



Pastoral Guidelines for Celebrating Mass

DEFINITELY APPROVED

by the Catholic Bishops Conference
of Papua New Guinea & Solomon Islands

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President

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LCI CHURCH DOCU-



MENTS Series 4

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INTRODUCTION

In March 2001 Liturgical Catechetical Institute (LCI) sponsored a Consultation on the General Instruction on the Roman Missal (GIRM) 2000 at Kefamo in Goroka. One of the results of the consultation was a recommendation to the Bishops for a pastoral guide for celebrating Mass. Through the Liturgical Catechetical Commission of the Catholic Bishops' Conference, these *Pastoral Guidelines for Celebrating Mass* were prepared.

These Guidelines were initially approved in May 2002 during the Annual General Meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Madang for a period of two years. It was extended for another year in 2004. In September 2003 a workshop for diocesan representatives on these Pastoral Guidelines was organised by the LCI at Kefamo in Goroka. Suggestions were made during this workshop. The LCI board deliberated on these suggestions and approved some to be incorporated in this definitive version. These were eventually presented to the bishops for their approval. In April 2005 during their Annual General Meeting in Port Moresby the bishops gave their **definitive approval** of these guidelines. These Pastoral Guidelines become effective with their publication. These conform fully to the GIRM 2000. The Latin version of the instruction became official on March 18, 2002 while the English version was confirmed and approved by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on March 17, 2003. These guidelines also incorporate the directives contained in the Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum* issued on March 25, 2004 by the same Congregation which are relevant to us in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. These Guidelines, therefore, contain the norms for the way we are to celebrate the Eucharist in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

These Guidelines are based on the Pastoral Introduction prepared by the International Commission for English in the Liturgy (ICEL) to be

included in the revised English Sacramentary. The pastoral introduction was used with permission of ICEL. Yet these Guidelines are very much our own especially in references to certain cultural practices and pastoral directives that have been part of our liturgical celebrations of many years.

These guidelines are exactly what they are called, a pastoral guide, a norm, a pattern, to help ministers and people alike in preparing for and in celebrating the Eucharist, in a richer, fuller way. It is hoped that the worthy eucharistic celebration through creative participation would become a real possibility for everyone, everywhere. But this will not happen because a set of Guidelines were approved. It will only happen when every member of the Church takes seriously the responsibility to study this text and to try to follow the guide placed before us.

We ask that everyone makes every effort to implement these guidelines so that we may all worship the Father as he really is, offering him true worship he wants (Jn 4:23).

Liturgy Sub Commission
Liturgical Catechetical Institute

April 28, 2005
Feast of St. Peter Chanel
Protomartyr of Oceania

I THE CELEBRATION OF MASS

1 In celebrating the eucharist, the people of God assemble as the Body of Christ to fulfil the Lord's command to "do this as a memorial of me" (Luke 22:19). In this most sacred action of Christ and the Church, the memorial of his death and resurrection is celebrated. God is adored in spirit and in truth. The Church identifies itself with the saving sacrifice of its Lord. Nourished by his body and blood, the Church looks forward in joyful hope to sharing in the supper of the Lamb in the heavenly kingdom.¹

2 At the Last Supper the Lord spoke to his disciples, took bread and wine, gave thanks, broke the bread, and gave them the bread of life and the cup of eternal salvation. After his resurrection from the dead, two disciples recognised his presence in these same actions: speaking, taking bread, giving thanks, breaking and sharing (see Luke 24:13-35). In the eucharist today the Church continues to make Christ's memorial and celebrates his presence in the same actions. In the **liturgy of the word** the assembly listens with hearts burning as the Lord speaks to it again, and it responds with words of praise and petition. In the **liturgy of the eucharist** it takes bread and wine, gives thanks, breaks the bread, and receives the body and blood of Christ².

3 These two parts of the Mass form one single act of worship: the table of God's word and of Christ's body is prepared, and from it the faithful are instructed and nourished. The spoken word of God announces the history of salvation, the eucharist shows it in the sacramental signs of the liturgy. In addition to these two parts, there are

¹ See Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Eucharisticum mysterium*, on the worship of the eucharist, 25 May 1967 (hereafter, *EuchMyst*), no. 3, a-c: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, Commentarium officiale (Vatican City; hereafter *AAS*) 59 (1967), pp. 540-542.

² See General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 2000 (hereafter *GIRM*), no. 72.

also the introductory rites, which prepare the people for word and eucharist, and the concluding rite, which brings the people's worship to a close and sends them out to witness and service.³

4 The celebration of Mass is the action of Christ and the people of God, that is of its ministers and the faithful. Within the one Body of Christ there are many gifts and responsibilities. But just as each part of the body is necessary for the healthy working of the body (see 1 Corinthians 12), so every member of the assembly has a part to play in the eucharist. It is of great importance that the celebration be so organised that priest, ministers, and faithful may all take their own part. The participation of each one is demanded by the nature of the liturgy, and, for the faithful, is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.⁴

- By apostolic tradition, the Church gathers on the Lord's Day or Sunday to celebrate the Lord's Supper. This Sunday eucharist, at which the entire local community assembles and in which all play their proper parts, is the most important sign of the local Church.⁵

THE ASSEMBLY AND ITS MINISTERS

ASSEMBLY

5 Christ is always present in the Church, especially in its liturgical celebrations. He is present first of all in the assembly itself: "Where two or three come together in my name, there am I in their midst" (Matthew 18:20).⁶ At Mass the faithful are a holy people; they are a chosen people; and they are a royal priesthood. They give thanks to God and offer the Victim. They do so through the hands of the priest, but also together with him, they offer themselves. They should do this by their deep sense of reverence for God and their charity toward their sisters and brothers who share with them in the celebration.⁷

6 The assembly is a gathering of God's people who exercises its priesthood in the eucharist. Everything in the celebration is or-

³ See *GIRM*, no 28; see Missale Romanum, *Ordo Lectionum Missae*, editio typica altera, 1981, Praenotanda (hereafter, *LM*), no. 10.

⁴ See Vatican Council II, Constitution on the Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963 (hereafter *SC*), art. 14, 28; see *GIRM*, nos. 16, 17, 18, 20.

⁵ See *SC*, art. 49, 106; see Congregation of Rites, *General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar*, 21 March 1969 (hereafter, *GNLYC*), no. 4.

⁶ See *SC*, art 7; see *GIRM*, no. 27.

ganised to encourage an awareness of praying and working together.

- The dialogues between the assembly and its ministers (e.g., the greeting and response) and the acclamations (e.g., after the consecration) have a special value as signs of common action and as means of good communication.
- Singing is one of the most powerful expressions of communal awareness and common purpose.⁸
- In the same way, making the same gestures together, such as standing, kneeling, and sitting, can help all the members of the assembly to feel they are united as one.

LITURGICAL MINISTERS

7 All the members of the eucharistic assembly have a role to play in its celebration. By doing all those parts that belong to them, the ministers and other members of the assembly show the Church as the one Body of Christ, actively involved in worship of the living God.⁹

8 All who exercise a liturgical ministry need proper preparation for their responsibilities. They must have the ability to do the ministry which they have been given.

9 The preparation or training for liturgical ministers is both spiritual and practical. Although this preparation or training will be different depending upon the ministry, the training is to be *liturgical*, *biblical*, and *practical*. Through their *liturgical training*, ministers come to an understanding of the Mass as a whole, and especially of the parts of the Mass during which they have something to do. Through their *biblical training*, ministers are helped to understand the calendar of Scripture readings and to notice more and more the revealed message of the Scriptures through the light of faith. They also learn the close connection between the two most important parts of the Mass, the **liturgy of the word** and the **liturgy of the eucharist**. Through their *practical training*, ministers learn to make the best use of their personal talents and strengths in order to communicate the person and message of Christ by the reverent use of *word*, *gesture*, or *movement*.

⁷ See GIRM, no. 95.

⁸ See GIRM, no. 34.

⁹ See GIRM, no. 91.

10 At different times during the year, ministers should come together to pray and to be renewed and encouraged in their ministry. These times together may also provide for their continuing training and for the improvement of their abilities to assist the assembly in its worship.

11 The words and actions of the liturgy give expression to the realities of God's gracious activity. They also allow people to respond to God. Equal care is therefore to be given by liturgical ministers to both the words and actions of the liturgy.

- When speaking or singing, ministers are to use a strong, clear voice.
- At those times in the liturgy when they are not doing their special ministry, liturgical ministers join with the rest of the assembly in actions and responses. At these times the ministers listen, respond, and sing with the other members of the assembly and so continue to contribute to the worship of the whole body.

Priest Celebrant

12 In the celebration of the eucharist, Christ is also present in the person of the priest. Every celebration of the Eucharist is led by the bishop or a priest, who is representing the person of Christ. The bishop or priest leads the people in prayer, in listening and responding to God's word, and in offering the sacrifice through Christ in the Spirit to the Father. He proclaims the message of salvation in preaching and gives the bread and cup of salvation.¹⁰

- In these guidelines, when speaking of the celebrant, *priest* will be used. When the bishop is presiding, there are a few differences. They are not covered in these Guidelines. They may be found in other sources, especially the book *Ceremonial for Bishops*.

13 By his prayer, humility and respect for his ministry, the priest should be an example of the living Christ for the people.

- Through the way he leads the liturgy, the priest encourages the participation of others. He is responsible for seeing that everything is done well through sharing different roles with

¹⁰ See GIRM, nos. 27, 92, 93; See Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of Sacraments Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum* on certain matters to be observed or to be avoided regarding the Most Holy Eucharist, March 25, 2004 (hereafter RS) no. 29.

others.¹¹

- The main tasks of the priest are to proclaim the opening prayer, the prayer over the gifts, the prayer after communion, and above all the eucharistic prayer. Acting in the person of Christ, he addresses these prayers to God in the name not only of this assembly but also of the entire people of God everywhere.¹²
- Sometimes the priest may also help the people to participate better by giving brief and helpful comments and introductions, for example, at the beginning of the celebration, before the readings and the eucharistic prayer, or at the dismissal.¹³
- The readings, including the gospel, are proclaimed by other ministers, but the homily is usually given by the priest (see numbers 82-84). Preaching is a very important part of the liturgy, especially when the community gathers for its Sunday celebration of the eucharist.¹⁴
- Priests who are present at a Eucharistic celebration should preferably take part as concelebrants, wearing the proper vestments. It is not fitting that priests participate in the Eucharist as one of the lay faithful except in rare and exceptional cases.¹⁵ For the guidelines regarding Eucharistic concelebration see numbers 137-154.

Deacon

14 From the earliest time in the Church, the deacon has had a major role among the other minister of the assembly. Together with bishops and priests deacons are to serve the people of God. The deacon serves the people of God especially through the liturgy, through proclamation of the word and through charity.¹⁶

- If the Book of the Gospels is used, the deacon may carry it before the priest in the entrance procession. He places the book on the altar and then, with the priest, kisses the altar.¹⁷ If he does not carry the Book of the Gospels during the en-

trance procession, he walks beside the priest and makes all the reverences together with him.

- The deacon's most important service at Mass comes during the liturgy of the word when he proclaims the gospel reading. At times, he may give the homily. His ministry also includes the praying of the intentions in the general intercessions.¹⁸
- In the liturgy of the eucharist, the deacon prepares the altar and the gifts. During the doxology at the end of the eucharistic prayer, he holds up the cup. He may help with the breaking of the bread and preparation of the cups at communion. He then helps with the giving of communion to the people, especially the giving of the cup.
- In his service, he helps the priest at the chair and at the altar. At times he is to give directions and invitations to the assembly, especially in regard to movement or posture.¹⁹ When incense is used, he helps with its preparation and may incense the priest, the people, and the Book of the Gospels as indicated.

Reader

15 In proclaiming the word of God, readers also make Christ present. God speaks to the assembly through them, and God's message, heard by the assembly, will depend very much on their belief in what they read, their preparation, and the way they read.

- It is better to have a different reader for each reading.²⁰
- A cantor or song leader leads the responsorial psalm, but, if necessary, it may be led by the reader.²¹ In this case it is preferable that someone lead it other than the reader of the first reading.
- A reader may carry the Book of the Gospels before the priest in the entrance procession and lay it on the altar. The Lectionary (the book of readings) is to be prepared at the ambo

¹¹ See LM, no. 38; see Congregation for Divine Worship, Circular Letter *Eucharistiae participationem*, to the presidents of the conferences of bishops, on the eucharistic prayers, 27 April 1973 (hereafter, EP), no. 17: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 346-347; see RS, no. 32.

