

New Translation Edition

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The Mass

An Overview

The Mass is a single act of worship that has four parts —

A Introductory Rites

B Liturgy* of the Word

C Liturgy of the Eucharist

D Concluding Rites

A Introductory Rites

The purpose of the Introductory Rites is to remind the people that they are one family, united in Christ.

We call the gathering the assembly.

The whole assembly, as the priestly body of Christ, actively participates in the action of the Eucharist. The ordained priest, acting in the person of Christ, brings about the Eucharistic sacrifice. He offers it to God in the name of all the people.

Entrance Procession and Gathering Hymn

(people stand)

In many societies singing is a significant part of any celebration. Singing helps to bind the community together. Usually at the beginning of Sunday Mass, the priest and the liturgical ministers (*readers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, altar servers*) come in procession through the congregation to the front of the church, joining with the people in singing the gathering **hymn***. This hymn is generally a song in praise of God, or a song which is appropriate for the Church season or feast.

Sign of the Cross and Greeting

When the priest and ministers arrive at the foot of the altar they make a sign of reverence — either a **genuflection*** or a deep bow. The priest kisses the altar as a mark of respect.

Mass always begins with the priest and people together making the Sign of the Cross. We acknowledge that we are in the presence of God, in and through Christ.

The priest greets the people, e.g.
The Lord be with you.

They reply,
And with your spirit.



B

Liturgy of the Word

The move to the Liturgy of the Word is marked by several things:

- ▶ The focus shifts to a different place — the lectern*
- ▶ We give our attention to a different person — the reader
- ▶ We alter our posture — we sit
- ▶ We begin a different type of activity — we listen and respond to the Word of God

Now your word
is a lamp to my feet,
a light on my path.

Psalm 119: 105
Jerusalem Bible



Only one activity takes place at the lectern — the Word of God is proclaimed.

We hear about the Good News of our salvation in Jesus Christ.

It is through the Readings and the Homily* that God speaks to us and invites us to live as disciples* of Jesus.

There are three Readings and a Homily in the Liturgy of the Word on Sundays, together with a Responsorial Psalm* and a verse to welcome the Gospel*.



Readings from Scripture

First Reading *(people sit)*

This reading is generally taken from the **Hebrew*** Scriptures (*Old Testament*) or in the Easter Season, from the **Acts of the Apostles***. The Hebrew Scriptures which are part of the Christian Bible, contain the account of God's self-revelation to the Jewish people and tell the story of God's special relationship with them in the centuries before Jesus was born. We see in the Scriptures the foretelling of the Messiah and the preparation of the Jewish people for this great event.

At the conclusion of the reading the people respond with the words, *Thanks be to God*. There should be a short period of silence so that we can reflect on the words we have just heard. Our community response is made through the singing or reciting of a Psalm.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalms are hymns or songs. They have been a part of Jewish and Christian prayer for centuries. The Lectionary — the book containing all the readings that are used for Mass — includes a Responsorial Psalm for every First Reading. These psalms have been carefully chosen to match the Reading. The preferred manner of praying the psalm is to have a **cantor*** sing the verses, with the people joining in the **antiphon***.

Second Reading

This reading generally comes from one of the letters (Epistles) of the apostles. Sometimes these letters dealt with situations that had arisen in the early Church. They were written to encourage the early Christians to keep living as Jesus wanted them to live.

D

Concluding Rites

Blessing

The word 'blessing' has many meanings. In Scripture it is used to mean:

- ▶ praise
- ▶ divine favour
- ▶ a prayer that God shall be with a certain person or thing, or
- ▶ the dedication of a person or thing to a sacred purpose.

*May God,
who has called you
out of darkness
into his wonderful light,
pour out in kindness
his blessing upon you
and make your hearts firm
in faith, hope and charity.*

