

† The Reformed "Ordo Missae" †

Second Part

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The Liturgy of the Word

7. The reader goes to the ambo and reads the first lesson. All sit and listen. To mark the end of the reading, the reader adds:

This is the word of the Lord.

All respond:

Thanks be to God.

The Liturgy of the Word consists of the readings from Sacred Scripture, the interlectionary chants, the homily, the Creed and the Universal Prayer. In the readings, which are to be explained in the homily, God speaks to his people, discloses the mystery of our redemption and offers spiritual nourishment to all. Christ Himself is present in his word: He Himself speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the church.

In his Apostolic Constitution Pope Paul VI mentioned a new lectionary which will provide for three readings on Sundays and the higher feasts of the ecclesiastical year in a three-year cycle. The first reading will be from the Old Testament, the second from the Apostles (Acts, Epistles, Apocalypse) and the last from the Gospels. *Per se* these three lessons are obligatory; but the episcopal conferences have the power to permit priests, for pastoral reasons, to omit one of the first two.

The reading of the word of God in liturgical celebrations is not a presidential, but a ministerial service. It is the word of God, not his own, the reader proclaims; he lends his voice to the word of God. This is the reason why it is not absolutely necessary that only sacred ministers

read the sacred Scriptures in the course of the Mass. Obviously, the Gospel should be read always by a deacon, or in his absence by the priest, as it is traditional. But the first and second lesson may be read by a subdeacon, a lector, a layman or, with the permission of the respective episcopal conference, by a woman. This permission has been granted, under certain circumstances, by the bishops of the Philippines.

Before the readings start, the celebrant or some other suitable person, may give a short introduction, in order to insure a better understanding. Each of the readings is concluded with the word: "This is the word of God." The people reply: "Thanks be to God."

8. The cantor recites the psalm and the people make the response.

It is an ancient Christian practice, taken over from the synagogue, to let the readings be followed by a psalm. The new rubrics restored the original name for this song: responsorial psalm. A cantor, or in his absence the reader of the lesson, has to render the verses of the psalm while the people respond with a refrain after the verses. These responsorial psalms have been inserted into the lectionary, because the selection has been made to be in harmony with the lesson. As an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word the responsorial psalm is never to be omitted. To make it easier for the people to take part in the recitation of the psalm, there exist for certain seasons of the ecclesiastical year and for certain Commons of Saints special texts of responses and of psalms, whenever the psalm is sung.

For the singing or recitation of the responsorial psalm the cantor, also called psalmist, takes his place at the ambo or another suitable place from where he can be easily heard and understood. During the singing or recitation of the psalm the people remain seated and listen, if the psalm is recited "modo directo," i.e., without response. But normally the people should answer with the response.

If these interlectionary texts are chanted — and they may be chanted also in a low Mass — one is free to take either the responsorial psalm of the lectionary, or the usual gradual of the *Graduale Romanum*, or the responsorial psalm or the Alleluja-psalm of the *Graduate simplex* (cf. Lit. Inform, Bull. of the Philippines, March 1969), and sing them according

to the rules given in these books. The use of the Graduale simplex is very easy.

9. If there is a second reading the reader reads it from the ambo as before. To mark the end of the reading, the reader adds:

This is the word of God.

All respond:

Thanks be to God.

Only few Masses of the old Roman Missal retained a three-lesson system, namely the Masses for the Wednesday of the fourth week in Lent, of Holy Week and the Ember Wednesday. On liturgical days of higher rank, especially Sundays and holy days of obligation this system has now been introduced "so that a richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word" (Const. on the Lit., art. 51).

If there is only one lesson before the Gospel, then, outside Lent one sings either the Alleluja-psalm, or a psalm and the Alleluja with its versicle, or only a psalm or only the Alleluja. One is free to recite or to sing this psalm, but only the Alleluja is to be sung. If one does not sing the Alleluja and its verse before the Gospel, it is simply omitted.

10. The Alleluja follows or another chant.

Throughout the ecclesiastical year the Alleluja is sung with the exception of Lent. Since Septuagesima time has been abolished, one sings the Alleluja in Masses until Tuesday before Ash Wednesday inclusively. It would be normal that the people are already standing for the singing of the Alleluja; but the episcopal conference may eventually decide otherwise.

The Alleluja should be chanted. If it cannot be sung one may omit it together with its verses which are also found in the lectionary or Graduale.

During Lent another chant takes the place of the Alleluja. It consists either of a verse before the Gospel or of another psalm (Tract). One finds these texts (and melodies) in the lectionary or in the Graduale Romanum.

11. Meanwhile, if incense is to be used, the priest places incense in the censer. Then the deacon, who is to proclaim the gospel, bows before the priest and in a low voice asks his blessing in these words:

Father, give me your blessing!