¹² See GIRM, no. 30; see RS, 52.

¹³ See GIRM, no. 31; see LM, no. 42; see RS, no. 58.

¹⁴ See GIRM, no. 66.

¹⁵ See RS, no. 128.

¹⁶ See GIRM, no. 94; see Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium*, 21 November 1964 (hereafter, LG), no. 29; see The Roman Pontifical, *Rites of Ordination of Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons*, Second Typical Edition, 1993, no. 199; see RS, no. 34.

¹⁷ See GIRM, no. 173.

¹⁸ See GIRM, nos. 71, 94; see LM, no. 50.

¹⁹ See GIRM, no. 94.

(the reading stand) before Mass begins.²²

Minister of Music

16 A cantor or song leader and musicians, where possible a choir and a director of music, assists the assembly's full participation in singing the songs, responses, and acclamations.

- The cantor or song leader has the special task of involving the assembly in the proclamation of the Word of God in the psalms. The song leader usually does this by singing alone the psalm responses, alleluia or gospel acclamation and inviting the assembly to repeat what was sung. The song leader then usually sings the verses of the responsorial psalm and the verse of the gospel acclamation alone.²³ The song leader may also introduce all antiphons to the assembly and sing the verses of the psalms used alone.
- The cantor or song leader's function is to lead and encourage the assembly in singing, not to sing in place of the assembly. It is also a function of the song leader to introduce and teach new music to the people.²⁴
- The instruments not only support and encourage participation through song, but in their own right can powerfully assist reflection and express praise and many other human feelings before God. They must never distract the assembly from worship.
- A choir remains at all times a part of the assembly. It serves the assembly by leading it in sung prayer.

Ministers of Communion

17 Since the Mass is the paschal meal, it is right that the faithful who are prepared receive the Lord's body and blood as spiritual food as he commanded.²⁵ If a large number of people are to receive communion, the priest celebrant will frequently need assistance in distributing communion, so that the communion rite is not too long.

18 Priests are the ordinary ministers of communion. When there

²⁰ See GIRM, no. 109; see LM, no. 52.

²¹ See GIRM, no. 196; see LM, no. 22.

²² See GIRM, nos. 117, 120:d; 194-195.

²³ See GIRM, no. 102.

²⁴ See GIRM, no. 104.

are no sufficient number of ministers for distribution of Holy Communion extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion will assist in the giving of communion.²⁶

19 These extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion serve Christ present in the assembly by giving his body and blood to their sisters and brothers. They also help build up the family spirit of the community by taking communion to those members who are prevented by sickness, old age, or some other cause, from taking part in the Mass.

- There is no need for special ministers to be in the sanctuary for the whole celebration. They may come forward from their place among the people after the sign of peace.
- Should it be necessary to use the sacred bread from a previous Mass, one of them may bring the vessel containing the sacred bread to the altar from the tabernacle, reverently but without ceremony.
- When communion is being taken from Mass to the sick or those unable to leave their homes, a good time for the special ministers to take the pyx (a container for carrying the sacred bread to the sick) from the altar table and to leave the assembly is after the communion of the people. But they may also leave immediately after receiving communion themselves, or as part of the concluding procession of ministers. It is particularly fitting that when there are several such ministers, they leave in this procession.

Servers

20 The custom of altar servers is a long liturgical tradition. These servers help the celebration for the whole assembly by taking part in processions and by making sure that all that is required for the celebration is available at the right time, thus giving the priest freedom to make liturgical gestures.²⁷ Servers may either be male or female.

- Servers hold the book while the priest prays the prayers with open hands. They bring and hold such things as books, the censer (also called the *thurible*) and incense, water dish and

²⁵ See GIRM, no. 80.

²⁶ See RS, nos. 154, 157.

towel, plates and dishes, and microphones. They lead the entrance and concluding processions with the cross and candles. They go with the deacon (or priest) to the ambo and stand at his side while he proclaims the gospel reading. They may, on more solemn occasions, accompany the procession with the gifts.

- They look after the censer, prepare it for the priest or deacon, and themselves incense the assembly and other ministers.
- The number of servers will depend upon the circumstances and on what needs to be done. Especially at bigger celebrations, it is good to have a minister with responsibility for making sure that those things that need to be done are properly assigned and carried out. This minister is often called the *Master of Ceremony*.²⁸

Ushers

21 Saint Paul instructed the assembled community to “welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7). When convenient or useful it is fitting for ministers, commonly called *ushers*, to welcome people by greeting them at the door, making sure they are provided with all necessary books or papers, and helping them find their places.²⁹ The people are assembling as table guests of the Lord to share in a supper as sisters and brothers. They will appreciate this more if they are made welcome by these ministers representing the community and also if they are greeted informally by their neighbours.

- In small communities, a formal ministry of welcome may not be needed. But in larger assemblies, especially when there are visitors, special arrangements are necessary so those visitors and those unfamiliar with the community and its worship may be put at ease and drawn into the celebration.
- Ushers also help when, at any time during the celebration, members of the assembly become ill or otherwise need assistance.
- Ushers may assist with the collection and with processions.

²⁷ See GIRM, nos. 98; 187-193.

²⁸ See GIRM, no. 106.

THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION AND ITS SYMBOL

22 In the liturgy, by means of signs which are clearly seen and understood, people are made holy.³⁰ This work of the liturgy is helped and bears more fruit if the things used, the words spoken, and the actions done are all in good taste.

23 Occasionally, the symbolism or meaning of bread and wine, breaking and sharing, eating and drinking, standing, kneeling, bowing, and greeting should be explained. It is most fitting to do this at the time of the homily.

GESTURE AND POSTURE

24 The active participation of the faithful takes place first of all, within themselves, when their thoughts reflect what they hear, do, and say during the liturgy. It is also shown outwardly in and through their way of standing, sitting, kneeling and in other gestures. In this way they express their inner participation in the liturgy. The participation from both within and outwardly shows the living God whom the assembly worships and who is present, though not seen, except through the outward signs used in the celebration.³¹

25 Since worship involves people, in every part of their being, they worship God with their bodies and feelings as well as their minds and spirits, with their hands and feet as well as their eyes and ears. The non-spoken parts of the liturgy can express what cannot be expressed in words and, at times, can strengthen the spoken word. Because of their power, the gestures and postures of the liturgy deserve as much care as do the words that are used in the liturgy.

26 The people are called as members of a community, not as separate individuals. A Christian assembly that worships “with one heart and soul” (Acts 4:32) will use the same postures together as a sign of its unity.³²

- Actions done together by the whole assembly express its unity and togetherness in the Body of Christ. Some actions and gestures are done by the whole community together, for example, making the sign of the cross, standing to pray, sitting to listen, bowing to show reverence or respect, moving

²⁹ See GIRM, no. 105:c, d.

³⁰ See SC, art 7.

forward to present and receive, exchanging the sign of peace.

- For this reason it is not fitting for individuals to make devotional gestures (such as genuflecting before or after communion) that can disturb or distract the assembly.
- Other actions are done by the priest alone, for example, praying with hands raised and open, blessing with hands extended over the people, showing the consecrated bread and wine to the people, breaking the bread.

Posture

27 Many cultures share a common understanding of the meaning of the postures of standing, sitting, and kneeling. One rises to greet people, to show respect to someone important, to express readiness for action, or when caught up with excitement. In Christian liturgical tradition, standing is the basic posture of an Easter people lifted up to greet their risen Lord. The assembly stands at Mass, for example, during the proclamation of the gospel reading.³³

28 One sits to listen, to rest, to watch. At Mass it is proper, for example, to sit during the homily and at the preparation of the gifts.³⁴

29 In Christian tradition, kneeling is an acknowledgement that we were created by God. It can also be a sign of penitence for sin, humility, reverence, and adoration.

- Numbers 59-136 of these Guidelines give the more usual postures used at Mass.
- This bishops' conference may decide when the assembly should stand, sit, or kneel at Mass, in accord with local cultures and the character of the rite.³⁵

Sacred Dance

30 In most of the cultures of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, dancing by groups in traditional costumes is used at more important celebrations in the lives of the people. The meaning of these dances can well express the joy, happiness, and unity of the people at Mass. These dances are especially fitting at the processions in the Mass: the entrance procession, the procession with the bread and wine and other gifts, and at the concluding procession. It

³¹ See Congregation of Rites, Instruction *Musicae sacrae*, on music in the liturgy, 5 March 1967 (hereafter, MS), no. 15; AAS 59 (1967) PP. 304-305.

³² See GIRM, no. 42.

may on occasion be very fitting to use dance as part of the Gospel procession.

- The dance and words that go with it are to fit the purpose and meaning of the procession at which they are used.
- If a traditional *singsing* is used at the entrance procession or for the procession with the gifts, it is not necessary to use another entrance or "offertory" song at the end of the procession. For example, a traditional *singsing* used at the entrance procession serves fittingly as the opening song for the Mass. If dance is used as part of the Gospel procession (see numbers 81 and 144) there is no need for another Gospel acclamation. The dance and song themselves serve that purpose.

Other Postures and Gestures

31 Other gestures used in the celebration of the Mass include bowing, kissing, genuflecting, and striking the breast. Each of these gestures has a natural meaning in human experience and in Christian liturgical tradition, but this may change considerably according to culture and time. Bowing may be seen as a natural and gracious sign of respect, as, for instance, when passing the altar. Kissing is a deeper sign of reverence and respect. Genuflecting was a gesture of reverence, obedience, and adoration. It is now generally used for the veneration of Christ present in the eucharistic bread and wine. Striking the breast is a sign of humility.

- During the Mass the focus of attention is the altar not the tabernacle. Ministers, such as readers and servers, moving to or around the sanctuary do not genuflect to the tabernacle. Usually, however, they do bow to the altar when they pass in front of it.
- This bishops' conference may decide on other postures and gestures in accord with local culture and the character of the rite.

WORDS

32 Because the celebration of Mass is a community activity, the priest and all others who have special parts to play in it need to give

³³ See GIRM, no. 43.

³⁴ See GIRM, no. 43.

³⁵ See GIRM, no. 43.

careful thought to the different kinds of spoken communication. Their way of speaking is to fit the nature of the text, the size of the building, the kind of the celebration, and the language being used.³⁶ Words are a means of communication. They are to be recited with attention to their meaning and purpose.

Sacred Scripture

33 Among the most important spoken words of the Mass are the biblical readings (see nos. 76-77 and 82 below). Through them God continues to speak to his people. By the power of the Spirit in the word, people are strengthened to witness to Christ.³⁷

The Priest Celebrant's Prayers

34 Among all the words spoken by the priest during the Mass, the eucharistic prayer is of first importance as the high point of the whole celebration. Next are the other prayers: the opening prayer, the prayer over the gifts, and the prayer after communion.

- The priest alone says these prayers, praying them in the person of Christ. They are addressed to God in the name of the entire Church and on behalf of the whole assembly.³⁸
- When the assembly is asked to pray by the invitation *Let us pray*, all keep some moments of silence in which they place themselves in God's presence and make their personal petitions.
- By a very old tradition of the Church, the prayers have a Trinitarian structure. That is they are addressed to God (*Father, God, Lord*) with and through the Son as mediator, in the unity and power of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit who gathers the Church, maintains it in communion, and helps it to pray.
- The assembly makes the prayer its own and expresses its "yes" in the acclamation *Amen*.

Common Prayers

35 Some prayers belong to the whole assembly and so are recited or sung by the priest and congregation together. These are, for example, the acclamations, the profession of faith, and the Lord's Prayer.³⁹

³⁶ See EP, no. 17: AAS 65 (1973), PP. 346-347; see GIRM, no. 18.

³⁷ See LM, no. 12.

Sung Texts

36 There are different kinds of prayer that by their very nature or because of their use or place in the liturgy are best when sung.

- The psalms used in the liturgy, for example the responsorial psalm, are songs and poems of praise intended for singing. The opening and communion antiphons, when used, are likewise texts that by their very nature should be sung, along with fitting psalm verses.
- The acclamations call for the whole assembly to take them up and to sing them with enthusiasm.
- On Sundays, feasts, or more solemn occasions, some parts of the liturgy like the eucharistic prayer or at least its preface may be sung. Since the eucharistic prayer is the central prayer and high point of the Mass, the singing of this prayer can show the more solemn nature of the day or occasion being celebrated.