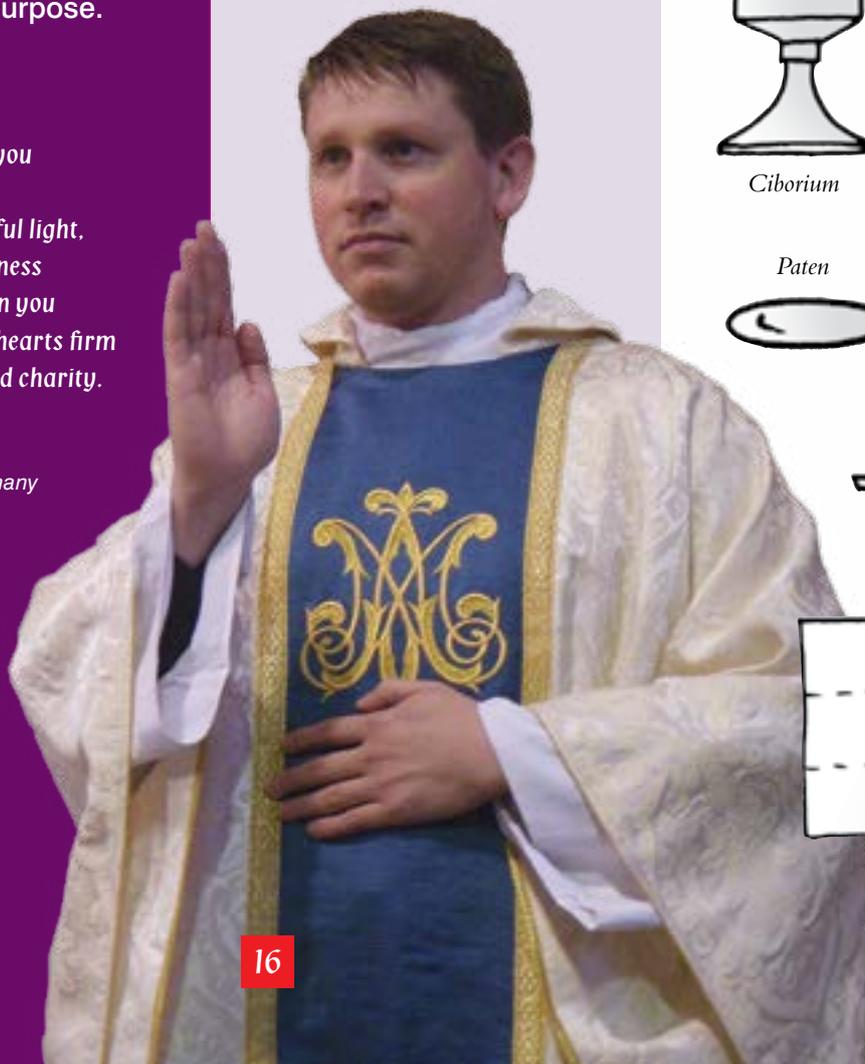
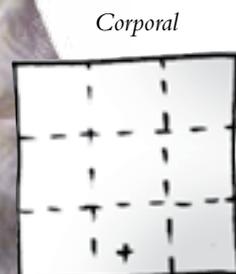
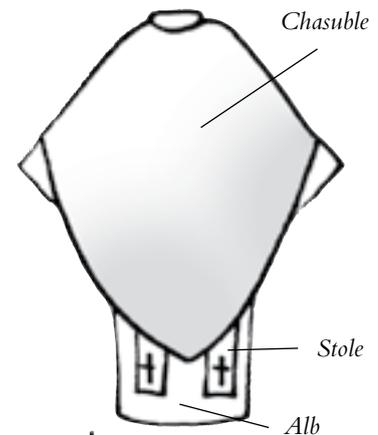
*Solemn Blessing
Roman Missal —
Feast of the Epiphany*

The Blessing and Dismissal

The priest's greeting and blessing is important. By raising his hand and making the Sign of the Cross, he calls down God's help and protection upon the people. The priest then dismisses the assembly.

We are called to go into the world to do good works, to thank God for what we have received and to be faithful witnesses to the Gospel.

As the priest and other **liturgical ministers*** leave the assembly a recessional hymn may be sung.



Liturgical Books

The most commonly used books in the Roman Rite are the Lectionary and the Roman Missal (also known as the Sacramentary).

The Lectionary contains all the Scripture readings that are required for Mass, the celebration of the other sacraments, and for other ritual occasions.

It also includes the responsorial psalms and the gospel acclamations.



There are three books that make up the Lectionary —

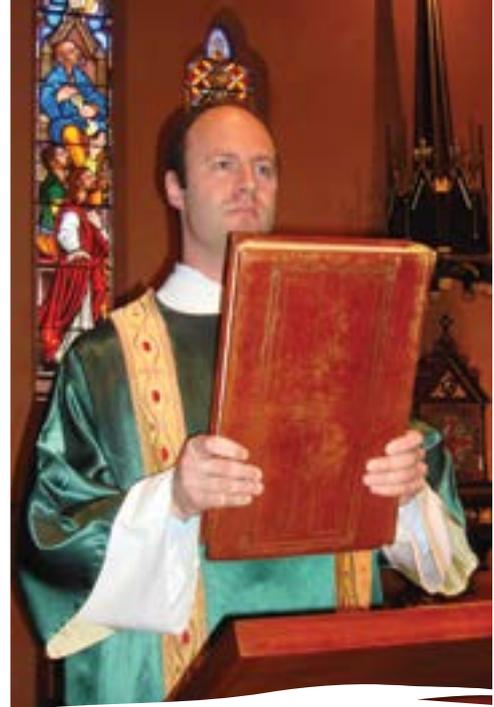
- 1 Book One** contains all the readings that will be used on the Sundays of the year, as well as the readings for the weekdays of the seasons (Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter).
- 2 Book Two** contains all the readings that will be used on the weekdays of Ordinary Time and the readings for the feasts of Saints.
- 3 Book Three** contains the readings for the celebration of all the Sacraments, for Masses for special occasions and needs, and for Funeral Masses.

