

# LITURGY NEWSLETTER

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A Quarterly Newsletter prepared by the Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales

## The Pasch of Pope John Paul II

As the Church mourns the death of Pope John Paul and gives thanks to God for his extraordinary ministry, it is appropriate in this Newsletter to recall his contribution to the process of the renewal of the Church's liturgy called for in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Lack of space means that attention can be paid only to the late Holy Father's principal teaching and influences.

It would be difficult to over emphasise the importance for liturgical formation of the many and varied celebrations of the liturgy presided over by Pope John Paul both during his pastoral and missionary pilgrimages across the globe, and 'at home' in the diocese of Rome, on pastoral visitation and in the great basilicas and St Peter's Square. The value of these celebrations for the Holy Father himself is witnessed to in *Mane Nobiscum Domine*, his last Apostolic Letter written for the 'Year of the Eucharist'. Words recorded in the Obituary notice placed in the Holy Father's coffin affirm the exemplary way in which he promoted the liturgical life of the Church: 'As *sacerdos magnus* he exercised the liturgical ministry in the Diocese of Rome and in the whole world, in total fidelity to Vatican Council II.'

Yet some considered him unduly responsive to the pastoral needs of those others uncomfortable with the liturgical renewal. His decision to establish the *Ecclesia Dei* Commission to oversee the authorised celebrations of the Mass according to the ritual books of 1962 has been criticised by some, though of course warmly welcomed by others. In more recent years certain documents of the Congregation of Divine Worship, issued with Papal approval, most notably *Liturgiam Authenticam* and *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, have been received somewhat nervously by many and by some seen as threatening the integrity of the renewal processes. However as time proceeds the pastoral advantage provided by these documents becomes more evident, as they assist the Church to what Pope John Paul himself called 'a sort of examination of conscience' as to its reception of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. (cf. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* 36 and *Spiritus et Sponsa* 6)

The significance of the Holy Father's Encyclical on the Eucharist, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, has been widely recognised. Two other documents issued to mark anniversaries of the promulgation of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* attracted much less attention, but the teachings presented in *Vicesimus Quintus Annus* (1988) and *Spiritus et Sponsa* (2003) deserve to be much more widely known and engaged with. They provide broad and generous appreciations of the renewal of the liturgy achieved to date, and encouragement to continue this work into the future.

The closing words of *Spiritus et Sponsa* are these: *At the beginning of this millennium, may a 'liturgical spirituality' be developed that makes people conscious that Christ is the first 'liturgist' who never ceases to act in the Church and in the world through the Paschal Mystery continuously celebrated, and who associates the Church with himself, in praise of the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit.*

They provide a clear indication of a pastoral priority of the ministry of John Paul II and of the work of renewal to which the Church is called to commit herself.

### Bursary for Liturgical Study

In his will, Mgr James Crichton left money to be invested for the benefit of any seminarian or priest of an English Catholic diocese to assist with their fees in their study at the Pontifical Liturgical Institute, Sant' Anselmo, Rome. The first bursary will be granted for Academic year 2006/7. Suitable applicants should reply in English or Italian to: Mgr James Crichton Bursary for the study of Liturgy, The Preside, Pontifical Liturgical Institute, Pzza Cavalieri di Malta, 5, 00153 Roma, Italia or e-mail: [pil.roma@iol.it](mailto:pil.roma@iol.it)

### On the Way to Life

The Department for Catholic Education and Formation of the Bishops' Conference has commissioned a critical analysis of contemporary culture from Fr James Hanvey SJ and the Heythrop Institute for Religion, Ethics and Public Life. The Department recently presented the report to the Bishops' Conference. The report, and people's responses to it, is likely to have a broad influence on reflection on catechesis and formation including the formation for and by the liturgy over the next few years.

Being on the threshold of the Third Millennium *in medio Ecclesiae*, I wish once again to express gratitude to the Holy Spirit for the great gift of Vatican Council II, to which together with the whole Church — and above all with the entire episcopate — I feel indebted. I am convinced that once again and for a long time it will be given to the new generations to draw from the riches that this Council of the 20th century has lavished. As a Bishop who has participated in the conciliar event from the first to the last day, I wish to entrust this great treasure to all those who are or will be in the future called to realize it. For my part, I thank the eternal Pastor who allowed me to serve this great cause in the course of all the years of my pontificate.