Invitations and Introductions

37 At certain moments in the Mass, the deacon or the priest give invitations which call for the people's action, response, or silent preparation for prayer. Also the priest may help the people's participation by brief and well-prepared comments.⁴⁰

- All such introductions should be prepared according to whom is present and what is celebrated.
- Invitations may be expressed in the words as they appear in the liturgical books or in similar words.
- Invitations intended to be followed immediately by a response from the people should end in such a way that the people will know what to respond.

Private Prayers

38 Some prayers in the Mass are personal prayers of the priest. These are private prayers and are said quietly.⁴¹ This also allows the faithful to pray silently and in their own way.

³⁸ See GIRM, no. 30; see RS, no. 51.

³⁹ See GIRM, no. 34-36.

Music

39 Music is part of the liturgical action. It draws people together and makes them into an assembly of worshipers. For this reason it is a most important part of worship and is to serve the people, helping them to worship God.⁴²

40 In choosing music for liturgy, those responsible for the music must choose music that is suitable to the words or their meaning, and to the purpose of the music at a given time in the Mass.

- The main sources for the texts of the liturgical music are Scripture and the prayers of the liturgy.
- Music is provided in the Sacramentary (the mass book) as a model, especially when singing will be done without instruments. Local composers should try to write suitable music that fits the culture and traditions of the people.
- Many forms or types of music are used in the liturgy according to the nature of the various parts of the Mass, for example, the responsorial psalm, acclamations, responses, and hymns.

41 Instrumental music may be used to give a particular sense or feeling to the celebration and especially to create an atmosphere that leads to recollection, stillness, or silent prayer. Many different instruments could be used to help with this.

42 While music is an important part of every liturgical celebration, not every liturgy is celebrated with the same degree of solemnity. Sundays and solemnities, for example, are more important than weekdays and lesser feast days and therefore Sundays and major feasts need greater preparation. Other celebrations are planned according to the community's needs and abilities.

43 It is important that the music chosen reflect the nature of the season or occasion. The choice should contribute to developing a good music collection for the community. If it will be used regularly, it must be good enough so that it can be used again and again without boring people.

44 The choice of music begins with the liturgical texts them-

⁴⁰ See GIRM, no. 31; see EP, no 14: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 345-346.

⁴¹ See GIRM, no. 33.

⁴² See SC, art. 112, 123.

selves. The first concern is for those parts of the Mass which are most important. Therefore, in the liturgy of the word, the first concern is the responsorial psalm and the acclamation before the gospel. In the liturgy of the eucharist, the first concern is the *Sanctus*, the memorial acclamation, and the *Amen*. Other important times for music in every kind of celebration are the dialogues between the priest and the people (for example, the preface dialogue and the final dismissal).⁴³

- Numbers 59-135 of these Guidelines make recommendations as to which parts of the Mass may or should be sung.

SILENCE

45 Silence has, as in all communication, a most important part to play in the communication between God and the community of faith. Its purpose is to allow for the voice of the Holy Spirit to be heard in the hearts of the people of God and to enable them to unite personal prayer more closely with the word of God and the public voice of the Church.⁴⁴ During liturgical silence all respond in their own way. They recollect themselves, thinking about what has been heard or seen. They petition and praise God in their hearts.⁴⁵

46 Liturgical silence is not merely an absence of words, a pause, or an empty space. It is a stillness, a quieting of spirits, a making of time to take into one's self and respond to what is heard or seen. Hurrying on to the next part of the Mass, which therefore keeps the silence from happening, should be avoided. The dialogue between God and the community of faith, taking place through the Holy Spirit, requires times of silence. The amount of time for silence must fit the assembly. It will be different when there are mostly children at Mass from when there are mostly adults. But it is always needed, so that all can take to heart the word of God and respond to it in prayer.⁴⁶

- At the beginning of the rite of blessing and sprinkling of water, the people pause to ask for God's blessing on the water as a sign of baptism. In the penitential rite, they pause to remember their sinfulness and the loving kindness of God in Christ. At the opening prayer, they put themselves and their

⁴³ See LM, nos. 19-20; see GIRM, no. 40; see MS, nos. 7, 29: AAS 59 (1967), pp. 302, 308-309.

deepest needs and desires before God. After the readings and homily, they take God's word, think about it in their hearts like Mary (see Luke 2:19), and apply it to their lives. Before communion, they prepare themselves to receive the Lord and afterwards they praise God in silent prayer.⁴⁷

- Liturgical silence is an activity of the whole group, shared by all present. They support and encourage each other in prayerful unity. This demands a stillness and prayerful thoughtfulness, which the priest celebrant and all ministers can help to bring about.

MATERIALS AND OBJECTS

47 Materials and objects used in the eucharist are to be “truly worthy and beautiful,” and suitable for sacred use.⁴⁸ The greatest care and feeling are necessary, even in the smallest things, to bring about “a noble simplicity and elegance.”⁴⁹

Bread and Wine

48 The bread and wine for the Eucharist is to be recognisable as food and drink.

- Bread made from wheat flour should be unleaven and should “have the appearance of food.” In colour, taste, texture, and smell it should be able to be identified as bread by those who are to share it.⁵⁰ This is just as necessary when small individual breads are used.
- Wine should be natural and pure, from the fruit of the grape.⁵¹ To be seen and recognised for what it is and for what it signifies, it can help greatly if the wine is brought to the altar in clear glass containers and is of a colour to be clearly distinguished from water.

Vessels or Containers

49 Vessels or containers for the bread and wine should be made of worthy and long lasting materials. Their design may be in keeping with the Melanesian culture and with their use in the liturgy.⁵²

⁴⁴ See Congregation for Divine Worship, General Instruction of the Liturgy of Hours, 2 February 1971 (hereafter, GILH), no. 202; see EP, no. 18: AAS 65 (1973), p. 347; see GIRM, no. 45.

⁴⁵ See EP, no. 18: AAS 65 (1973), p. 347; see GIRM, no. 56.

⁴⁶ See LM, no. 28; see GIRM, no. 56.

⁴⁷ See GIRM, no. 45.

- The symbolism of the many sharing in the one bread and one cup is more clearly expressed when all the bread is placed in a single container and all the wine in one cup. Additional containers may be necessary for the distribution of communion and may be brought to the altar at the breaking of the bread.
- It is better if the containers for the body of Christ look like bread-plates or dishes rather than cups. Cups for the blood of Christ need to be large enough to be shared, easily handled between minister and communicant, and easily tilted by the communicant for the purpose of drinking.
- A suitable container with water and a bowl, or simply a large bowl with water, may be used for the washing of the priest's hands. The water presented with the gifts for mixing with the wine should not usually be used for this purpose. A fairly large amount of water and a towel will be necessary if the priest is to do more than wet the tips of his fingers.

Altar

50 “At the altar the sacrifice of the cross is made present under sacramental signs. It is also the table of the Lord, and the people of God are called together to share in it. The altar is, as well, the centre of the thanksgiving that the eucharist accomplishes.”⁵³

- The design of the altar will reflect its place as the focus of attention during the liturgy of the eucharist and its function within the liturgical assembly. Its size and proportions should fit the normal Sunday eucharistic celebration. It should be able to hold the plates and cups for the communion of the assembly.
- Out of respect for the memorial meal, which is celebrated at it, the altar is covered with a cloth throughout the eucharist. This should be of white colour, and the material should be of good quality. At the preparation of the gifts, a corporal, large enough to hold all the containers that are to be used in the sacred meal is spread on top of the altar.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ See GIRM, nos. 288, 325, 326.

⁴⁹ GIRM, no. 351.

⁵⁰ See GIRM, no. 321; see RS, no. 48.

⁵¹ See GIRM, no. 322; see RS, no. 50.

⁵² See GIRM, nos. 327-329, 332.

- The candles may be placed on the altar or, better, near or around it so as not to distract from the sacred vessels or block the view of the participants.⁵⁵
- The table of the altar itself holds only what is necessary for the celebration, for example, the bread-plate and cup and Sacramentary.⁵⁶ These things remain on the altar only for as long as needed. Flowers may be placed near or around the altar, but not, as a rule, on it.⁵⁷

Ambo or “Table of the Word”

51 When the Scriptures are read in the church, God speaks to the assembly. In the proclamation of the gospel reading, Christ himself is present in his word. The place from which the Scriptures are proclaimed is regarded as the “table of God’s Word” and is therefore a symbol of the great dignity of that word.⁵⁸

- In accord with its dignity, the ambo is used only for the proclamation of God’s word in the Scriptures, including the singing of the responsorial psalm, the homily and general intercessions, and also the Easter proclamation (*Exultet*).⁵⁹
- The design of the ambo is to reflect its place as the focus of attention during the liturgy of the word and its function within the liturgical assembly. The ambo is to be somewhat elevated, fixed, and of noble design, putting it in clear relationship to the altar.⁶⁰
- Community announcements should be made from somewhere other than the ambo.

Chair

52 Christ is really present in the person of the minister who presides at the liturgy. The chair stands as a sign of the priest celebrant’s office. It is a sign of unity, leadership, and service to the gathered assembly. Its place in the gathering space should allow the priest to be seen easily and heard by all in the assembly.⁶¹

- From the chair the priest leads the introductory and concluding rites and presides over the liturgy of the word. He may also give the homily at the chair, sitting or standing, and say the prayer after communion.⁶²

⁵³ GIRM, no. 296.

⁵⁴ See GIRM, no. 304.

⁵⁵ See GIRM, no. 307.

Cross

53 The paschal mystery celebrated in the eucharistic liturgy was accomplished through the crucifixion and resurrection. Christians glory in the cross of the Lord (see Galatians 6:14). As a constant reminder of the cost of salvation and the symbol of Christian hope, the cross, with the image of Christ on it, should be visible to the entire assembly during the eucharist. It may be carried in procession, or there may be a fixed cross near the altar or a cross on it.⁶³ Care should be taken not to have several crosses in the place of worship. Statues or other images should not distract from the cross.

Books

54 Books used in the celebration of the eucharist serve to communicate God’s presence to the assembly in the word or to speak the Church’s response to God in praise and adoration.⁶⁴

- Books from which the word of God is proclaimed are treated with respect and given honour. They need to be of large size, strong binding, and noble design. Other books, including the Sacramentary, while worthy in appearance, need not draw attention to themselves. Typed papers and leaflets take away from the good appearance of liturgical action and should never be used by ministers as they exercise their particular ministry.⁶⁵

Vesture or Clothing for the Liturgy

55 Vestments serve several purposes in the celebration of the eucharist. As special clothing, for example, they show the solemn nature of the eucharistic meal. Specific ministers in the assembly are identified through the kinds of vestments they wear.⁶⁶

- The vestment common to all ordained ministers is the alb, or as approved by this bishops’ conference, a white cassock or white habit of religious.
- The chasuble, worn with alb or white cassock or white habit and stole, is the proper vestment of the priest. It may be

⁵⁶ See GIRM, no. 306.

⁵⁷ See GIRM, no. 305.

⁵⁸ See GIRM, no. 29; see LM, no. 32.

⁵⁹ See GIRM, no. 309; see LM, no. 33.

⁶⁰ See GIRM, no. 309; see LM, no. 32.

⁶¹ See GIRM, nos. 27, 310.

made from either natural or synthetic fabrics that are worthy and beautiful. Beauty should come from the cleanliness, quality and cut of the fabric as much as from its decoration.⁶⁷ The *closed chasuble* worn instead of the alb and chasuble is not an approved liturgical attire in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

- The deacon wears an alb or white cassock or white habit, stole on the left shoulder to the right side, and dalmatic. However, the dalmatic need not be worn.⁶⁸
- Other ministers may wear an alb or what is approved for or the custom of particular dioceses.⁶⁹

Incense

56 Incense has been used since before Christian times both as a sign of respect and honour and as a symbol of prayer rising before God. Incense represents both the otherness of God and the cloud which was the sign of God's glory and presence in the midst of the Israelites. It can contribute powerfully to a sense of mystery. Smelling sweet as it does, it represents the prayers of the Church rising before God as an acceptable offering (see Psalm 141:2; Book of Revelation 8:4).