The priest in a low voice says:

The Lord be in your heart and on your lips, that you may worthily proclaim his Gospel.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The deacon answers:

Amen.

While the Alleluja is being sung, the priests, if he uses incense, places incense on the coals, but makes only the sign of the cross over the censer, saying nothing. He may do so in sung Masses and low Masses, with deacon or without.

In a Mass with a deacon, the latter assists the priest in placing incense on the coals, holding the boat. Without holding the Gospel book he asks for the priest's blessing, and answers "Amen." If the Gospel book lies on the altar, he goes, after receiving the priest's blessing to the altar, gets the book, and preceded by the servers with censer and candles, goes to the ambo to read the Gospel. Incense and candles are optional, even in solemn high Masses, but are allowed also in low Masses, because they are signs of reverence toward the Gospel.

If there is no deacon assisting at Mass, the priest himself goes to the altar, and bowing says in a low voice the shortened prayer "Munda cor meum . . ."

Almighty God, cleanse my heart and my lips that I may worthily proclaim your Gospel.

The reference to the cleansing of the lips of the prophet Isaias by the burning coal has been deleted from the text. Also the conclusion "Through Christ our Lord" disappeared from this prayer.

12. Then the deacon, or priest, goes to the ambo. He may be accompanied by ministers with incense and candles. There he says:

The Lord be with you.

The people answer:

And with your spirit.

The deacon or priest, says:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to N.

He makes the sign of the cross on the book, and then on his forehead, lips and breast. The people answer:

Glory be to you, O Lord.

Then, if incense is used, the deacon or priest incenses the book, and reads the Gospel.

On his way from his seat to the ambo, the priest takes the Gospel book — if it was on the altar — from there and carries it with him to the ambo. If no special Gospel book is used, i.e., a book containing only the Gospel readings, the lectionary is to be left on the ambo after the previous reading. During the reading the people stand. In the acclamations the people greet their Lord, because "Christ is present in his word, since it is He Himself who speaks when the Holy Scriptures are read in the Church" (Const. on the Lit., art. 7).

**13. When the reading of the Gospel is finished, the deacon or priest says:
This is the word of the Lord.**

All respond:

Praise be to you, O Christ.

Then he kisses the book, saying silently:

**Through the words of the Gospel
may our sins be blotted out.**

These rubrics mark a departure from the present practice in this country where the priest pronounces aloud the words "Through the words of the Gospel . . ." and the people answer in their final acclamation. As after the other readings the people's acclamation comes after the official conclusion of the reading. The petition for the remission of sins is said silently.

14. The homily follows, which shall be given on all Sundays and holy days of obligation; it is also recommended for other days.

This ruling repeats, once again, the prescription of the Constitution on the Liturgy (art. 51), of the Instruction of Sept. 26, 1964 (art. 56) and of the Instruction on the Worship of the Eucharist (art. 15, 20, 25, 28). It is allowable for the priest to remain at his seat during the homily; he may also preach from the ambo.

15. When the homily is finished, the profession of faith is made as prescribed.

The new "Ordo Missae" contains only the text of the Nicene Creed. But the episcopal conference of the Philippines approved its substitution with the Apostles' Creed.

The number of occasions when the Creed is to be said, has been steadily diminished since 1956. At present it is only to be said or sung on Sundays and solemnities, i.e., the former first class feasts. It *may* be sung on certain more solemn occasions. Since it is a profession of faith it is preferably to be sung or recited by all present. It should be at least rendered in such a way that the faithful are given a chance for a fitting participation. This is the reason why, even in a solemn high Mass or in a sung Mass, the Creed may also be recited by all.

16. Then follows the Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful.

This rubric seems to suggest that the Universal Prayer is to be said in every Mass with the people. But the guidelines of the new Missal (art. 45) say that it is *desirable* that this prayer be said commonly (de more habetur).

The name "oratio communis" (Const. on the Lit., art. 53: Instr. of Sept. 26, 1964, art. 56) has been dropped, it has been substituted by the title "Universal Prayer" which is more in harmony with 1 Tim 2, 1 f. the biblical source of this prayer. St. Paul exhorts Christians to "pray for all men," that is to say, for the Church, for those who rule over us, for those in various needs, and for the salvation of mankind in general. These intentions should normally be mentioned explicitly. But on more particular occasions (weddings, funerals, house Masses) the Prayer of the Faithful can be adapted to the circumstances. The general intentions for the Church, the world, brothers in need and the assembly should not be entirely omitted. Particular intentions, properly prepared, can be proposed by the individual participants (ff. Instruction on Masses for Special Gatherings May 15, 1969, art. 6, n).