John Paul II  
From his Last Will and Testament

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## Coming Events

### Society of St Gregory

**Music & Liturgy Summer School** The theme for the Summer School is 'Mission and Evangelisation'. It will explore in key note talks and developed through the liturgies. The Summer School is being held in Sneaton Castle, Whitby, Yorkshire from August 1st-5th. Details on SSG website ([www.ssg.org.uk](http://www.ssg.org.uk)) or from Gill Ness-Smith 01903 812480.

### Joint Liturgical Group Conference

'Dwellers all in Time and Space 13-15 September 2005 at Ushaw

### Taize European Meeting for Young People

Milan, Dec. 28 to Jan. 1. Details on [www.taize.fr/en](http://www.taize.fr/en).

### National Network of Pastoral Musicians

July 27-30 2006  
Themes to include 'Wisdom from the East...'

### Society of Liturgical Studies

22-24 August 2006

## Book reviews

Because of pressure of space book reviews are now put directly on the Liturgy Office website. New reviews are added regularly.

## Rest in Peace

Three great servants of the work of liturgical renewal have recently died

### Louis Bouyer

Died 23 October 2004  
A consultant to Vatican Council II. His writings on liturgy have been very influential, including *The Paschal Mystery* (1950), *Liturgical Piety* (1955), *Liturgy and Life* (1956), *Liturgy and Architecture* (1967) and *Eucharist: Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer* (1968)

### Pierre Jounel

Died 14 November 2004  
A specialist on the cult of saints he contributed to the post Conciliar reform of the Liturgical Calendar, the Order of Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours. He was a regular contributor to *La Maison Dieu* and one of the authors of *The Church at Prayer* (1986-1988)

### Pierre-Marie Gy

Died 20 December 2004  
In addition to his work at the *Institut Catholique de Paris*, especially at its *Institut Supérieur de Liturgie* Père Gy made contributions to the preparatory Commission on liturgy for Vatican Council II and took part in the reform of the Mass and the rites for anointing the sick, for marriage and funerals.

# New Liturgical Publications

The Bishops' Conference and its Liturgy Office have published three new documents.

1. The Bishops' Conference's translation of the revised edition of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. This revised edition was prepared by the Holy See as part of the 3rd edition of the *Roman Missal*. The translation was prepared by the Bishops' Conference, through the agency of ICEL, and has received *recognitio* from the Holy See. The revised *General Instruction* has been published in advance of the rest of the *Missal* because of its singular significance.

2. *Celebrating the Mass: a pastoral guide*. This is a document of the Bishops' Conference itself, intended to assist the widest reception of the teaching of the *General Instruction*, and to offer pastoral guidance on the celebration of the Mass in the particular circumstances of England and Wales. Whereas the *General Instruction* necessarily considers a variety of forms of celebration of Mass, *Celebrating the Mass* is able to focus on the pattern of celebration most usually encountered in parishes in England and Wales. Its organisation and style make it more easily readable by the non-specialist than is the *General Instruction*.

3. *With Hearts and Minds*, a resource for parish groups, prepared by the Liturgy Office of the Bishops' Conference. It provides resources for six meetings in which participants can meet together, pray, reflect on what the Church teaches about the celebration of the Mass and consider in what ways they participate in the liturgy and live from the liturgy. There are complementary resources for both leaders and participants. Additional materials for parish leaders, both to help set up groups and to reflect on the results of the process are available for downloading from the Liturgy Office website.

Extracts from press releases are given below. The full texts are available on the Liturgy Office website.

## Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, President of the Bishops' Conference

I warmly welcome the publication of these three documents and the opportunity for 'renewing the renewal' of the liturgy called for by the Second Vatican Council and so recently requested by the late Holy Father, Pope John Paul II.

Every week, many thousands of times, in the parishes and communities of England and Wales, the Mass is celebrated. The Second Vatican Council called this Mass, the source and summit of the Christian life.

How often have we said that old adage, 'It is the Mass that matters'? Essentially we say that because in the Mass we are not focused on what we do, or we say, but what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. It is His Word, His Sacrifice, His Presence, remembered, re-focused, re-presented on the altar, the salvation and hope of the world.

My own hope and prayer is that of the late Holy Father, that in this Year of the Eucharist there will be an increase of faith, devotion, reverence, care and celebration of the Mystery of the Holy Eucharist.