- Incense, which when burning appeals to our sight and to our sense of smell, should be used in such amounts as to be readily seen and smelled.
- In the introductory rites, incense may be carried in the entrance procession and used at the veneration of the altar. In the liturgy of the word, it may be carried in the gospel procession and used to venerate the Book of the Gospels. In the liturgy of the eucharist, it may be used at the preparation of gifts to honour the bread and wine and the altar and to acknowledge the presence and action of Christ in the priest celebrant and the other members of the assembly. It may also be used when the consecrated bread and again when the consecrated wine are shown after the words of the Lord in the eucharistic prayer.⁷⁰

⁶² See GIRM, nos. 124, 165; see LM, no. 26.

⁶³ See GIRM, nos. 122, 308.

⁶⁴ See LM, no. 35.

⁶⁵ See LM, no. 37.

⁶⁶ See GIRM, no. 335; see RS, no. 121.

ADAPTING THE CELEBRATION TO PARTICULAR CIRCUMSTANCES

57 The General Instruction of the Roman Missal and these Guidelines present the celebration of the eucharist, especially the principal celebration of the Sunday Mass of the local community. This celebration requires certain necessary things, the participation of an assembly, and a number of ministers and musicians.⁷¹

58 But if every Mass were celebrated in exactly the same way and with the same degree of solemnity, then the Sunday celebration would cease to be truly the most important celebration of Mass. The revised liturgical books clearly suppose that every celebration, in whatever circumstances, will fully take account of the needs, abilities, and situation of the community which assembles for it.⁷²

- This bishops' conference may decide on adapting the celebration in accord with local culture and the character of the rites.

⁶⁷ See GIRM, nos. 337, 343-344; See RS, no. 123.

⁶⁸ See GIRM, nos. 119:b, 338, 340; See RS, no. 125.

⁶⁹ See GIRM, no. 339.

II INTRODUCTORY RITES

59 In the introductory rites the assembly is called together in Christ and established again as the Church. The risen Lord is present in the midst of the assembly, which becomes visible as the Body of Christ. Thus, the assembly itself is the first way in which Christ is present in the liturgy. The function of these rites is to enable people, coming together from different communities, with many kinds of concerns, and different ways of life to become aware of itself again as a gathered community, eager and ready to listen to the word and to celebrate the sacrament.⁷³

- The introductory rites are led from the chair rather than from the altar or ambo.⁷⁴

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

60 The assembly's worship begins with the opening song and procession. The opening song and procession are to help to create a sense of celebration, a sense of community, and make the assembly aware of the way Christ is present in each celebration.⁷⁵

- The opening song should be such that everyone is able in some way to join in singing it. It may be an antiphon and psalm or another song that fits the day, the feast, or the season. When no singing is possible, the antiphon may be used by including it as part of the opening remarks that may follow the greeting.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ See GIRM, nos. 113, 115-116.

⁷¹ See GIRM, nos. 113, 115-116.

⁷² See GIRM, no. 352.

⁷³ See SC, art. 7; see GIRM, nos. 27, 46.

⁷⁴ See GIRM, no. 124.

⁷⁵ See GIRM, no. 47.

- A procession of ministers through and from the assembly shows the relationship of the priest celebrant and the other ministers to the congregation.
- Depending on the occasion, the procession may be led by ministers carrying the censer with burning incense, the cross, and two candles or flowers. Other ministers, such as readers and communion ministers, then the deacon or reader carrying the Book of the Gospels, if it is to be used, may follow them. The other deacons, if there are any, and the priest then follow. If the Book of the Gospels has been carried, it is placed on the altar upon arrival in the sanctuary.
- Only the Book of the Gospel is carried in procession. The Lectionary or a Bible are never carried in procession. The Lectionary is to be at the ambo from the beginning of the celebration.⁷⁷
- On more special or solemn occasions, there may be a procession led by a *singsing* group. In this case, the singing of the group serves as the opening song for the celebration. The assembly participates by turning towards the procession and watching and listening as the group leads in the ministers.
- Generally, everyone stands from the opening procession through to the opening prayer.⁷⁸

61 The altar is an abiding symbol of Christ and the centre of the eucharistic action.⁷⁹

- The priest, deacon, and other ministers in the procession, bow to the altar on arrival as a sign of reverence. If a tabernacle containing the Blessed Sacrament is in the sanctuary, they genuflect toward the tabernacle.⁸⁰ Ministers who are carrying a liturgical object (for example, a cross, book, or candle) bow their heads in place of a genuflection. Afterward, the priest and deacon then make an additional reverence to the altar with a kiss.⁸¹
- On more solemn occasions, additional honour may be given to the altar by use of incense.⁸²

⁷⁶ See GIRM, no. 48; see CP, no. 40a: AAS 62 (1970), p. 661.

⁷⁷ See GIRM 118b; 120d

⁷⁸ See GIRM, no. 43.

⁷⁹ See Euch Myst, no. 24: AAS 59 (1970), p. 661.

⁸⁰ See GIRM, nos. 122, 274.

- After the procession and the kissing of the altar, the priest and deacon proceed to the chair. From there the priest greets the people and leads the opening rite.⁸³

GREETING

62 After making the sign of the cross together, the priest and people exchange formal greetings and in doing so they declare that the Lord is present among them.⁸⁴

- As the first dialogue between priest and people, the greeting and response should be both warm and reverent. The ordinary greetings that are used in day to day human exchange, and which do not refer to the presence of Christ, are not suitable because they distract from the sacred nature of the exchange.

63 The Mass of the day may be introduced at this point. A very brief and well-prepared comment can help to create a suitable atmosphere and lead into a good celebration.⁸⁵

- At this point strangers, guests, and special groups may briefly be welcomed to the celebration.
- When a large number of children are present, they may be specially greeted at this point.⁸⁶
- Though the introduction will normally be the function of the priest, on occasion it may be fitting for the deacon or some other member of the assembly to do this.

OPENING RITE

64 Only one of the following opening rites is chosen. The choice may be made on the basis of the liturgical season, the feast, the special occasion, or to fit the assembly that gathers for the celebration. Each of the opening rites begins with an invitation by

⁸¹ See GIRM, nos. 49, 123, 173, 274.

⁸² See GIRM, nos. 123, 277.

⁸³ See GIRM, nos. 124, 174.

⁸⁴ See GIRM, no. 50.

⁸⁵ See GIRM, no. 50, 124; see EP, no. 14: AAS 65 (1973), pp. 345-346.

⁸⁶ See Congregation for Divine Worship, *Directory for Masses with Children*, 1 November 1973 (hereafter, DMC), no. 17: AAS 66 (1974), p. 35.

the priest. Sometimes this invitation might become part of the introductory remarks that follow the greeting.

i. Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Water

65 As they assemble, the people of God remember that the risen Christ is with them. They see themselves as reconciled sinners and prepare to receive the gift of Word and Sacrament. The blessing and sprinkling of water serves as a reminder of Easter and baptism. God is thanked for saving us through the gift of water and is asked to continue to give forgiveness and life.

- Because of its emphasis on Easter and baptism, it is most fitting to do the blessing and sprinkling during the season of Easter.⁸⁷
- If the greeting and blessing take place at the door, the priest may sprinkle the people during the entrance procession.

ii. Penitential Rite

66 In the penitential rite the assembly, gathered in God's presence, recognises its sinfulness and confesses the mystery of Christ's love. This may take one of two forms, both of which conclude with a prayer of absolution.

- The first form is a general confession, *I confess to Almighty God*. It calls upon the support of the communion of saints and, specifically, of the community gathered for the eucharist.
- The second form is made up of verses of the penitential psalms.
- The season of Lent may be a most fitting time to choose the penitential rite.

iii. Litany of Praise

67 The litany of praise is addressed to Christ our Redeemer. A number are given in the Sacramentary and can be used or followed as examples. When preparing a litany of praise following these examples, the words must centre on Christ and his mercy.

- The litany of praise is sung or recited. The verses may be sung by a cantor or choir.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ See GIRM, no. 51.

iv. Kyrie

68 The *Kyrie* is an ancient chant by which the assembly acclaims the Lord and asks for mercy.⁸⁹ It may be used in English, in the original Greek, or in any other language.

- It is by nature a chant and, when used, is ideally sung with the cantor or choir beginning and with everyone repeating the chant.

v. Other Opening Rites

69 Another opening rite may be chosen for special occasions, and according to the liturgical books, or according to the culture of the people or group concerned. These rites are used on certain special feasts, when the liturgy of the hours is combined with the Mass, or when special rites are celebrated during the Mass, for example, baptism, marriage, or funeral rites. Sometimes, for example, on Passion Sunday, or on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, when an entrance procession is part of this opening rite itself, the opening rite follows the form given for these days.

GLORIA

69 The *Gloria* is one of the Church's most ancient, solemn hymns.

- The *Gloria* is by nature a festive hymn and is ideally sung entirely, or in part, by the people.⁹⁰
- The *Gloria* is sung or said on Sundays outside the seasons of Advent and Lent, on feasts and solemnities, and at special celebrations of a more solemn character.⁹¹
- The *Gloria* is not to be replaced by some other hymn that simply has the words "Glory" in it.⁹²

OPENING PRAYER

⁸⁸ See GIRM, no. 52.

⁸⁹ See GIRM, no. 52.

⁹⁰ See GIRM, no. 53.

⁹¹ See GIRM, no. 53.

71 The opening prayer completes the introductory rites. Through petition to God, it sets the tone of the celebration and prepares the assembly to hear the word of God.⁹³

- As the ending of the introductory rites, an opening prayer is always used. It may be sung or said.
- After the invitation *Let us pray*, all are quiet for some moments during which they place themselves in God's presence and make their personal petitions.
- The opening prayer always ends with a full trinitarian conclusion

⁹² See GIRM, no. 53.

⁹³ See GIRM, no. 54.

III LITURGY OF THE WORD

72 The Mass is made up of the **liturgy of the word** and the **liturgy of the eucharist**, which are so closely connected as to form one act of worship. In the word of God the divine covenant is announced; in the eucharist the new and everlasting covenant is made real and renewed.⁹⁴

73 The chosen people entered into a special covenant with God at Sinai, a covenant that was renewed and fulfilled on Calvary. By hearing the word proclaimed in worship, the faithful enter into the unending communication between God and the covenant people, a communication sealed in the sharing of the eucharistic food. The meaning of communion is proclaimed in the word; the message of Scripture is made present once again in the communion banquet or meal. The proclamation of the word is essential to the Mass and is at its very heart.

74 The celebration of the liturgy of the word has several parts and requires several ministers, but care is necessary so that human words and actions do not block the divine word from being heard. In this communication with the Lord, the people listen to the word, reflect on it in silence, respond to it in song, and take it into their lives to live it. Moved by it, they profess their faith and pray for the needs of the Church and the world.

75 The role of the various ministers in the liturgy of the word, and guidelines for their service, are given in the Introduction to the Lectionary and in the first part of these Guidelines (see numbers 15, 16, and 20).

⁹⁴ See GIRM, no. 28; see LM, no. 10.

- The assembly sits from the beginning of the liturgy of the word until the gospel acclamation.

BIBLICAL READINGS

76 In the word of God handed down in the Scriptures, the community of faith even now hears God speaking to it. For this reason the biblical readings and Scripture chants may not be omitted, shortened, or replaced by non-biblical texts.⁹⁵

77 The proclamation of the gospel reading is the high point of the liturgy of the word. The other readings from the Old and New Testaments prepare the assembly for this proclamation.⁹⁶

- When a prayerful silence is observed before or after a reading, the whole assembly is to take part in it. The reader does not move to or from the ambo during the period of silence.
- When it would be helpful, the liturgy of the word may be introduced by a brief word on the background of the readings. Such comments, whether from the priest or another minister, should always be short and well prepared.⁹⁷
- After reading the text the reader pauses briefly then says *The word of the Lord*. The conclusion to the first and second readings, *The word of the Lord*, may be sung, even by someone other than the reader, so as to invite from the faithful a sung response of gratitude for the word of God.⁹⁸

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

78 The responsorial psalm follows the first reading and is an essential part of the liturgy of the word. After hearing and taking to heart God's word, the assembly responds with words from the psalms, which are themselves God-given. Psalms, which have expressed the faith and feelings of God's people over the centuries, are chosen by the Church to express a response, whether of wonder

⁹⁵ See GIRM, no. 57; see LM, no. 12; see RS, nos. 61-62.

