

✠ The Reformed "Ordo Missae" ✠

(Third Part and Last Part)

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The Eucharistic Prayer

27. The Priest begins the Eucharistic Prayer. He extends his hands and says:
The Lord be with you.

The people respond:
And with your spirit.

Lifting up his hands the priest continues:
Lift up your hearts.

The people:
We have lifted them up to the Lord.

With hands extended the priest adds:
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

The people:
It is right and just.

With his hand extended, the priest sings or says the preface.

With the introductory dialogue of the Eucharistic Prayer the Mass reaches its climax. As the name indicates, the Eucharistic Prayer is a prayer of thanksgiving and praise. Therefore, the priest first invites the people to lift up their hearts to God in prayer and thanksgiving. The people are supposed to join in this prayer which the priest directs also in their name through our Lord Jesus Christ to the Father. United with Christ in the praise of the great deeds of God and in the offering of the sacrifice the whole congregation of the faithful offer through him the sacrifice.

The following are the main elements of the Eucharistic Prayer:

- a) Especially in the *preface* occurs the motive of thanksgiving. Here the priest glorifies the Father in the name of the entire holy people of God. He gives thanks either for the whole work of salvation

or selects one particular aspect of this work as the special motive of thanksgiving and praise. This selection is done in accordance with the different feasts, liturgical seasons or occasions (e.g. weddings).

- b) In the acclamation of the *Sanctus* the congregation unites itself with the heavenly choirs. It is to be sung or recited by both the people and the celebrant.
- c) In the *Epiclesis* the Church implores the divine power to come and consecrate the gifts prepared by men that they may become the Body of Christ. In the epiclesis the Church prays also that the immaculate victim to be received in holy Communion, may become fruitful to the communicants. These prayers in the four anaphoras of the Roman Rite have been divided into two sections, in the *consecratory* epiclesis before the institution narrative and the *Communion* epiclesis to be said after the anamnesis.
- d) We commemorate in a special manner the words and deeds of Our Lord with which He instituted this Sacrament of His Passion and Resurrection in the *Institution Narrative*.
- e) At the Last Supper the Lord gave to the Apostles his Body and Blood under the appearances of bread and wine and ordered them to do the same in His memory. The Church fulfills this commandment in the *Anamnesis*. We remember especially the Paschal Mystery of His blessed Passion, His glorious Resurrection and His Ascension into heaven.
- f) In the prayer of *oblation* the Church, especially the local Church, here and now assembled around the altar, offers in the Holy Spirit the immaculate victim to the heavenly Father. It is the wish of the Church that the faithful should not only offer this immaculate victim, but they should also learn to offer themselves with it. Thus they should come closer to their own perfection from day to day. Through Christ, their Mediator, the faithful ought to be brought into unity with God and with one another, until God will be finally all in all.
- g) Inserted into each of the Eucharistic Prayers are also *intercessions*. The Eucharist is celebrated in union with the whole Church, the

one in heaven and on earth. Therefore, this sacrifice is also offered for the whole Church, for all her members, living and dead. They all are called to share in the promised heavenly inheritance, in the salvation brought about by the Body and Blood of Christ.

- h) The final *doxology* glorifies God through Jesus Christ in the union of the Holy Spirit. It is concluded with the solemn "Amen" in which the people confirm everything that has been done and said in the Eucharistic Prayer.

The priest's gestures during the introductory dialogue to the preface and Eucharistic Prayer have been slightly altered in the new rubrics. For the *Dominus vobiscum* the priest extends and joins his hands as he does now when he says the same greeting before the collect. At the *Sursum corda* he lifts up his arms and keeps them in the same position also when he says the *Gratias agamus* and the entire preface.

Before the actual beginning of the first Eucharistic Prayer (Roman Canon) we find in the new Roman Missal the same 22 prefaces which were part of the Roman rite since summer 1968. To these prefaces we have to add the two proper prefaces of the second and fourth of the Eucharistic Prayers, the preface for the Mass of the blessing of the Holy Oils on Maundy Thursday and the three prefaces for wedding Masses. Apart from the proper prefaces of dioceses and religious orders, the Roman rite has now 28 prefaces, far short of the some 70 prefaces that were announced some time ago. They will be published in due time together with the reformed Mass orations, a great number of richer formulas for the last blessing at the end of the Mass, and antiphons for the beginning of the Mass and holy Communion. Together with that section of the Roman Missal that has been published so far, they will make up the Sacramentary (*Orationale, Sacerdotale*) that will, for the priest's use, take the place of the present Roman Missal.