If there is to be such a renewal of these things it will be in large part led by the initiative and dedication of the priests of the Church. I urge them to make the celebration of Mass not only their daily obligation, but part of their daily prayer, and personal devotion and study. As their reverence and love for the Mass grows, together with their knowledge and understanding of how the Church asks for the Mass to be celebrated, so they will be all the better able to lead the People of God in fruitful celebration of the Mass.

I urge too the whole Church, young and old, to take time to reflect on the contribution they can make to the worthy celebration of the Mass. Through their reverence and love for the Mass each one can make a contribution, both those who exercise

particular ministry and all those who gather as members of the Body of Christ.

These three documents have something to offer us all. I hope the Church in England and Wales will take full advantage of them.

## Bishop Arthur Roche, Chairman of the Department for Christian Life and Worship

In this 'Year of the Eucharist' the late Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, highlighted the importance of the Eucharist in the life of the Church.

His own love and understanding of the Eucharist informed his ministry in every way. Millions of people are witnesses to the devotion and love with which he celebrated the Mass. His teachings on the Eucharist remain a rich resource for the Church. The encyclical *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, the annual *Letters to priests* on Holy Thursday explored many dimensions of this great Mystery, and his Apostolic letter *Mane Nobiscum Domine* spoke eloquently of his hopes for the 'Year of the Eucharist'.

One specific project which he singled out and commended to parish communities was the study of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*.

As the Holy Father said, 'The Eucharist is a great mystery! And it is one which above all must be well celebrated. Holy Mass needs to be set at the centre of the Christian life and celebrated in a dignified manner by every community, in accordance with established norms, with the participation of the assembly, with the presence of ministers who carry out their assigned tasks and with a serious concern that singing and liturgical music be suitably sacred.' (*Mane Nobiscum Domine* 17)

Much has been achieved already in implementing the renewal of the liturgy as required by the Second Vatican Council. These publications will provide priests and people with the opportunity to take stock of what has been achieved already and take responsibility for what is still needed.

# Renewing the Renewal *Opportunities for formation*

The publication of the revised edition of the *General Instruction* (GIRM) and of *Celebrating the Mass* (CTM) provides an opportunity for refreshing and deepening ministers' understanding of the liturgy, principally of the Mass, but also more generally. It also is an occasion for considering how a deeper liturgical formation might be provided for the whole assembly.

*Sacrosanctum Concilium* emphasised that 'in the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else, for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit. Yet it would be futile to entertain any hope of realising this unless pastors of souls, in the first place, themselves become fully imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy and attain competence in it.' SC 14.

Such competence is not gained in the initial training provided in seminaries, or in a once only reading of something such as the *General Instruction*. These are foundations that need to be built on by continuing study and reflection on experience. It is far from easy to find sufficient time, for significant study and sufficient reflection. That is why from time to time there is advantage in such initiatives as the present 'Year of the Eucharist' and the encouragement to take every advantage of the opportunity for renewal presented by the publication of the *General Instruction* and *Celebrating the Mass*.

Different communities will find themselves in different situations. For that reason a wide range of different formation materials have been prepared.

In what follows the examples are a series of imaginary parish communities. However it should be remembered that although parish priests have a particular responsibility for liturgy in their parish, they are in the first place to respond to the guidance of their Bishop, who has responsi-

bility for the celebration of the liturgy throughout the diocese entrusted to his care. (SC 41; GIRM 22, 387; CTM 21, 26) It is doubtless best for a general process of 'renewing the renewal' to be carried out under the auspices of the Bishop, and guidance of his Liturgy Commission. A certain consistency in practice within a Diocese is desirable.

That said there will of course be occasions when initiatives are taken within a particular parish or local deanery.

## Parish 1

There is a perceived need for general parish renewal concerning the liturgy. Parish has good experience of working with small groups. Following a review of GIRM and CTM by the parish priest and the parish team (e.g. other clergy, catechetical coordinator, coordinator of liturgy team) it is agreed to embark on a programme of general formation across the parish.

### Resources

- *With Hearts and Minds* (WHM) — resourcing parish groups for a six week process of study, prayer and reflection.
- *In Communion with Christ* (ICWC) — a whole-parish formation tool based on Sunday preaching on the liturgy and take home sheets (one set for general use and one specifically for parents of young children). General themes are the same as WHM. (ICWC and WHM are designed to be complementary and run alongside each other.) Additional resources to assist with liturgical preaching.

## Parish 2

As with Parish One, there is a desire for cross-parish formation except there is no eagerness for using small groups.

