

Preparing for the
Roman Missal, third edition
in the Catholic Diocese
of Springfield in Illinois

Booklet 5

Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts

For use in the week of 30 October 2011
or any other time

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Bread and wine,
gifts of creation,
prepared at the
altar in order
to be changed
into the
Body and Blood
of Christ.

◆ _____ ◆ _____ ◆

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Two tables. The focal point for the Liturgy of the Word is the **ambo**, the table of the Word. It is set aside for the proclamation of and by Christ present among us. The focal point for the Liturgy of the Eucharist is the **altar**. It is set aside for the sacrificial meal of and by Christ present and living among us.

This **preparation**, both of altar and of gifts, "is not in itself the sacrifice or offering but is instead a preparation [1] for the Eucharistic Prayer, the great act of blessing and thanksgiving that constitutes the Church's memorial offering of Christ's sacrifice, and [2] for Holy Communion."

Committee on Divine
Worship, USCCB.
*Introduction to the Order of
Mass*, no. 100.

The Preparation of the Gifts

Reverend Msgr. David Lantz
Pastor, Christ the King Parish, Springfield;
Director, Office for Ministry Formation and
Director, Office for the Diaconate, Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Following the Liturgy of the Word, we begin the second principal part of the Mass: the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The shift from Word to Eucharist is shown with the change in our focus from the table of the Word, the ambo, to the table of the Eucharist, the altar. The shift is highlighted by the movement that takes place toward and at the altar.

Taking us back to early liturgical traditions, this rite brings to mind three important theological elements of the Eucharistic liturgy. First, we recall that Mass is rooted in the Last Supper. During it, the Synoptic Gospels tell us, Jesus and the disciples celebrated the Passover meal which always included a preparation of gifts. So, too, our altars are prepared with necessary items: corporal, purificator, Missal, and chalice. Second, because the whole Mass is a sacrificial offering to God, the preparation of the gifts expresses the offertory nature of the celebration. We present the essential and simple gifts of bread and wine. Third, the Eucharist is not only the sacrifice of Christ but also the sacrifice of the Church – the participation in Christ's sacrifice.

The very simple and useful action of bringing the gifts forward and setting the table is a profound moment in the Mass. We, the faithful, are preparing to offer ourselves in this celebration along with the gifts. Bread and wine are brought forward. The wheat and the grapes used in their production are a precious gift from God. The gifts represent our cooperation between God, the Creator, and his creatures, human beings. Bread is one of the most basic foods common in every culture. It represents what we need to stay alive. Wine is elegant, refined, and festive. We read in Psalm 104 that God blesses the earth to serve our needs, bringing forth "bread from the earth and wine to cheer the heart." Jesus takes these two natural symbols and makes them so much more for us, turning them into his very Body and Blood. We receive and place these gifts in the hands of Christ to be transformed, by placing them into the hands of the priest. In this action, we ask that our lives may become what Christ's life was and is.

Jesus' once and for all sacrifice on the cross was a gift beyond all imagining and one to which we can never adequately respond. However inadequate, we must respond for this is a holy exchange which God has initiated. The preparation of the gifts is a key ritual for expressing that response to God's graciousness by returning to God gifts first given to us.



Other Gifts

Eliot Kapitan
Director, Office for Worship and the Catechumenate,
Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Bread. Wine. Precious gifts. They are not the only ones carried in procession. Other gifts for the needs of the Church and the poor are also brought in procession by members of the faithful. Most typically this is the weekly envelop for support of the parish staff, work and ministry, and upkeep of the buildings and property, and works for charity and justice. There are other collections as well: for national and diocesan needs, for local charities and religious organizations, etc. Sometimes there is the gathering of real food and clothing for those in need. These must be real gifts, not mere token items that will be carried in procession but then taken back at the end of Mass and returned to parish or school use.

This procession of gifts powerfully expresses the active participation of all the faithful present for the Eucharist. It also shows our awareness and support in the apostolic work, the social mission of the Church.

Bread and wine are taken to the altar. Other gifts are placed near the altar – but not on it – or in another suitable place.

Processions. There are at least four processions during Sunday Mass. Each of them are graced and gifted moments.

First the ministers, led by the cross, process to the altar during the Entrance Song.

Second, the *Book of the Gospels* may be carried from the altar table to the table of the Word, the ambo during the Liturgy of the Word.

Third, some members of the faithful process with gifts to the altar so that some are set aside and bread and wine are prepared for the sacrificial meal.

Fourth, most of the assembly process to the altar for Communion.

Liturgical processions take us to table, to Word proclaimed, to holy meal. They take us to Christ. What a gift!

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Mass Outline

Using New Titles

Introductory Rites

Liturgy of the Word

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts

Song
Preparation of the Altar
Collection of Gifts
Procession of Gifts
Blessing
[Incensing of Altar and Gifts]
Washing of Hands
Prayer over the Offerings

Eucharistic Prayer

Communion Rite

Concluding Rites

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Old Texts from the *Order of Mass, 1985*

Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts. It is most common that **music**, either a song or an instrumental, begins this preparation which also begins the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Two ritual actions happen at the same time: (1) the **altar is prepared** with linen, vessels, and book and (2) the **collection is gathered** from the faithful.