Instead of being a hymn of praise and thanksgiving the preface of the Apostles had become a prayer of petition: "It is truly right and just, proper and helpful for salvation, humbly to *pray* you, Lord, eternal Shepherd, not desert your flock..." This situation asked for a revi-

sion in the new Missal. Now, the preface of the Apostles is a thanksgiving-prayer: "We do well always and everywhere to give you *thanks* because, as the eternal Shepherd, you never abandon your flock. You lovingly watch over and protect us..."

Changes in the Roman Canon

In the first Eucharistic Prayer (Roman Canon) a number of items have been changed, in the texts as well as in the rites. The celebrant is now given the opportunity to omit the conclusions "Through Christ our Lord.—Amen.", in the *Communicantes*, the *Hanc igitur*, the *Supplices* and in the memento for the dead. In the *Communicantes* the celebrant may omit the names of the Saints after St. Andrew. In the *Nobis quoque* the names of the non-biblical Saints (from St. Ignatius on) need not be mentioned any more.

The *Hanc igitur* is a variable prayer of petition while the *Quam oblationem* is obviously the equivalent of the consecratory epiclesis. This is the reason why the priest now hold his hands extended, as he did during the *Communicantes*. In a concelebrated Mass the main celebrant says the *Hanc igitur* alone in a loud voice. He is joined by the concelebrants only from the *Quam oblationem* on.

According to the former rubrics the ciborium with hosts to be consecrated had to be opened before the priest started to pronounce the first part of the institution narrative. This rubric has been deleted from the new guidelines. By being placed on the altar, resp. corporal, the hosts in the ciborium are destined "to become for us the bread of life" (*Offertory*).

In the institution narrative the words of the Lord have been made uniform. We find now the same text for all four Canons or Eucharistic Prayers. While the priest slightly bows over the bread, he says: "This is my Body which will be given up for you!" The formula to be pronounced over the wine reads in all four anaphoras as follows: "This is the cup of my Blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all men so that sins may be forgiven." At the end of the institution narrative the priest says simply: "Do this in memory of me." Also in the Roman Canon the priest, after

the elevation of the cup, exhorts the faithful to their acclamation with the words: "Let us proclaim the mystery of faith!" The uniformity in all these texts is of special advantage in the case of concelebration.

The concluding words *Per Christum Dominum nostrum* of the *Nobis quoque* have been transferred and form now the introduction of the prayer *Per quem haec omnia*, so that the *Nobis quoque* ends with... *quaesumus largitor admitte*. The priest joins his hands and says: "Through Christ our Lord you give us all these things..."

In the past the priest took his own big host and showing it with the cup to the people pronounced the great doxology. In the future the celebrant takes the paten (or the ciborium) into the one hand, the chalice into the other, and, lifting them both up, pronounces the *Per ipsum* and keeps them raised until the people respond *Amen*. If a deacon assists the priest, he holds the chalice up, the priest only his paten or the ciborium.

Changes in the new Eucharistic Prayers (II-IV)

Small changes were also inserted in the new Eucharistic Prayers. The priest makes a small bow of the body while he pronounces the words of the Lord in the institution narrative. While the deep bow of the body in the *Supplices* of the Roman Canon, the equivalent of the Communion epiclesis, has been retained, it has been abolished in the corresponding formula of the new Eucharistic Prayers (*Et supplices; Respice, quaesumus; Respice, Domine*). These prayers are to be said with arms extended.

Rite of Communion

96. The priest sets down the cup and paten and, with hands joined sings or says:
Let us now with confidence pray to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:

He extends his hands and with the people he continues:
Our Father ...

The Communion rite is preceded by some preparatory rites which are to lead the faithful to holy Communion, namely, the Lord's Prayer with its introduction and embolism, the rite of peace, the breaking of the bread, the rite of commingling, the Agnus Dei and a special preparation prayer for the priest.

In order to mark the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, the Ordo Missae of 1965 and 1967 prescribed a genuflection after the elevation with doxology. This genuflection has been abolished.

The introduction to the Our Father remained unchanged. Together with the priest the congregation sings or recites the Lord's Prayer.

97. The priest continues alone:

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil.
 Grant us peace in our day.
 In your mercy keep us free from sin
 and protect us from all anxiety
 as we wait in joyful hope
 for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.
 He joins his hands. People and priest together
 end the prayer with the acclamation:
 For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours
 now and for ever.