### Resources:

- ICWC can run as a stand alone programme.
- Before running ICWC for the whole parish the parish team and those principally involved in preparing and leading liturgy in the parish might themselves make use of WHM. It can help them focus on the task in hand

and achieve a common mind with regard to the liturgy.

## Parish 3

'We know WHM and ICWC is the way forward for us. But we'll start in six months time. What might we do in the meantime?'

### Resources

- A range of leaflets have been prepared for parish ministers, e.g. ministers of the word and ministers of Holy Communion. These provide GIRM/CTM descriptions of particular ministries and hints on preparation for exercising them. These will help begin a process of formation with key people with little additional effort.

## Parish 4

A process of liturgical formation for all has recently taken place in the context of continuing parish renewal programme. However there are some particular issues that need addressing – for example how to deepen participation in the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of Communion.

### Resources

- WHM may be of assistance to parish team and principal ministers.
- Issues sheets have been prepared considering a wide range of particular matters and offering a simple process for considering how to proceed.

## Where do I find these resources?

The *General Instruction*, *Celebrating the Mass* and *With Hearts and Minds* are all published by CTS ([www.cts-online.org.uk](http://www.cts-online.org.uk)).

Additional resources for *With Hearts and Minds* can be downloaded from Liturgy Office website ([www.liturgyoffice.org.uk](http://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk)).

*In Communion with Christ* is downloadable from the Liturgy Office website

*Ministers Leaflets* and *Issues sheets* are also all downloadable from the Liturgy Office website.

Also available from the website is an abbreviated form of WHM designed for use by priests and principal co-workers over a series of 3 Deanery meetings.

To participate in Sunday Mass is not only an important obligation but, first, a profound need of every faithful.

The faith cannot be lived without habitual participation in Sunday Mass, sacrifice of redemption, common banquet of the Word of God and of the Eucharistic Bread, heart of Christian life.

Because of this it is necessary to concentrate efforts on better and more careful instruction and catechesis of the faithful on the Eucharist, as well as to take care that the celebration is worthy and decorous, so that it inspires true respect and genuine piety before the greatness of the Eucharistic mystery.

Sunday Mass should be appropriately prepared by the celebrant, with his spiritual disposition, perceptible later in his gestures and words, and the proper preparation of the homily.

Special attention must also be dedicated to the selection and preparation of songs, signs and other means that enrich the liturgy, always within the respect due to the established norms, valuing all the spiritual and pastoral richness of the Roman Missal....

It is not an easy task, and because of this it requires the cooperation of all: presbyters and deacons, the consecrated and faithful who are present in the parishes or who belong to ecclesial associations or movements.

Accept the collaboration of all, unite efforts and work in communion!

Pope John Paul II  
Address to plenary assembly  
of the Pontifical Commission  
for Latin America  
21st January 2005



The Liturgy offers the deepest and most effective answer to the human heart's yearning for the encounter with God. It does so especially in the Eucharist, in which we are given to share in the sacrifice of Christ and to nourish ourselves with his Body and his Blood. However, Pastors must ensure that the sense of mystery penetrates consciences, making them rediscover the art of 'mystagogic catechesis', so dear to the Fathers of the Church. It is their duty, in particular, to promote dignified celebrations, paying the proper attention to the different categories of persons: children, young people, adults, the elderly, the disabled. They must all feel welcome at our gatherings, so that they may breathe the atmosphere of the first community of believers who 'devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers' (Acts 2: 42).

Pope John Paul II  
*Spiritus et Sponsa 12*

## Liturgy Newsletter

www.liturgyoffice.org.uk /Newsletter

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# Pope John Paul's Holy Thursday letter to Priests

*The full text of the late Holy Father's letter, from which the following is extracted can be found on the Liturgy Office website.*

I take as my inspiration the words of Eucharistic consecration. These words provide us with illuminating insights for priestly spirituality: If the whole Church draws life from the Eucharist, all the more then must the life of a priest be 'shaped' by the Eucharist. So for us, the words of institution must be more than a formula of consecration, they must be a 'formula of life.'

### A life of profound 'gratitude'

*Tibi gratias agens benedixit.* At every Mass we remember and relive the first sentiment expressed by Jesus as he broke the bread: that of thanksgiving. Gratitude is the disposition which lies at the root of the very word 'Eucharist.' This expression of thanksgiving contains the whole Biblical spirituality of praise for the *mirabilia Dei*. God loves us, he goes before us in his Providence, he accompanies us with his continuous saving acts.