⁹⁶ See GIRM, no. 60; see LM, no. 13.

⁹⁷ See LM, no. 15.

⁹⁸ See GIRM, no. 59; see LM, no. 18.

and praise, repentance and sorrow, hope and trust, or joy and happiness.

79 The assembly is to be helped and encouraged to hear and understand God's word in the psalms, to make them their own prayer, and to experience them as the prayer of the Church.

- The psalms, the songs and hymns of Israel, are ideally sung. This may be done in different ways. The preferred form is *responsorial*, in which the cantor or psalmist sings the verses and the whole assembly takes up the response. In the *direct form*, which is also permitted, there is no response and the cantor, or the whole assembly together, sings the verses.⁹⁹
- Even when it is impossible to sing the psalm, it may be possible to support the reading of the psalm with instrumental music. Psalms should always be spoken in a manner that leads to meditation.¹⁰⁰
- The psalm may not be replaced by another hymn.¹⁰¹

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

80 The *Alleluia* or gospel acclamation is a song of welcome which expresses the people's greeting of Christ and their faith in his presence as he comes to speak to them in the gospel.¹⁰²

81 The gospel acclamation has traditionally been used during the gospel procession, when the Book of the Gospels is carried from the altar to the ambo accompanied by candles or flowers and incense.

- The *Alleluia* or gospel acclamation looks forward to the gospel reading. It does not respond to the reading that has just been heard.
- If incense is to be used at the gospel reading, it is prepared after the preceding reading and before the gospel procession.
- The deacon, who is to proclaim the gospel reading, bows before the priest celebrant and asks for a blessing. If the

⁹⁹ See LM, no. 20.

¹⁰⁰ See LM, no. 22.

¹⁰¹ See GIRM, no. 61; see LM, no. 19.

¹⁰² See GIRM, no. 62; see LM, no. 23.

priest reads the gospel, he bows before the altar and silently prays the prayer.

- The assembly stands while the procession moves to the ambo and the *Alleluia* is sung.
- As a song of welcome, everyone present sings the *Alleluia* or gospel acclamation. The verse may be sung by a cantor or choir or by everyone. If it cannot be sung, it may be omitted.¹⁰³
- On more special or solemn occasions, a *singsing* group, coming from the entrance of the church, may dance towards the altar and bring the Book of the Gospels from the altar to the ambo. In this case it may be better for the assembly to sit and watch as the group comes in and carries the Book of the Gospels from the altar to the ambo. The assembly then stands at the conclusion of the procession. The song of the group is the gospel acclamation and no other acclamation is needed.

GOSPEL READING

82 Because the proclamation of the gospel reading is the high point of the liturgy of the word, it is given special marks of honour. Its proclamation is reserved to a deacon or, in his absence, the priest. The one who proclaims the gospel reading prepares himself. The deacon receives a blessing, the priest prepares by prayer. The people stand to hear the gospel reading and acclaim Christ present and speaking to them. Servers with candles or flowers may stand on each side of the ambo, and the Book of the Gospels or the Lectionary may be incensed before the text is proclaimed. If the Book of the Gospels is used, it is carried in procession from the altar to the ambo. And at the end of the gospel reading, the one who has read it gives the Book of the Gospels or the Lectionary a kiss.¹⁰⁴

- The gospel reading is never omitted.¹⁰⁵
- A deacon proclaims the gospel reading. If no deacon is present, a priest other than the one presiding proclaims it. Only if no deacon or other priest is present is it to be read by the

¹⁰³ See GIRM, no. 63:c; see LM, no. 23.

priest who presides.

- The deacon (or priest) greets the people with *The Lord be with you*, and while announcing the gospel passage he makes the sign of the cross first on the book, then on his forehead, lips, and breast. The faithful also sign themselves in this way and then respond, *Glory to you Lord*.¹⁰⁶
- Even if the gospel reading itself is not sung, it may be helpful to sing the greeting and title of the gospel reading at the beginning and *The gospel of the Lord* at the end, so as to allow the people to sing their acclamation.¹⁰⁷ On more solemn occasions, it may be fitting to repeat the sung *Alleluia* at the end of the gospel reading.

HOMILY

83 The homily is an essential part of the liturgy and a necessary source of nourishment for the Christian life. By means of it the mysteries of the faith and the guiding principles of Christian living are explained, most often from the Scriptures proclaimed but also from the other texts and rites of the liturgy.¹⁰⁸

84 In the readings, God's word is made present to people of every age and condition, but the homily, as a living explanation of the word, helps the faithful to take the word into their lives and to live it. The homily is to lead the faithful to an awareness of the presence of Christ here and now in the eucharist and to help them to live his death and resurrection in their daily lives.¹⁰⁹

85 If it is to fulfil its purpose, the homily must be the fruit of meditation. It must be carefully prepared. It must not be too long. It must fit the needs of those present.¹¹⁰ For this to happen it may be helpful if the priest prepares the homily in shared reflection and prayer with some members of the congregation.

- On Sundays there must be a homily at all Masses celebrated with a congregation. It may not be omitted without a serious reason.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ See GIRM, no. 175.

¹⁰⁵ See GIRM, no. 59.

¹⁰⁶ See GIRM, nos. 134, 175.

¹⁰⁷ See LM, no. 17.

¹⁰⁸ See GIRM, no. 65; see SC, art. 52.

¹⁰⁹ See GIRM, no. 29; see LM, no. 24; see RS no. 67.

- A homily is strongly recommended on the weekdays of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter and on other occasions when there are many people present.¹¹²
- The priest who presides ordinarily gives the homily. A deacon or, at a concelebrated Mass, one of the concelebrating priests may be invited to preach.¹¹³
- It is not advisable to make the sign of the cross before and after the homily. The homily is part of the Mass and people have already blessed themselves and received the greeting at the beginning of the Mass.
- The assembly sits during the homily.
- The priest celebrant gives the homily while standing or sitting at his chair or from the ambo. Other homilists use the ambo.¹¹⁴
- It is good to have a period of silence following the homily so that the people may take the word of God to heart and prepare a response to it in prayer.¹¹⁵

PROFESSION OF FAITH OR CREED

86 In the profession of faith or creed, the assembly united in faith, responds and saying “yes” to the word of God heard in the readings and in the homily. And before they celebrate the mystery of faith in the eucharist, they express their faith in the words of the creed.¹¹⁶

- The priest and people together recite the creed on Sundays and solemnities. It may also be said at other solemn celebrations.¹¹⁷
- Either the Apostles’ Creed or the Nicene Creed may be used. The creed may not be replaced by a hymn that simply has the words “believe” or “belief” in it.
- At the Easter Vigil, and at Masses in which baptism or confir-

¹¹⁰ See GIRM, nos. 65, 352; see LM, no. 24.

¹¹¹ See GIRM, no. 66; see LM, no. 25.

¹¹² See LM, no. 25.

¹¹³ See GIRM, nos. 66, 94, 171:c, 213; see RS nos. 65, 161.

¹¹⁴ See GIRM, no. 136; see LM, no. 26.

¹¹⁵ See GIRM, no. 45; see LM, no. 28.

mation is celebrated, the profession of faith is replaced by the renewal of baptismal promises. The renewal of baptismal promises may also replace the profession of faith at the Masses of Easter Sunday.¹¹⁸

- The origin and nature of the creed indicate that it is more naturally recited than sung. If it is sung, it should be in a way that involves the entire assembly.
- In the Nicene Creed, a deep bow is made by all at the phrase that begins *was incarnate of the Holy Spirit*.
- The assembly stands for the Creed.¹¹⁹

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS OR PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

87 Having listened to God’s word, the community responds by praying for all people. The assembly prays not just for its own needs but for the salvation of the world, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by any burden, and for the local community, particularly for those who are sick or who have died.¹²⁰

88 When the assembly prays in this way it becomes a sign of the communion of this assembly with the Church throughout the world.

89 The priest celebrant directs the prayer from the chair. He briefly invites the people to pray and, at the end, he draws their prayers together in a brief concluding prayer. A deacon, another minister, or members of the assembly pray the intentions at the ambo or another suitable place. After each intention, the faithful respond by silent prayer or a common response or both.¹²¹

- The prayer of the faithful is ordinarily included in all Masses.¹²²
- Both the priest’s introduction and the intentions are addressed to the assembly, not to God. Through the introduction and the intentions, the faithful are invited to pray for particular needs. They make these prayers their own in the si-

¹¹⁶ See GIRM, no. 67; see LM, no. 26.

¹¹⁷ See GIRM, no. 68.

¹¹⁸ See Renewal of Baptismal Promises, Easter Vigil and Easter Day in the Sacramentary.

¹¹⁹ See GIRM, no. 43.

¹²⁰ See GIRM, nos. 69-70; see LM, no. 30.

lence of their hearts and in their common response.¹²³

- The intentions should be short and clear enough for the faithful to understand them and to respond to them without difficulty. They are to be prayers of intercession, not of praise or thanksgiving.¹²⁴
- The usual order of intentions is: a) for the needs of the Church; b) for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world; c) for those oppressed by any need; and d) for the local community.¹²⁵
- When other sacraments or particular rites are celebrated within the Mass, the intentions may be more closely concerned with the occasion. But even so, the prayers should always include some general or universal intentions.
- For each intention, the invitation to pray and the response may be sung or the entire intention may be sung or even spoken while music is played.¹²⁶
- Those who pray the intentions return to their place only after the completion of the concluding prayer.
- The assembly stands for the general intercessions.

OPTIONAL RITE OF PEACE

90 A ritual kiss is mentioned in the oldest writings of the New Testament and is found in the eucharistic liturgy from the earliest days of the Church (see Romans 16:16). In most traditions it occurs here before the presentation of gifts and is understood as a sign of that mutual love and reconciliation that Jesus called for before the offering of sacrifice (see Matthew 5:23).

91 The biblical concept of peace includes total well-being, a life in harmony with God and with ourselves, with our neighbours and

with the whole of creation. Such peace can only be the pure gift of God. It is won for us by the risen Christ, present in the midst of the assembly, and so it is the peace of Christ that is exchanged.

- The sign of peace is introduced by the priest who reminds the assembly that the greeting they share among themselves is to be a sign of the mutual love and reconciliation they are to have before they bring their gifts to the altar. The priest may introduce the sign of peace with these or similar words: *As our Lord taught us, before we present our gifts at the altar, let us be at peace with one another.*
- If this *Optional Rite of Peace* is used, the *Sign of Peace* (see numbers 118-119 below) with the prayer for peace that goes before it are omitted.

¹²¹ See GIRM, no. 71; see LM no. 31.

¹²² See GIRM, no. 69, 264.

¹²³ See GIRM, no. 71.

¹²⁴ See GIRM, no. 71.

¹²⁵ See GIRM, no. 70.

¹²⁶ See GIRM, no. 70.

IV LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

92 At the Last Supper, Christ instituted the sacrifice and paschal meal that make the sacrifice of the cross present in the Church. From the days of the apostles, the Church has celebrated that sacrifice by carrying out what the Lord did and handed over to his disciples to do in his memory. Like him, it has taken bread and wine, given thanks to God over them, broken the bread, and shared the bread and cup of blessing as the body and blood of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 10:16). The Church's eucharist has always followed this order: the taking of bread and wine in the preparation of the gifts, the act of thanksgiving in the eucharistic prayer, the breaking of the bread, the giving of the body and blood of Christ in communion.¹²⁷

PREPARATION OF THE ALTAR AND THE GIFTS

93 At the beginning of the liturgy of the eucharist, the gifts that will become the Lord's Body and Blood are brought to the altar. This taking of bread and wine is a preparation of the gifts. It is not in itself the sacrifice or offering, but a preparation for the eucharistic prayer, the great act of blessing and thanksgiving, which makes up the Church's memorial offering of Christ's sacrifice, and for communion.¹²⁸

94 The purpose of this rite, then, is to make the altar, the gifts which are placed on it, and the assembly ready for the eucharistic offering which is to follow.

¹²⁷ See GIRM, no. 72.

¹²⁸ See GIRM, no. 73.