This embolism is said or sung aloud by the priest alone. It is an extension of the last petition of the Our Father: "Deliver us from evil." It has undergone considerable changes. We pray to be freed from every evil, but there is no further need to specify them as past, present or threatening in the future. The reference to the intercession of the Saints has been taken out. We conclude this prayer with an outlook to the return of the Lord in glory, inspired by TIT 2.13.

The new acclamation does not only give the people a new opportunity for active participation, but has also an ecumenical significance. Many non-Catholic Christian conclude the Our Father always with this venerable, ancient doxology which is already found in the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" (*Didache*).

98. The priest, with hands extended, says:

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles:
 Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,
 I leave you peace, my peace I give you,
 and grant us peace and unity.
 He joins his hands
 You who live and reign for ever and ever.
 The people answer:
 Amen.

The rite of peace is introduced by the prayer *Domine Iesu Christe* which was formerly the first of the three, private pre-Communion prayers, to be said silently by the priest. Destined, to be said aloud in the name of the whole congregation, it has been changed into the plural (*our* sins). All ask here for peace and unity in the Church and in the whole human family.

99. The priest, extending and joining his hands, adds:

The Lord's peace be with you always.

The people answer:

And with your spirit.

In a gesture of greeting, the same that he now uses for the *Dominus vobiscum* before the collect, the priest addresses the community with the well-known text.

100. Then the deacon, or the priest, may add:

Let us show that we are at peace with one another.

All make some appropriate, customary sign of peace and love.

In the reformed Mass rite the place of the rite of peace has been retained. It is however, up to the Bishops' Conference of each country to decide the manner in which the people are to show that they are at peace with one another. Different ways have been proposed in this country so far: a handshake, the "abrazo" (among men), holding hands, etc. Perhaps a simple nod of the head with a smile to one's neighbor may be an appropriate sign of peace that comes quite naturally.

101. The priest gives the sign of peace to the deacon or minister. He then takes the bread and breaks it over the paten. He places a small piece in the cup, saying in a low voice:

May this mingling of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.

Either in the same way as the people do, or in the customary, stylized form of the "kiss of peace" the celebrant gives the sign of peace to the deacon or server. After the invitation to show that they are at peace with one another, the people are not supposed to wait until the "peace" is brought to them from the altar; they should start among themselves right away. The priest himself *may* (but need not; cf. no. 112 of the guidelines) give the sign of peace to the simple Mass server.

As long as we shall have pre-formed hosts, the rite of breaking the bread will always remain some kind of a problem. According to the Constitution on the Liturgy the sacred rites should be clear and within the people's power of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation (art. 34). But today the rite of breaking the bread is not functional any more. It was retained because it is traditional. In ancient times it even gave its name to the whole Eucharistic celebration. Perhaps it was also retained in view of a future change of the form of the hosts. If there is one really big host, its breaking would indicate that the many who eat from the one bread (Christ) may become one body in the Lord (cf. 1 Cor 10,17).

Equally problematic is the rite of commingling. Only because of its venerable age was this rite retained. The words which accompany it, still to be said in a low voice, have been changed; the strange word *consecratio* has been dropped.

While the explanations in chapter Three of the new guidelines of the Missal give normally clear and precise information concerning the meaning of the different rites (nos. 24-57), they offer only historical information for the breaking of the bread and none at all for the commingling.

102. Meanwhile the following is sung or said:

Lamb of God, you take away sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.

This may be repeated until the breaking of the bread is finished,
but the last phrase is always 'Grant us peace.'

During the breaking of the bread and the commingling the congregation recites, or preferably sings the *Agnus Dei* which thus became once again what it originally was, the *confractorium*, the song accompanying the breaking of the bread. Using the present form of hosts there is no need for a prolonged recitation of the *Agnus Dei* (except for concelebrated Masses, if the concelebrants use large hosts). The rubrics refer us here, once again, to the exhortation of the guidelines at the beginning of the new Missal, to give to the hosts a more bread-like aspect.

From the the 11th century on, for Masses of the dead the *Agnus Dei* was used as a prayer for eternal rest: "Grant them rest, grant them eternal rest!" On Maundy Thursday also, the last answer was "Have mercy on us." In many churches the *Agnus Dei* was considered to be a sign of peace, an equivalent for the kiss of peace. Because of the misuse of the kiss of peace by Judas on that day, the petition "Grant us peace" was left out. From now on, however, the *Agnus Dei* will always have the conclusion "Have mercy on us" except for the last repetition of this prayer which will be always "Grant us peace."

103. Then the priest joins his hands and says in a low voice.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God,
by will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit
your death brought life to the world.
By your holy body and blood
free me from all my sins and from every evil.
Make me always cling to your commandments,
and never let me be parted from you.