The Roman Missal (Mass book) includes instructions on how to celebrate Mass in the Roman Rite.

It also includes:

- ▶ The Ordinary of the Mass. (the unchanging parts of the Mass)
- ▶ The Proper of the Mass (the prayers particular to the Mass of the Day: the Opening Prayer, the Prayer over the Gifts, and the Prayer after Communion).
- ▶ The complete Order of Mass.
- ▶ The Entrance and Communion Antiphons.

Some people like to follow the Mass with their own Sunday Missal, which has in it the Order of Mass, the Readings and Prayers for each of the Sundays of the Year and some of the major feasts throughout the year.



A Deacon elevates the Book of the Gospels

*Lord Jesus Christ,
you give us your body and blood
in the eucharist as a sign that even now
we share your life.*

*May we come to possess it completely
in the kingdom where you live
for ever and ever.*

*Prayer after Communion —
Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ
Roman Missal*

Below:

*A wood carving depicting
the Good Samaritan
Artist: Sr Jacinta Shailer scs
Holy Spirit Church, Seacombe Gardens,
South Australia*



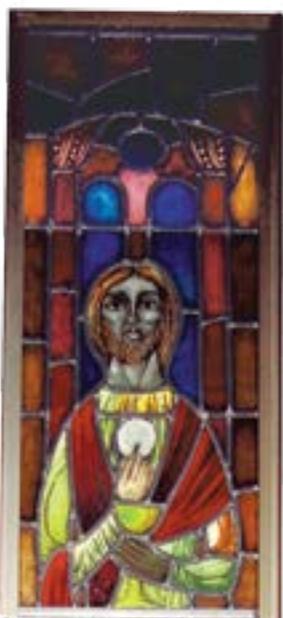
Sabbath

The seventh day of the week (Saturday), the day of rest and religious observance for the Jewish people, is called the Sabbath. The *Jews* observe the *Sabbath* as a day of rest, because the story of creation speaks of *God* completing the whole of creation in six days, and then resting on the seventh. (See *Genesis 2:3*)



Above:
Stained Glass Window —
Sacred Heart Church, Mildura
Victoria

Below:
Stained Glass Window —
Mary Help of Christians Church,
Morphett Vale, South Australia



Sacrifice of the Mass

The *Mass* is referred to as a *sacrifice* because it makes present to us the *sacrifice* of *Jesus* on the Cross.

Sacristy

The *sacristy* is the room in the church where the *vestments*, *sacred vessels* and other items used during worship are kept. The *priest* puts on his vestments in the *sacristy*.

Salvation

Salvation means *saving*. It is through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of *Jesus*, that we have been saved from sin. *God's* love, forgiveness, healing and freedom were brought to the world. *Jesus* opened the way for all people to be in right relationship with *God*.

Sanctuary Bells

In many churches these are rung at special moments in the eucharistic prayer: e.g. elevation of the host and chalice.

Scriptures

The Scriptures are the books of the *Bible*. The Bible is divided into two parts, the *Old Testament* (consisting of the Hebrew Scriptures and some other works written before the time of *Christ*) and the *New Testament* (made up of the four Gospels, the *Acts of the Apostles*, a number of letters (*Epistles*) to the early Christian Churches, and the *Book of Revelation*.)

Sin

Sin refers to the deliberate choice to do what is known to be wrong. We can commit a *sin* not only by doing something that we know to be against *God's* law, but also by failing to do something that we ought to do.

Solemn Mass

Solemn Mass is a special sung form of the *Mass*.

Synagogue

The place of gathering and worship for the *Jewish* community.

Tabernacle

The tabernacle is the ornate safe in which the *Blessed Sacrament* is reserved in churches. It is usually made of wood, stone or metal, and is rectangular or round in shape. It is generally located in the *sanctuary* of the church or a side chapel.

A small lamp (*sanctuary lamp*) burns nearby to indicate the presence of the *Blessed Sacrament*.

Venerate

To venerate is to make a sign of reverence, e.g. genuflect, bow, touch the cross or kiss the feet of the crucified *Christ*.

Tabernacle



Below right:
The Risen Christ —
St John the Apostle Church,
Goolwa, South Australia

On the day before he was to suffer,
he took the bread in his holy
and venerable hands,
and with eyes raised
to heaven to you, O God,
his almighty Father,
giving you thanks, he said
the blessing, broke the bread
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

Take this, all of you, and eat of it,
for this is my Body which will be
given up for you.

In a similar way, when supper was ended,
he took this precious chalice
in his holy and venerable hands,
and once more giving you thanks,
he said the blessing and gave the chalice
to his disciples, saying:

Take this, all of you, and drink from it,
for this is the chalice of my Blood,
the Blood of the new and eternal covenant,
which will be poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this in memory of me.

Eucharistic Prayer 1. 2011 Translation