The priest at his seat or at the ambo should introduce and conclude this prayer. From the ambo the prayer leader or lector pronounces the individual petitions to which the people answer.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

17. At the end of this prayer, the song of the offertory is begun. Meanwhile the ministers place the corporal, the purificator, the chalice and the missal on the altar.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist, the second principal part of the Mass, consists of three parts:

- 1) the preparation of the gifts. Bread and wine, together with water are brought to the altar, the same earthly elements which Christ, during the Last Supper, took into his hands.
- 2) In the Eucharistic Prayer the Church gives thanks and praise to God for the whole work of salvation, and the gifts become Christ's Body and Blood.
- 3) By eating from one bread the unity of the faithful is symbolized. In holy Communion they receive the Body and Blood of Christ.

At the beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist the gifts are brought to the altar. For this the altar has to be prepared. The servers bring the chalice, corporal, purificator and the Missal to the altar which to this moment was, except for the altar cloth and (eventually) the candles, entirely empty. Of the things to be brought to the altar, the burse and the missal stand are no longer mentioned in the rubrics; they are therefore optional.

There exists no prohibition for the servers to carry the chalice; nor do servers need for this purpose a little cloth. As a matter of fact, the rubrics presuppose that the Mass servers place everything on the altar and arrange it in such a way that the priest may directly start with the rite of setting down the bread on the altar. This is the reason why the rite is now called "depositio oblatorum" or "praeparatio donorum." Only in connection with the chant that accompanies this rite has the old name "offertory" survived (cantus or antiphona "ad offertorium"). The old name implied that the offering, and therefore, the sacrifice, takes place already here. But this is not the Case.

18. It is desirable that the participation of the faithful shall be demonstrated by some of them bringing up the bread and wine for the celebration of the Eucharist or other gifts for the needs of the Church and the poor.

The guidelines recommend that the bread, the wine and water for the Eucharist be brought to the altar by the faithful. At a suitable place—at the edge of the sanctuary area, near the altar—the priest or deacon may receive them. Money and other gifts may also be brought at this occasion. They are destined for the Church or the poor. During the Mass they find their place near the altar, not, however, on the mensa. While the collection is being taken up and the procession with the altar, the offertory chant is sung. It is to be continued until the gifts of bread and wine have been placed on the altar. A suitable song in the vernacular may take the place of the offertory antiphon. If there is no singing during these rites, the offertory antiphon of the Missal is simply dropped; the celebrant is not to recite it even silently.

The Collection should be completed at the end of the preparation of the gifts. It should not be protracted into the time of the Eucharistic Prayer. A sufficient numbers of ushers will help achieve this goal even in large churches.

19. The priest, standing at the altar, takes the paten with the bread and, holding it slightly raised above the altar, says in a low voice:

Blessed are you, Lord God, for all creation.

Through your goodness we have received this bread which we present to you. It is the fruit of the earth and the work of man's hands; it will become for us the bread of life.

Then he places the paten with the bread on the corporal. If no offertory song is sung, the priest may say the preceding words in an audible voice; then the people may respond:

Blessed be God forever.

Seen from afar, the rites of the preparation of the gifts will appear almost as before the reform. The priest lifts up the paten with both hands. If there is a ciborium with hosts for the people, he may add his own host to those of the faithful and lift up the ciborium while saying silently the prescribed prayer. Artists will see to it that the form of a chalice will gradually disappear for the ciborium; it is destined for "cibus", sacred food. Therefore, it should have the form more of a dish, than that of a drinking vessel.

The use of unleavened bread has been retained in the Latin Church. But the new guidelines recommend that the altar bread be given a shape and appearance that makes it look more like bread, and not

like pieces of thin, white paper. This change should be introduced also for the purpose of the breaking of the bread.

The formula which replaces the "Suscipe sancte Pater" praises God as the giver of the bread. At the same time we consider the bread as the result of human cooperation with God. He let the earth grow the grain, man grinds it to flour, prepares the dough and bakes it into bread. Thus it is truly the result of the fruitfulness of the earth and the labor of human hands.

What is the meaning of the word "offerimus" which we find in the new formula for placing the bread on the altar? It would not be right to drop this word altogether here and in the preparation of the wine, as did the "green-book" edition of the "Ordo Missae" of the International Committee for English in the Liturgy (ICEL). A solution is eventually the translation attempted above. It fits into the context, because we place bread on the altar "that it may become for us the bread of life."

In case the assembly does not sing during these ceremonies the priest may pronounce these words in an audible manner. The people may (but need not) respond to them.

20. The deacon or the priest, pours wine and a little water into the cup, saying in a low voice:

By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in his divinity who humbled himself to share in our humanity.