Preparation of the Altar

95 First, the altar, the Lord's table, is prepared as the centre of the eucharistic liturgy. Until this point in the celebration, with the exception of the honour shown to it at the beginning, the altar has not been the focus of attention. It remains almost bare and unused during the liturgy of the word, which is centred at the ambo. Now the altar is prepared for the sacred meal.¹²⁹

- Everything indicates that a new and important stage of the liturgy is about to begin.
- The corporal, purificators, and Sacramentary are not themselves offerings or gifts and are not brought up in the procession of gifts. They should be brought respectfully but without ceremony from a side table, along with the cup if it will be prepared at the altar.
- A deacon, a server, or other members of the assembly do this preparation of the altar.

Presentation of the Gifts

96 It is one of the Church's very old customs that the people themselves provided the bread and wine for the eucharist. They also brought other food to be blessed for their own use and for the poor. The carrying up of the gifts continues the spiritual meaning of this old custom. This is also the time to bring forward money or gifts for the poor and the Church.¹³⁰

97 In the cultures of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, to thank someone involves more than just saying words. Nearly always, the giving of something either of real value or of symbolic value is included with the words of thanks. Certainly in this greatest act of thanksgiving, this cultural custom is most fitting. The biblical idea of "*tithing*" (see Genesis 14:20; Deuteronomy 26:12-14) should be taught and encouraged as a fitting way of joining this cultural practice with the giving of thanks to God in the Mass.

- The collection of money, food, or other gifts takes place first. It has been an essential part of the eucharistic liturgy since apostolic times. The priest celebrant and people all sit and

¹²⁹ See GIRM, nos. 73, 306.

¹³⁰ See GIRM, no. 73.

wait while the collection is taken. Then the collection is brought to the altar with the bread and wine. The collection is not to be taken during the creed or the prayer of the faithful, nor should it continue during the prayer over the gifts or the eucharistic prayer. Music or song may begin with the collection and continue during the procession of gifts. It continues at least until the bread and wine have been placed on the altar.

- The bread and wine are carried in the procession in containers that can be seen by all the assembly. So far as is possible, the bread and wine should each be placed in a single container, in order that priest and people may be seen to be sharing the same food and drink in the sacrament of unity.
- Members of the congregation carry the gifts of bread, wine, food, and money forward. The procession through the assembly shows clearly that these gifts are coming from the people and represent them. The priest, who may be assisted by the deacon and other ministers, accepts the gifts. The collection of money and other gifts is placed near the altar or in another suitable place. The priest places only the vessels containing the bread and wine on the altar.¹³¹
- Besides money, other gifts for the poor may be brought up. But anything that will be taken back and returned to ordinary use after the celebration are not to be brought up in the procession.
- The purpose of any music at this point is to accompany the collection, the procession, and the presentation of gifts, especially when these will take a long time.
- The words of the song need not refer to bread and wine, nor to offering. Words expressing joy, praise, community, as well as the spirit of the season, are fitting for use at this time. Since the presentation of gifts is only a preparation for the offering, instrumental music or silence may often be better.
- On more special or solemn occasions, a singing group may lead the procession bringing the gifts forward.

PLACING OF THE GIFTS ON THE ALTAR

98 The prayers said as the gifts are placed on the altar are

based upon Jewish table-prayers. They express praise of God for the creation of the world and for human co-operation in the making of the bread and wine that will become the Body and Blood of Christ.

- The priest holds the vessel containing the bread slightly above the altar and blesses God. He places the bread on the altar. He then holds the cup in the same way, blesses God, and places the cup on the altar.
- Since the taking of bread and wine is expressed by the very action of *taking* them, normally both prayers will be prayed quietly. If there is no music, the priest may say them aloud. In this case, the people may respond with the acclamation *Blessed be God forever*. The two prayers should be seen as one. It should never happen that one is said quietly, the other aloud.

MIXING OF WINE AND WATER

99 In the ancient world, wine was regularly mixed with water. In time, this practice during the eucharist came to be understood to mean either the union of God and man in Jesus or the union of Christ and the Church. Both understandings are included in the prayer *By the mystery of this water and wine*.

- The preparation of the cup is a role of the deacon. When no deacon is present, the priest prepares the cup. The one who prepares the cup says the prayer *By the mystery* quietly.¹³²
- The cup may be prepared at the side table before the bread and wine are placed on the altar.¹³³

INCENSE

100 Incense may be used at the preparation of the gifts to honour the bread and wine and to acknowledge the presence and action of Christ in the priest celebrant, the ministers, and the rest of the assembly.¹³⁴

- The priest incenses the gifts and the altar. The deacon or other minister incenses the priest and the rest of the assembly.

¹³¹ See GIRM, no. 73.

¹³² See GIRM, no. 178.

¹³³ See GIRM, no. 178.

- When the members of the assembly, including the other ministers, are incensed they stand.

WASHING OF HANDS

101 Though historically it may have been necessary for the priest to wash his hands after preparing the bread and wine and incensing them, the washing of hands was well known in early Christianity. As in Judaism, it was a symbolic way of showing the need for inner purity at the beginning of a religious action.

- The washing of the hands is to be done slowly and with dignity, and is to be a real washing of hands.
- The words from Psalm 51, like the previous prayer *With humble and contrite hearts*, are an expression of the priest's personal preparation and are said quietly.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

102 The prayer over the gifts ends the preparation of the gifts and leads to the eucharistic prayer.

- The priest invites the people to pray using either the words *Pray brothers and sisters* or simply *Let us pray*. Then everyone stands.¹³⁵
- The prayer may be sung or said.
- After concluding the prayer over the gifts, the priest should make a pause to make clear that the preparation of the gifts (the "taking") is complete and that the eucharistic prayer (the "giving thanks") is now about to begin.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

103 The eucharistic prayer is the heart of the entire celebration. It sums up what it means for the Church to celebrate the eucharist. It is a prayer of praise that remembers and gives thanks for God's work of salvation. It is a prayer in which the Body and Blood of Christ are made present by the power of the Holy Spirit. In it the people are joined to Christ in offering his sacrifice to the Father. The eucharistic

prayer is proclaimed by the priest celebrant in the name of Christ and for the whole assembly, which professes its faith and says its "yes" through dialogue, acclamations, and the *Amen*. Since the eucharistic prayer is the heart of the Mass, its solemn nature and importance are better expressed when it is sung.¹³⁶

104 The eucharistic prayer is prayed over the people's gifts. In this prayer, the Church gives praise and thanks for God's holiness and justice and for all God's mighty deeds in creating and redeeming the human race. This redeeming work reached its highest point in the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the eucharistic prayer the mystery of Christ's saving death and resurrection is recalled. The story of the Last Supper is told. The memorial sacrifice of his Body and Blood is presented to the Father. The Holy Spirit is called upon to make the gifts holy, to change those who receive them into the Body of Christ, and to unite the assembly and the whole Church and family of God, living and dead, into one communion of love, service, and praise to the glory of the Father.

- The assembly kneels at the consecration or after the *Holy* until the doxology. If for some reason they cannot kneel, they make a deep bow when the priest celebrant genuflects after the consecration.

105 The following parts make up the eucharistic prayer:¹³⁷

Dialogue

106 The prayer begins with a dialogue between the priest celebrant and the assembly.¹³⁸ All are invited to lift up their hearts, that is, to raise up and place in God's presence their whole life, their thoughts, memories, emotions, and hopes, in thanks to God.

- By the priest celebrant's voice, gestures and whole attitude, he invites the community to express their gratitude and wonder. This may be done best by singing the dialogue.
- Before the dialogue, the priest may introduce the eucharistic prayer by suggesting very briefly particular reasons for thanksgiving.¹³⁹

Preface

¹³⁴ See GIRM, no. 146.

¹³⁵ See GIRM, no. 178.

¹³⁶ See GIRM, nos. 30, 147.

¹³⁷ See GIRM, no. 79.

¹³⁸ See GIRM, no. 34.

107 The praise and thanksgiving, from which the entire eucharist takes its name, is expressed most of all in the “preface.” The preface proclaims the Church’s thanks for the saving work of God.¹⁴⁰

- The preface is the first part of the eucharistic prayer and because it is a proclamation of thanksgiving, it is best if sung.
- Speaking for Christ, the Head of the Church, the priest celebrant proclaims the prayer on behalf of the people as the people pray in their hearts and through their responses.¹⁴¹

The Holy or Preface Acclamation

108 In this response to the preface prayer, the assembly joins its voice to that of all creation in giving glory to God, with words inspired by the vision of Isaiah (6:3). In each celebration of the eucharist, the Church also joins the heavenly liturgy in which the entire communion of saints, the heavenly powers, and all of creation give praise to the God of the universe.

- This response is an essential part of the eucharistic prayer. It belongs to priest and people together. Of its very nature it is a song and is meant to be sung, even if the preface is not.¹⁴²
- The *Holy* is not to be replaced by some other hymn.

Epiclesis or Prayers Inviting the Holy Spirit to Come

109 In these prayers, one said before and the other after the Last Supper words of Jesus, the Church calls upon the Spirit of God. In a prayer *before* the words of Jesus are repeated, the Spirit is called upon to make the gifts holy, to change them into the Body and Blood of Christ. In a prayer *after* the words of Jesus, the Holy Spirit is asked to gather those who receive these gifts into the Body of Christ. When the words Jesus said at the Last Supper are spoken again, the power of the Spirit makes happen what those words say. Through these words and the power of the Spirit, Christ’s death and resurrection is made present once again and the Church is built up anew as the Body of Christ in the world.¹⁴³

- The life-giving power of the Spirit, who moved over the waters in the first days of creation and overshadowed Mary at the Incarnation, is clearly expressed by the gesture of the priest

celebrant placing his hands over the bread and wine to be consecrated. This same gesture is used in ordination, confirmation, the anointing of the sick, and the sacrament of reconciliation to show the action and power of the Holy Spirit at work in these sacraments.

The Last Supper Words of Jesus and Consecration

110 At the heart of the eucharistic prayer, the words of Jesus at the Last Supper are repeated. Everything for which God has been thanked and praised, all of God’s work in saving us, is brought together and made present in the person of the crucified and risen Lord. Therefore, the words of Jesus at the Last Supper, in which he gave himself to his disciples as their food and drink, are repeated in this prayer of praise. In the power of the Spirit, these words make happen what they say: the presence of Christ and his sacrifice are made real for his assembled people.¹⁴⁴

- These words of Jesus are an essential part of the one continuous prayer of thanksgiving and blessing. They should be said reverently, in a loud enough voice, and meaningfully. It is most fitting to sing these words.
- On concluding the words over the bread, the priest shows the consecrated bread to the people, and then does the same with the cup. The gesture may be different depending on the size of the assembly and the place of gathering. The gesture should be reverent but not prolonged.

Memorial Acclamation

111 The memorial acclamation of the people in the eucharistic prayer expresses the Church’s belief in the central mystery of our faith, that is the paschal mystery, Christ’s death and resurrection and his presence among his people.

- As an acclamation, the memorial acclamation is meant to be sung.

Anamnesis or Memorial and Offering

112 The whole action of the eucharist is done in obedience to the Lord’s command, as a memorial of him. The Church understands this memorial as a living remembrance before God of the saving

¹³⁹ See GIRM, no. 31.

¹⁴⁰ See GIRM, no. 79:a.

¹⁴¹ See GIRM, no. 78.

¹⁴² See GIRM, no. 79:b.

¹⁴³ See GIRM, no. 79:c.

¹⁴⁴ See GIRM, no. 79:d.

deeds that God has made come about in Christ, so that their fullness and power may bear fruit for those here and now present. In this prayer of remembering, the Church offers the one sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. It is a sacramental offering of the sacrifice made “once for all” by Christ. It is an offering made by the whole Church, but especially, by those here and now assembled. In the power of the Holy Spirit, they offer themselves with and through Christ, the Victim and Priest, who joins the Church’s offering to his own.¹⁴⁵

Intercessions

113 By the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Church has become a single offering in Christ to the glory of God the Father. She now prays that the fruits of this sacrifice may be experienced throughout the Church and the world. The Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints are named as examples of the fruits of this saving and life-giving sacrifice. Praying in communion with Mary and the other saints of God, the assembly now prays for the living and the dead in union with the Lord, who for ever lives to make intercession (see Hebrews 7:25).¹⁴⁶

Doxology

114 Faithful to the Jewish way of praying known and used by Jesus and his disciples, the eucharistic prayer ends where it began, with praise and glory to God. All present say their “yes” to the whole prayer of thanksgiving through the acclamation of the “Great Amen.”¹⁴⁷

115 In the priest celebrant’s prayer *Though him, with him, in him*, all is turned to the Father’s glory by the action of the Holy Spirit. At this conclusion of the prayer, the Body and Blood of Christ are raised high in a gesture that clearly expresses the true nature of the eucharistic sacrifice as the offering of the Church *through* Christ, who is the true and only High Priest; *with* Christ, who is really present in the Church; *in* Christ, who has brought his people into himself by the action of the Holy Spirit.