Or:

Lord Jesus Christ, when I eat your body
and drink your blood
may it not bring judgment
but through your love and mercy
bring healing in mind and body.

These two prayers form now the private preparation of the priest before holy Communion. The priest stands erect with his hands joined while he says *one* of them (not both). The new liturgical books provide now also official translations for these private prayers; therefore, they may in future be used in the vernacular. Here we have anew an occasion where the development went beyond the rulings of the Constitution on the Liturgy (art. 54). In the both prayers the former conclusion has been omitted. Because they were suggestive of the time of moral decadence, when this prayer originated as an apology, the words *quod ego indignus sumere praesumo* have been left out in the new form of the second of these prayers. But even in their present form both formulas cannot hide their character as "apologiae," prayers to be said in the Middle Ages whenever the choir sang. In them the priest proclaimed his unworthiness.

The guidelines say that these prayers have been kept for the private preparation of the priest for a fruitful Communion. During this silent time

the people are supposed to do the same. These reasons are not convincing. Is not the Mass as such the best preparation for holy Communion? Why, then, in addition private, silent prayers? The retention of these prayers appear therefore to be the result of a compromise.

104. The priest genuflects. Taking the bread he raises it slightly over the paten and, facing the people, says aloud:

This is the Lamb of God
who takes away the sins of the world.
Happy are they who are called to his supper.

He adds, once only, with the people:

Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,
but if you say the word, I shall be healed.

As usual, the priest genuflects before holy Communion. This is normally the third and last genuflection in the Mass. The priest shows then a host to the people, holding it over the paten (or the ciborium) and says the usual words of invitation to which were added, because of the eschatological dimension of the Eucharist, the words "Happy are they who were called to his supper" which are influenced by *Apoc* 19,9. All then say, but only once, not three times, the customary *Domine, non sum dignus*.

105. Facing the altar, the priest says in a low voice:
May the body of Christ bring me to everlasting life.

He reverently consumes the body of Christ.

He then takes the cup and says in a low voice

May the blood of Christ bring me to everlasting life.

He reverently drinks the blood of Christ.

Already in 1964 the formula for the distribution of the holy Communion had been shortened and simplified. Now also that for the reception of holy Communion of the celebrant has been streamlined and to some extent corrected. The words (*Domini nostri Iesu* have been omitted in each case. For *animam meam* the priest says each time *me*, because the effects of the Eucharist are not limited to the soul, but extend, according to the intention of the Lord, to the whole man, soul and body (cf. *Jn* 6,54).

106. After this he takes the paten (or other vessel and goes to the communicants. He takes bread for each one, raises it a little, and shows it, saying:

The body of Christ.

The communicant answers:

Amen,

and receives the bread. When a deacon gives communion he does the same.

Formerly the rubrics, at least those for the purification, remarked that the priest "places in the chalice any fragments which may be found on the paten held under the chin of the communicants." This or a similar reference to the Communion paten cannot be found any more in the general rubrics of the Missal. Only for the communion under both species, if someone receives the Eucharist by dipping or with a spoon, the paten is mentioned. To distinguish it from the paten of the priest, it is called in Latin *patina*. In the communion by intinction as well as in that with a spoon there exists the danger the drops of the consecrated wine may fall to the ground. This danger does not exist in the other cases. For holy Communion under the species of bread only the use of a paten is consequently in future optional.

107. If any are receiving holy Communion in both kinds, the rite described elsewhere is followed.

108. While the priest is receiving the body of Christ, the Communion song is begun.

In the unity of their voices the communicants are to express in the Communion song their spiritual union. At the same time this song is to be an expression of their spiritual joy. When the communicants approach in procession, Communion is made, by the common singing, a real community event: not only the individual goes to receive his Lord, but the community of brothers and sisters.

This song begins as soon as the priest himself receives holy Communion; it continues as long as seems fit. If a thanksgiving hymn is to follow during the Mass, after the distribution of holy Communion, the Communion song is not to last too long. There should be some time of silence in between for personal prayer and thanksgiving.

For Communion song may be used the antiphon of the Roman Gradual (with or without its psalm), the antiphon and psalm of the Graduale simplex or any other suitable hymn (approved in its text by the Bishops' Conference). These chants may be sung by a schola alone, by a schola or cantor and the people, or by the people alone.

If no chant accompanies the Communion of the people, the new Communion "antiphon" (for the time being the antiphon found in the old Roman Missal) is to be recited.