In the Eucharist, Jesus thanks the Father with us and for us. How could this thanksgiving of Jesus fail to shape the life of a priest? He knows that he must cultivate a constant sense of gratitude for the many gifts he has received in the course of his life: in particular, for the gift of faith, which it is his task to proclaim, and for the gift of the priesthood, which consecrates him totally to the service of the Kingdom of God. We have our crosses to bear — and we are certainly not the only ones! — but the gifts we have received are so great that we cannot fail to sing from the depths of our hearts our own Magnificat.

### A life that is 'given'

*Accipite et manducate. Accipite et bibite.* Christ's self-giving, which has its origin in the Trinitarian life of the God who is Love, reaches its culmination in the sacrifice of the Cross, sacramentally anticipated in the Last Supper. It is impossible to repeat the words of consecration without feeling oneself caught up in this spiritual movement. In a certain sense, when he says the words: 'take and eat,' the priest must learn to apply them also to himself, and to speak them with truth and generosity. If he is able to offer himself as a gift, placing himself at the disposal of the community and at the service of anyone in need, his life takes on its true meaning.

This is exactly what Jesus expected of his apostles, as the Evangelist John emphasizes in his account of the washing of the feet. It is also what the People of God expect of a priest. Obeying out of love, sacrificing even a certain legitimate freedom when the authoritative discernment of the bishop so requires, the priest lives out in his own flesh that 'take and eat' with which Christ, in the Last Supper, gave himself to the Church.

### A life that is 'saved' in order to save

*Hoc est enim corpus meum quod pro vobis tradetur.* The body and the blood of Christ are given for the salvation of man, of the whole man and of all men. This salvation is integral and at the same time universal,

because no one, unless he freely chooses, is excluded from the saving power of Christ's blood: *qui pro vobis et pro multis effundetur*. It is a sacrifice offered for 'many,' as the Biblical text says (Mark 14:24; Matthew 26:28; Isaiah 53:11-12); this typical Semitic expression refers to the multitude who are saved by Christ, the one Redeemer, yet at the same time it implies the totality of human beings to whom salvation is offered: the Lord's blood is 'shed for you and for all,' as some translations legitimately make explicit. Christ's flesh is truly given 'for the life of the world' (John 6:51; 1 John 2:2).

Repeating Christ's venerable words in the recollected silence of the liturgical assembly, we priests become privileged heralds of this mystery of salvation. Yet unless we sense that we ourselves are saved, how can we be convincing heralds? We are the first to be touched inwardly by the grace which raises us from our frailty and makes us cry 'Abba, Father' with the confidence of God's children (Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:15). This in turn commits us to advance along the path of perfection. Holiness, in fact, is the full expression of salvation. Only if our lives manifest the fact that we are saved do we become credible heralds of salvation. Moreover, a constant awareness of Christ's will to offer salvation to all cannot fail to inspire us with fresh missionary fervour, spurring each of us on to become 'all things to all men, in order to save at least some of them' (1 Corinthians 9:22).

### A life that 'remembers'

*Hoc facite in meam commemorationem.* These words of Jesus have been preserved for us not only by Luke (22:19) but also by Paul (1 Corinthians 11:24). We should keep in mind that they were spoken in the context of the Paschal meal, which for the Jews was indeed a 'memorial'. On that occasion the Israelites relived the Exodus first and foremost, but also the other important events of their history: the call of Abraham, the sacrifice of Isaac, the Covenant of Sinai, the many acts of God in defence of his people. For Christians too, the Eucharist is a 'memorial,' but of a unique kind: it not only commemorates, but sacramentally makes present the death and resurrection of the Lord.

Jesus said: 'Do this in memory of me.' The Eucharist does not simply commemorate a fact; it commemorates Him! Through his daily repetition *in persona Christi* of the words of the 'memorial,' the priest is invited to develop a 'spirituality of remembrance.' At a time when rapid social and cultural changes are weakening the sense of tradition, and leading the younger generation especially to risk losing touch with their roots, the priest is called to be, within the community entrusted to him, the man who faithfully remembers the entire mystery of Christ: prefigured in the Old Testament, fulfilled in the New, and understood ever more deeply, under the guidance of the Spirit, as Jesus explicitly promised: 'He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you' (John 14:26).