- The deep importance of the assembly’s “yes” can be difficult to bring out in the one short word *Amen*. At the very least it should be sung or spoken loudly. Music that prolongs or repeats the *Amen* can help the assembly to experience and ex-

¹⁴⁵ See GIRM, no. 79:e and f.

¹⁴⁶ See GIRM, no. 79:g.

press the true importance of the *Amen*.

- At the conclusion of the eucharistic prayer, the priest should make a pause to make clear that the eucharistic prayer (the “giving thanks”) is complete and that the communion rite (the “breaking and sharing”) is about to begin.

COMMUNION RITE

116 The eating and drinking together of the Lord’s Body and Blood in a paschal meal is the fulfilment and completion of the eucharist. The assembly is made ready to share in this meal by prayers and actions that lead from the eucharistic prayer directly to holy communion. These prayers and actions clearly point out that mutual love and reconciliation are both the condition for and the fruit of worthy communion and the unity of the many in the one. Both the natural and the sacramental meaning of bread and wine show this.¹⁴⁸

- Though these prayers and actions, namely, the Lord’s Prayer, sign of peace (when it is used here), breaking of the bread, are important in themselves, they lead from one high point, the eucharistic prayer, to another important point, the sharing in communion. When these prayers are sung, they should be done simply, so that they do not seem more important than the eucharistic prayer that came before or the communion that follows.
- The assembly stands from the Lord’s Prayer until after communion.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

117 The community of the baptised is made the family of God by the Spirit of adoption. In this Spirit, the assembly calls on God as Father. Because it speaks of daily bread and mutual forgiveness, the Lord’s Prayer is an excellent preparation for communion.¹⁴⁹ The final petition continues into a prayer prayed by the priest celebrant that concludes with the assembly’s acclamation *For the kingdom*.

- As the family prayer of all God’s children, the Lord’s Prayer belongs to the whole assembly. When sung, everyone sings

¹⁴⁷ See GIRM, no. 79:h.

¹⁴⁸ See GIRM, no. 80.

it together. In this case, it will normally be desirable for the priest to sing the prayer *Lord, deliver us from all evil* and for the priest and people together to sing the concluding acclamation *For the kingdom*.

SIGN OF PEACE

118 As mentioned above in number 89, in most traditions the sign of peace occurs before the presentation of gifts. Eventually however, it found its place after the Lord's Prayer, whose themes of mutual forgiveness it echoes. In the early Church it was described as a "seal" placed on prayer.

119 The sign of peace before holy communion is a way of saying that Christ, who is received in the sacrament, is already present in one's neighbour. In this sign of peace the assembly expresses the Gospel truth that communion with God in Christ must be seen clearly in communion with one's sisters and brothers in Christ. The sign of peace is not an expression of just a human greeting but a profession of faith that all are members, one with another, in the Body of Christ.

- All the members of the assembly, ministers and people, turn to those immediately around them and share the sign of peace.
- The sign is strong enough and expressive in itself not to need song.
- If the *Optional Rite of Peace* was used before the presentation of the gifts (see numbers 90 and 91 above), both the prayer for peace and the sign of peace are omitted at this point.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

120 From the time of the apostles, the name for the eucharist was "the breaking of bread." The breaking of the bread has a meaning that is natural, practical, symbolic, and spiritual. Just as many grains of wheat are ground, kneaded, and baked together to become one loaf, which is then broken and shared out among many, so those gathered are made one body, in the one bread of life which is Christ (see 1 Corinthians 10:17).

121 In order for the meaning of the breaking of the bread to be

understood, both the bread and the breaking must be real. The eucharistic bread is to "have the appearance of food" and is to be made so that it can be broken and distributed to at least some of the members of the assembly.¹⁵⁰

- The faithful are not ordinarily to be given communion from the tabernacle, that is with bread consecrated at a previous Mass.
- The breaking of the bread is done with dignity. It begins after the exchange of peace is completely finished (or after the Lord's Prayer if the *Optional Sign of Peace* is used), and the attention of the assembly is again focused on the action taking place at the holy table.¹⁵¹
- At every Mass at least one large bread is broken into several pieces. The priest eats one of these pieces. The rest are distributed to at least some other members of the assembly.
- During the breaking of the bread, the *Lamb of God* is sung or said. The assembly calls on Jesus as the Lamb of God (see John 1:29, 36) who has conquered sin and death (see 1 Peter 1:18; Book of Revelation 5:6, 13:8). The *Lamb of God* is sung during the action of breaking the bread. It loses its entire meaning if the breaking of bread is already completed before the *Lamb of God* has even begun.
- The *Lamb of God* is not to be replaced by some other hymn.¹⁵²
- If additional vessels are needed for the distribution of communion, they may be brought to the altar at this point. The consecrated bread is then divided among the plates or dishes. The pouring of consecrated wine is from one vessel to another is to be avoided. Flagons, bowls, or other vessels that easily break, deteriorate or are absorbent¹⁵³ are not to be used for containing the Blood of the Lord.

PRIVATE PREPARATION OF THE PRIEST

122 The prayer for the private preparation of the priest is prayed quietly. At this time the faithful prepare themselves quietly and in their own way for communion.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ See GIRM, no. 81.

¹⁵⁰ See GIRM, no. 321.

¹⁵¹ See RS, no. 55.

Invitation to Communion

123 The consecrated bread and wine are held out toward the congregation, whose members are invited to communion with words that express the confidence of the baptised and to which they respond with the humility of the centurion (see Matthew 8:9).

- There are several ways of making the invitation. Like all other introductions and invitations, these may be adapted for particular feasts or occasions but should always end with some recognisable words so that the people can respond with the words *Lord, I am not worthy*.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

124 Faithful to the Lord's command to his disciples to "Take and eat," "Take and drink," the assembly completes the eucharistic action by eating and drinking together the Body and Blood of Christ. It is for this reason that the faithful should not ordinarily be given communion from the tabernacle. Also for this reason, it is most desirable that the faithful share the cup. Drinking at the eucharist is both a sharing in the sign of the new covenant (see Luke 22:20); a foretaste of the heavenly banquet (see Matthew 26:29); and a sign of sharing in the sufferings of Christ (see Mark 10:38-39).¹⁵⁵

125 The communion procession expresses several things. It expresses the humble patience of the poor moving forward to be fed. It expresses the alert expectancy of God's people sharing the paschal meal in readiness for their journey. It speaks of the joyful confidence of God's people on the march toward the promised land.

- There should be a sufficient number of ministers to assist in the distribution of communion. This will normally mean two ministers of the cup to each minister of the bread.
- If there are many concelebrating priests, the communion of the assembly should not be delayed but should be begun after the presiding celebrant and the concelebrants who will distribute communion have communicated.¹⁵⁶ There is no need

for all the concelebrating priests to finish receiving communion before distribution to the assembly can begin.

- Should communion under both kinds be given in the form of intinction, the communicant may choose to receive under the form of bread only. When communion in the form of intinction is given, the minister, after dipping the sacred bread into the consecrated wine, says *The Body and Blood of Christ*, and the communicant responds *Amen*.¹⁵⁷
- The manner of receiving communion in the community is followed by all so that communion may truly be a sign of family unity between all who share in the same table of the Lord.¹⁵⁸

COMMUNION SONG

126 The communion of priest and people is traditionally accompanied by the singing of a psalm with a simple, short response by the people. Any psalm or other song can be used which expresses the spiritual unity of the communicants, shows the joy of all, and makes the communion procession an act of union of sisters and brothers in Christ. It should encourage the participation of the entire assembly.¹⁵⁹

- The communion song begins immediately after the common praying of *Lord I am not worthy*.¹⁶⁰
- Although several communion songs may be sung, depending on the length of communion, it is good to balance singing with periods of silence or instrumental music. Eucharistic hymns used for benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, focusing on adoration rather than on the action of communion, are not suitable as communion songs.

CLEANSING OF VESSELS

127 When communion is completed, the altar table is cleared again. The cleaning of the eucharistic vessels is a task described by the term "cleansing."

- Although done with reverence, it should be done briefly and

¹⁵² See GIRM, no. 366.

¹⁵³ See GIRM, no. 326-328, 330; see RS, nos. 106, 117.

¹⁵⁴ See GIRM, no. 84.

¹⁵⁵ See GIRM, nos. 85, 281-283; see RS 89.

¹⁵⁶ See RS, no. 97.

¹⁵⁷ See GIRM, no. 287; see RS, no. 103.

¹⁵⁸ See Euch Myst, no. 34, a: AAS 59 (1967), p. 560.

without disturbing the assembly. It would be better left until after Mass.

- If possible, this cleansing is carried out at the side table. Only as a last resort should it be done at the altar, and if so, at the side rather than at the centre.¹⁶¹

PERIOD OF SILENCE OR SONG OF PRAISE

128 When communion is completed, the whole assembly may observe a period of total silence. Without words, actions, music, or movement, everyone may experience a moment of deep stillness and quiet.¹⁶²

- Silence and true stillness can be achieved if all, the assembly and its ministers, take part in it.
- This period of deep communion is not to be interrupted by parish announcements, or by the taking of a collection, or by the public reading of devotional material.
- Though a psalm or song of praise may be sung, simple silence may be better if there has already been singing during communion.¹⁶³

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

129 In a final prayer by the priest celebrant, the communion rite is brought to a close. In the prayer, the priest asks that the spiritual blessings of the eucharist be experienced in the lives of the assembly.¹⁶⁴

- The assembly stands for the prayer after communion.

¹⁵⁹ See GIRM, no. 86.

¹⁶⁰ See GIRM, no. 86.

¹⁶¹ See GIRM, nos. 163, 183, 192, 279; see RS, no. 119.

¹⁶² See GIRM, no. 45.

¹⁶³ See GIRM, nos. 88, 164.

¹⁶⁴ See GIRM, no. 89.

V CONCLUDING RITE

130 After the communion rite, the Mass closes with a brief concluding rite. Its purpose is to send the people forth to put into effect in their daily lives the paschal mystery and the unity in Christ, which they have celebrated. They are called to witness to Christ in the world and to bring the gospel to everyone.

131 The concluding rite consists of the priest celebrant's greeting and blessing. On certain days and occasions this may be expanded by the prayer over the people or other solemn forms. The dismissal and an orderly procession of the ministers and the assembly out of the church follow this. The whole rite may be preceded by necessary but brief pastoral announcements.¹⁶⁵

- When another liturgical rite is to follow immediately, for example, the final commendation at a funeral, the entire concluding rite is omitted because these other rites will have their own form of conclusion.¹⁶⁶

ANNOUNCEMENTS

132 Just as the introductory comments by the priest at the beginning of the celebration may help the assembly to a better understanding and experience of the mysteries to be celebrated in the eu-

¹⁶⁵ See GIRM, nos. 90, 166, 184.

¹⁶⁶ See GIRM, no. 170.

charist, so also the pastoral announcements at the end may help the people make the move from worship to renewed Christian witness in society. They should help people to become aware of their faith-life and the pastoral activity of the community, and they should invite participation in the ongoing mission of the Church.

- Ordinarily announcements, when they are needed, should be brief enough for the assembly to remain standing.
- In order to respect the dignity of the ambo as the place of God's word, announcements are made from some other place.
- Announcements may be made by the deacon, by the priest if he prefers, or by another member of the community chosen for this purpose.¹⁶⁷
- If a second collection is necessary for pastoral reasons, it should be done at this time.

GREETING

133 The greeting *The Lord be with you* helps the assembly to know that the blessing is a prayer.

BLESSING

134 As Scripture says, all beings are created and kept in existence by God's goodness. Every created thing is a blessing from God and should move us to bless God in return. This is above all true since the Word has come in flesh to make all things holy.