The word "antiphon" has been placed within quotation marks, because it will be different from the text, at present found in the Missal. These "antiphons" are not to be sung; they will be short, selected lessons, usually a text from Sacred Scripture, as motto for personal meditation and reflection after the reception of holy Communion. These texts may eventually be very welcome for both poets and composers as inspirations for the creation of new Communion hymns in the vernacular.

This antiphon is recited either in common by all the faithful, or by some of them (schola), by the lector, the prayer leader, or, if this should prove necessary, by the celebrant himself. In this case he should pronounce the text after his own Communion, before he starts to give holy Communion to the people.

109. When the Communion has been completed, the priest or deacon wipes the paten over the cup, and then washes the cup itself.

Priests have always made a distinction between the cleansing of the paten and the chalice. The former was only wiped clean with the purificator, the latter was rinsed first with wine and then with wine and water. Similarly, the new rubrics prescribe that the paten and/or ciborium only be wiped with the purificator. The chalice of the Mass is rinsed with wine and water, or with water only. In view of the small quantity of wine offered by the parishes for holy Mass, the rinsing with water only seems to be preferable in this country.

For the cleansing of the sacred vessels the rubrics propose two places: the side (either) of the altar, or the credence table. After a big celebration with a number of ciboria and chalices, it is obviously better to cleanse vessels at the credence table. One may even leave them, suitably covered, and cleanse them only after holy Mass when the people have left. The same may be advisable when on Sundays one Mass follows the other and the purification within Mass would unduly delay the end of the Mass.

No prayer formula does accompany the rinsing and cleansing of the chalice. Deleted from the *Ordo Missae* are the prayers *Panem caelestem*, *Quid retribuam*, *Quod ore*, and *Corpus tuum, Domine*.

110. Then the priest may return to his seat. A period of silence may now be observed, or a psalm or song of praise may be sung.

After holy Communion (or the cleansing of the sacred vessels) the priest may return to his chair. This is the better choice, if a communal thanksgiving is held now. All may sit during this time, pray in silence or sing a psalm or hymn of praise

111. Then, standing at the seat or at the altar, the priest says:
Let us pray.

Priest and people pray in silence, unless the silence has already been observed. Then the priest extends his hands and sings or says the prayer after Communion, at the end of which the people respond:
Amen.

If the priest returned to the presidential seat it is preferable that he says there also the prayer after Communion, which is said in the same way as the collect at the beginning of the Mass: with hands joined when he says Oremus and hands extended when he says or sings the oration; it is, however, concluded with the short ending. The aim of this prayer is to ask for the fruits of the mystery just celebrated.

Concluding Rites

112. If there are any short announcements, they are made at this time.

This rubric is a consequence of article 353, of the Constitution on the Liturgy which suggested that instructions of a liturgical nature should be inserted at the more suitable moments of the celebration. One should, consequently avoid, to connect these announcements with the homily. If they have to be made, then their place is here, after the post-Communion.

113. The dismissal follows. Facing the people, the priest extends his hands and sings or says:

The Lord be with you.

The people answer:

And with your spirit.

The priest blesses the people with these words:

May Almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

The people answer:

Amen.

On certain days or occasions another, more solemn form of blessing or prayer over the people may precede the above formula as the rubrics direct.

As usual, when he sings or says *the Dominus vobiscum*, the priest extends his hands. The rite for blessing the people has been simplified, however. The rite of the Mass for 1965 still contained the prescription that the priest "raises his eyes and hands, which he extends and joins, and says in a clear tone of voice:

May almighty God bless you . . ." (*Rites servandus*, no. 87; *Variationes* of 1967 no. 56). Now, however, the priest has his hands joined, when he says: "May almighty God bless you." While he continues, saying: "the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit" he blesses the congregation with the sign of the cross.

This form of blessing the people will not remain the only one. In the meantime some examples of the more solemn form of blessing have been published, e.g., for the ordination Mass of a bishop and for the wedding Mass. The *oratio super populum* is now acknowledged as a formula of blessing, and it gets its place in the Mass here; it is, consequently, transferred from its former place after post-Communion.

114. The deacon, or the priest himself, with his hands joined, says or sings:
 Go with the peace of Christ.
 The people answer:
 Thanks be to God.

This form of translating the *Ite, missa est* wants to bring out the rubric of the new Missal which says that this dismissal includes a mission, a sending: everyone of the congregation is to return to his own task entrusted to him by God.

The priest then kisses the altar, goes down to the level of the nave, makes the customary reverence (bow or genuflection) and leaves for the sacristy.