According to the rubrics issued before 1965 the chalice had to be prepared "in cornu Epistolae." The rubrics of 1965 bypassed the issue and did not mention the place where the chalice had to be prepared. It should be done at the side of the altar, say the new guidelines. The celebrant is free to choose the side which, according to the general structure of the sanctuary, is the most convenient for him. If the tabernacle is on *one* side it is preferable to have the credence table on the other. In this case the priest will prepare the chalice and wash his hands on that side of the altar which is closest to the credence table, even if this is the side where the Missal has its place on the altar.

Before pouring the water into the wine the priest does not bless the water. The formula accompanying the rite retained its basic con-

tent, but was shortened considerably. If a deacon assists the priest, he pours the wine and the water, he, not the priest, says the words of this prayer. Standing in the center of the altar, the priest waits until the deacon present the chalice to him. Nothing prevents the deacon from preparing the chalice at the credence table and bringing it later for the deposition on the altar to the priest.

21. Then the priest takes the cup and raises it a little above the altar, saying in a low voice:

Blessed are you, Lord God, for all creation!
Through your goodness we have received this wine which we present to you. It is a gift of the earth and a product of human hands; it will become for us a spiritual drink.

Then he places the cup on the corporal.
If no offertory song is sung, the priest may say the preceding words in an audible voice. Then the people respond:

Blessed be God for ever.

When a deacon assists at Mass he gives the chalice to the priest. Holding it with both hands the latter says the prescribed formula before placing it down on a suitable spot on the corporal. A larger paten, containing the bread for the Communion of the congregation and of the priest himself, may eventually cause the priest to choose another than the traditional position of the chalice and the paten on the corporal. The rubric which ordered the deacon to pronounce the same formula with the priest, has been dropped. Nor does the deacon touch the base of the cup or support the priest's right arm while the latter raises the chalice above the altar.

22. The priest bows and says in a low voice:

Lord, God, may you be pleased with the sacrifice we offer you with contrite and humble hearts.

Remaining in the center of the altar, the priest says, as usual, with a bow of the body and silently, the prayer "In spiritu humilitatis," a text culled from Dan 3,39b and 40 which is a part of the prayer of Azarias in the furnace (cf. Offertory of the 7th Sunday after Pentecost).

23. He may now receive the censer and incense the offerings and the altar. Afterwards the deacon or a minister incenses the priest and the people.

Even in low Masses the gifts and the altar may be incensed by the priest. One may add to this—or omit—the incensation of the priest himself and of the people. This should be done by the deacon or one of the servers. No formulas are mentioned which formerly had to accompany these rites, nor are these rites further detailed. One may continue to observe the traditional ceremonies, but should omit the circles and the crosses with the censer over the gifts, they smack of magic. Three double swings over the gifts may eventually take their place.

24. Next the priest, standing at the side of the altar, washes his hands, saying in a low voice:

Lord, wash away my sin; cleanse me from my iniquity.

In earlier drafts of the reformed Mass rite the Lavabo was placed at the beginning of the offertory rites. A number of experts pleaded for the total abolition of the rite, because it is a duplication of the penitential rite. In washing his hands the priest wants to express his desire to be cleansed in his heart. This same desire, however, already found expression in a more convincing way and in a communal form in the penitential act at the beginning of the Mass.

For the Lavabo the priest goes to that side of the altar where the credence table is. Only one verse of Ps 51 (50) is said in a low voice instead of the seven verses (6-12) of Ps 26(25).

25. Standing at the center of the altar, facing the people, he extends and joins his hands, saying:

Pray, brethren, that your sacrifice and mine may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

The people answer:

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his Church.

In the successive drafts of the reformed Mass rite the "Orate fratres" had been left out. Thus it came as a surprise when it found its place into the "Ordo Missae" after all. Its function is, as the rubrics state twice, to invite the people to prayer. But invitations to communal prayer are frequent in the Mass. Only a little later the celebrant invites the congregation to praise and thanksgiving in the introductory dialogue to the preface: "Let us give thanks to the Lord our

God." And in each of the four Eucharistic Prayers we find petitions for the acceptance of this sacrifice of the Church.

26. With hands extended, the priest sings or says the prayer over the gifts.
The people respond:
Amen.

Many had hoped that the Prayer over the Gifts would retain its original and dominating place and status in the Roman Liturgy. It is one of the presidential prayers and was originally as its present name implies, the only prayer spoken over the gifts. But now, despite the fact that it is has to be said aloud or even sung, it forms only the conclusion of the first part of the Eucharistic Liturgy, and, at the same time, a kind of preparation for the Eucharistic Prayer. It is concluded with the short ending "Through Christ our Lord."

(To Be Continued)