135 Blessings therefore point first to God, whose goodness they reveal, and they involve human beings, whom God lovingly rules and protects.¹⁶⁸

- The priest celebrant is encouraged to give a special blessing on Sundays. He may use either a solemn blessing or a prayer over the people. When either of these forms is used, it is the role of the deacon, after the greeting, to invite the people to prepare themselves to receive the blessing.
- In the case of the solemn blessing, the priest extends his

¹⁶⁷ See GIRM, no. 184; see RS no. 74.

¹⁶⁸ See The Roman Ritual, *Book of Blessings*, 1987, General Introduction, no. 7.

hands over the people as he sings or says the prayer of the blessing in such a way that the assembly is clearly invited to respond with an *Amen* to each part. The threefold solemn blessing touch upon various aspects of a feast or of God's goodness and often speak about the mission of the eucharistic assembly.

- In the case of a prayer over the people, which is simpler and more general than the solemn blessing, the priest uses the same gesture of extending his hands over the people.
- All the blessings end with the trinitarian formulary during which the priest, with his right hand, traces the sign of the cross over the members of the assembly as they make the sign of the cross on themselves.

DISMISSAL

136 The dismissal sends the members of the congregation forth to praise and bless the Lord in their daily life and work.

- It is the deacon's role to say or sing the dismissal, which should be done in a way that invites the people's response.¹⁶⁹
- The response *Thanks be to God* is a statement of grateful praise for encountering the risen Christ in the assembly's worship.
- Beginning at the Easter Vigil and up to and including the Second Sunday of Easter, the double *alleluia* is added to the dismissal and the response. It is also added on Pentecost.
- Using ordinary ways of saying farewell are out of place as they take away from the dignity of the celebration, distracting both priest and assembly from their sacred functions.
- The priest celebrant and deacon kiss the altar if they are near it at the time of the dismissal or if they pass by it as they leave.¹⁷⁰
- After giving the proper reverence to the altar, the ministers leave in the same order in which they entered at the beginning of the celebration.¹⁷¹
- If they have not left earlier, ministers who are to bring communion to the sick may take their place immediately before

¹⁶⁹ See GIRM, nos. 90:c, 185.

the deacon and the priest in the procession.

- During the procession, a fitting song of praise, seasonal hymn, or instrumental music may be used. On some occasions, there may even be silence. A recessional song is always optional, even for solemn occasions.
- On more special or solemn occasions, a *singsing* group may lead the procession.
- Since the Eucharist is the most perfect form of prayer after the recessional song it is not fitting to have additional common public recitation of ejaculatory prayers by the assembly. Ejaculatory prayers and other devotions may be done in private.

¹⁷⁰ See GIRM, nos. 169, 186.

¹⁷¹ See GIRM, nos. 186, 193.

VI EUCHARISTIC CONCELEBRATION

INTRODUCTION

137 Concelebration is the practice by which several priests with one voice and one will offer the one sacrifice of Christ and in his name in one sacramental act.¹⁷² Concelebration expresses the unity of the priesthood, of the sacrifice, and of the whole people of God.¹⁷³

138 A priest always has the right to celebrate Mass individually but not at the same time in the same church as a concelebrated Mass nor on Holy Thursday or the Easter Vigil.¹⁷⁴

139 The regulation of concelebration belongs to the diocesan bishop. The bishop may, therefore, set up diocesan guidelines concerning concelebration.

- The bishop may limit the number of concelebrants because of the size of the church and altar, or because of the assembly or dignity of the rite.¹⁷⁵
- When there is need to limit the number of concelebrants, the priests chosen to concelebrate should be truly representative of the larger group. Arrangements are to be made so that those who were not able to concelebrate have the opportunity to celebrate Mass at another time.

140 Once Mass has begun, no priest may join to concelebrate the Mass.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² See Congregation of Rites, Decree *Ecclesiae Semper*, on concelebration and communion under both species, 7 March 1965), AAS 57 (1965), pp. 410-412.

¹⁷³ See GIRM, no. 199.

¹⁷⁴ See SC, art. 57:2; see GIRM, no. 199; See RS, no. 111.

¹⁷⁵ See GIRM, no. 202; see Rite of Concelebration, no. 3.

Physical Arrangements

141 Concelebrants should be seated together in a distinct area, if possible in the sanctuary. They should not be intermingled with the rest of the assembly. If the sanctuary is not large enough for all the concelebrants, some are seated in another area that is physically united with the other concelebrants.

142 It must always be clear that only one bishop or one priest presides over the whole celebration. The placing of the seats for the concelebrants must not keep the other ministers from being able to move about or do their ministry. Nor should the seating of the concelebrants prevent the assembly from seeing the sacred action of the Mass. If there are other ministers present, concelebrants never takes over their proper ministries. Only if no other ministers are present do the concelebrants do these ministries.¹⁷⁷

Vesture of the Concelebrants

143 The clothing of ministers at Mass both clearly identifies the various ministers and ministries and adds to the solemnity and beauty of the celebration.¹⁷⁸

- Concelebrating priests wear both a stole and chasuble, or a stole alone, over the alb or white cassock or white habit. Vestments that differ in size, shape, and decoration can hide unity, emphasise individualism, and take away from the role of the presiding priest. The presiding celebrant always wears both the stole and chasuble over the alb.¹⁷⁹

INTRODUCTORY RITES

144 The concelebrated Mass follows the pattern of the Mass as presented in these Guidelines (see numbers 59 to 136 above) except for the changes or additions mentioned here.

- If the Book of the Gospels is being carried in the entrance procession, the concelebrants follow whoever is carrying the book. They go before the deacon of the Mass who walks with the priest celebrant. If there are a number of deacons, the concelebrants follow them in the procession.

¹⁷⁶ See GIRM, no. 206.

¹⁷⁷ See GIRM, no. 208.

¹⁷⁸ See GIRM, no. 335.

¹⁷⁹ See GIRM, no. 209.

- The concelebrants bow to the altar or genuflect toward the tabernacle as the other ministers in the procession have done. Afterward, the concelebrants make an additional reverence to the altar with a kiss.¹⁸⁰

LITURGY OF THE WORD

145 During the liturgy of the word, the concelebrants sit or stand as the presiding celebrant does.¹⁸¹

- If there is no deacon present, one of the concelebrants reads the Gospel. The concelebrant prepares himself by a prayer. Only if the bishop presides does he ask for and receive a blessing from the bishop.¹⁸²
- The presiding priest ordinarily gives the homily. One of the concelebrating priests may be invited to preach.¹⁸³

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

146 The concelebrants remain at their places while the presiding priest carries out the preparation of the gifts. If no deacon is present, one of the concelebrants may help with the preparation of the cup.

- After the prayer over the gifts, the concelebrants come near the altar and stand around it if possible. They must be sure that the people have a clear view of the sacred action.¹⁸⁴
- If there are a great number of concelebrants, only some of them are invited to stand with the presiding celebrant at the altar.
- The presiding celebrant begins the Eucharistic Prayer only after the concelebrants have taken their places.

MANNER OF PRAYING THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

147 The choice of the Eucharistic Prayer is to be made before the Mass begins. Any of the parts in the Eucharistic Prayer to be prayed by individual concelebrants should also be decided and assigned before Mass. All the concelebrants should

know what gestures will be used during the Eucharistic Prayer and how they will be done.

- The concelebrating priests stretch out both of their hands toward the bread and wine during the first epiclesis or prayer inviting the Holy Spirit to come.¹⁸⁵
- If it seems appropriate, the concelebrants may extend their right hand, with palm facing the side, toward the bread and toward the cup during the Last Supper words of Jesus.¹⁸⁶
- All the concelebrants make a deep bow when the presiding celebrant genuflects after showing the consecrated bread and again after showing the consecrated wine.¹⁸⁷
- The concelebrants hold their hands outstretched during the anamnesis or memorial and offering prayers, but not during the other parts of the Eucharistic Prayer. For this reason, it is best if the concelebrants can recite their prayers together from memory rather than reading from cards or books. The individual concelebrants stretch out their hands when they pray the individual parts assigned to them.
- When praying the First Eucharistic Prayer (Roman Canon), the concelebrants make two additional gestures. From the prayer *Almighty God, we pray* to the words *the sacred body and blood of your Son*, they bow with hands joined. Then they stand up and cross themselves at the words *let us be filled with every grace and blessing*. At the words *Though we are sinners*, each concelebrant strikes his breast.¹⁸⁸

148 Whenever the concelebrants join the presiding celebrant in praying parts of the Eucharistic Prayer, they are to pray these prayers in a very low voice so that the presiding celebrant's voice is always clearly heard. Singing the Eucharistic Prayer is a more solemn way of proclaiming it but should be done only if the presiding celebrant and the concelebrants know the music and are able to sing it well.¹⁸⁹

- The concelebrants recite or sing the epiclesis, the Last Supper words of Jesus or consecration, and the anamnesis or memorial and offering prayers together with the presiding

¹⁸⁰ See GIRM, no. 211.

¹⁸¹ See GIRM, no. 212.

¹⁸² See GIRM, no. 212.

¹⁸³ See GIRM, no. 213.

¹⁸⁴ See GIRM, no. 215.

¹⁸⁵ See GIRM, nos. 222:a, 227:a, 230:a, 233:a.

¹⁸⁶ See GIRM, nos. 222:c, 227:c, 230:c, 233:c.

¹⁸⁷ See GIRM, nos. 222:c, 227:c, 230:c, 233:c.

¹⁸⁸ See GIRM, nos. 222:e, 224.

celebrant but the concelebrants always pray in a low voice.

- The concelebrants may sing or say the doxology with the presiding celebrant. This must be decided before the Mass begins.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

149 The concelebrants extend their hands with the presiding celebrant during the praying of the Lord's Prayer. Then they join their hands. The presiding celebrant alone prays the prayer following the Lord's Prayer, but the concelebrants join with everyone in the acclamation *For the kingdom*.

- None of the other prayers during the communion rite are prayed by the concelebrants.¹⁹⁰

BREAKING OF BREAD

150 During the *Lamb of God*, the deacon(s) or some of the concelebrants help the presiding celebrant in the breaking of the consecrated bread for the communion of the priests and the people.¹⁹¹

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

151 Only the presiding celebrant shows the consecrated bread to the assembly when he proclaims *This is the Lamb of God*. If the concelebrants already have the consecrated bread, they hold it reverently in their right hand with the left hand under it.¹⁹²

COMMUNION

152 The concelebrants receive the consecrated bread from a bread-plate held by the deacon, one of the concelebrants, or the presiding celebrant, or the bread-plate may be passed from one to another. Or they may receive the consecrated bread from the altar, in which case they go to the altar, genuflect, take the consecrated bread and return to their places. Nothing is said as they take the consecrated bread.¹⁹³

¹⁸⁹ See GIRM, no. 218.

¹⁹⁰ See GIRM, nos. 238, 241.

¹⁹¹ See GIRM, no. 240.

¹⁸⁷ See GIRM, no. 242.

153 If there is a great number of concelebrants, they may receive the consecrated bread and wine while communion is being distributed to the people. There is no need for all the concelebrating priests to finish receiving communion before distribution to the assembly can begin. In this case, a bread-plate with the consecrated bread may be left on the altar from which each concelebrant can take a piece and afterward drink the consecrated wine from a cup. When receiving from the altar, each concelebrant comes forward, genuflects, and receives the Body and Blood of the Lord.¹⁹⁴

- The concelebrants are the ordinary ministers of communion. If there is need, extraordinary ministers for Holy Communion may help with the giving of the sacrament. They do not, however, receive communion with the concelebrants. Normally, they receive communion after the presiding priest and the deacon.
- Usually the deacon or other minister clean the communion vessels at the side table or after Mass.

CONCLUDING RITE

154 The presiding celebrant with the deacon do everything else until the end of Mass. The concelebrants remain at their places.¹⁹⁵

- The concelebrants make the reverence to the altar or the tabernacle as the other ministers do when leaving. Usually only the presiding celebrant kisses the altar.¹⁹⁶
- If they have not left earlier, ministers who are to bring communion to the sick may take their place immediately before the concelebrants in the procession.

¹⁹³ See GIRM, nos. 242, 248; See RS nos.98-99

¹⁹⁴ See GIRM, no. 248.

¹⁹⁵ See GIRM, no. 250.

¹⁹⁶ See GIRM, no. 251.

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