The rubrics (description of what is to be done in Liturgy) remind the Church that sufficient bread and wine "for the communion of the faithful are to be prepared. It is most important that the faithful should receive the body of the Lord in hosts consecrated at the same Mass and should share the cup....Communion is thus a clearer sign of sharing in the sacrifice which is actually taking place."

Procession of the Gifts. Members of the congregation bring forward bread and wine and other gifts for the needs of the Church and the poor.

Prayers. They may be said aloud by priest and people or quietly by the priest alone.

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.

Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will become for us the bread of life.

People: Blessed be God for ever.

Priest: Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.

Through your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.
It will become our spiritual drink.

People: Blessed be God for ever.

Incense and Washing hands. The priest may incense the offerings and the altar. A minister may also incense the priest and the people. Then the priest washes his hands.

Invitation to the Prayer over the Gifts. In the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois, when the priest returns to the center of the altar after washing his hands, the assembly stands for the invitation.

Priest: Pray, brethren, that our sacrifice
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

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

New Texts from the *Order of Mass, 2011*

Preparation of the Gifts. The preparation of the altar, the gathering of and procession with the gifts, the preparation of the gifts at the altar, and the place of music within this part of Mass remains unchanged. This first part of the Liturgy of the Eucharist is preparation for the Eucharistic Prayer.

Invitation to the Prayer over the Offerings. In this diocese, the assembly still stands before the priest makes the invitation, the words by the priest are slightly changed, and the adjective “holy” is added to Church in the response by the people.

Priest: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters),
that my sacrifice and yours
may be acceptable to God,
the almighty Father.

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

Prayer over the Offerings. The title of this presidential prayer now uses “offerings” instead of “gifts”. It more clearly distinguishes what we have always kept separate. Many gifts may be brought in procession. Some gifts support the Church and the works of charity and justice – these are never placed on the altar but are set aside and later used as intended. Two gifts, bread and wine, are the offerings placed on the altar – they will become the Body and Blood of Christ the Lord during the Eucharistic Prayer and then received during Communion.

The assembly’s “Amen” concludes this Preparation of the Gifts.

Second Collections.

If there is a second or special collection, it is also taken up here and not at a time later in the Liturgy (for example, after Communion).

Song. The song that began at the beginning of this preparation continues at least until the gifts have been placed on the altar. It may continue during the blessing prayers which are then said very quietly by the priest. If the song ends when the gifts are placed on the altar, then they may be said aloud by the priest so that the people may respond.

Novena for a Fuller Participation in the Sacrament of the Eucharist



A novena is a way to pray nine times for something important to the lives of Christians. The novena is usually prayed nine days in a row or nine weeks on a set day or nine months on a set day. Since this "Novena for a Fuller Participation in the Sacrament of the Eucharist" is included with *Catholic Times*, that is published every two weeks, it may be used on any day within that period. A parish group could use it as prayer during its meeting.

The complete novena is found in Appendix C in the *Parish Guide to Implementing the Roman Missal, Third Edition* by the Committee on Divine Worship, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. ISBN: 978-1-60137-093-8. It is available from USCCB Publishing, www.usccbpublishing.org or (800) 235-8722.

Day Five:

That those in consecrated life will keep the Eucharist at the center of their lives.

BEGINNING

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

All: **Amen.**

BIBLE READING – John 6:51-58

- From the *Lectionary for Mass*, no. 981.9 – Votive Mass of the Most Holy Eucharist
- My Flesh is true food and my Blood is true drink.

✠ A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said to the Jews who were present:
"I am the living bread that came down from heaven;
whoever eats this bread will live forever;
and the bread that I will give
is my Flesh for the life of the world."

The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying,
"How can this man give us his Flesh to eat?"

Jesus said to them,

"Amen, amen, I say to you,
unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink his
Blood,
you do not have life within you.

Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood
has eternal life,
and I will raise him on the last day.

For my Flesh is true food,
and my Blood is true drink.

Whoever eats my Flesh and drinks my Blood
remains in me and I in him

Just as the living Father sent me
and I have life because of the Father,
so also the one who feeds on me
will have life because of me.

This is the bread that came down from heaven.
Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died,
whoever eats this bread will live forever."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

REFLECTION

"The Eucharist—the center of our Christian being—is founded on Jesus' sacrifice for us; it is born from the suffering of love which culminated in the Cross. We live by this love that gives itself. It gives us the courage and strength to suffer with Christ and for him in this world, knowing that in this very way our life becomes great and mature and true."

Pope Benedict XVI, Homily at Mass for the Opening of the Year of Saint Paul, 28 June 2008.

SILENCE

FAITH SHARING

PRAYER

O God, who inspire and bring to fulfillment every good intention, direct your servants into the way of eternal salvation, and as they have left all things to devote themselves entirely to you, grant that, following Christ and renouncing the things of this world, they may faithfully serve you and their neighbor in a spirit of poverty and in humility of heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

SONG – Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

* Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here be - low;
Praise him a - bove, you heav'n - ly host:
Praise Fa - ther, Son and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Doxology, Thomas Ken, 1637-1711.
Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH, LM; Louis Bourgeois, c. 1510-1561.

- What did I notice, what stood out in the reading or the reflection that I find helpful?
- How can I keep the Eucharist at the center of my life?
- Why should I want to both eat and drink at the table of the Lord?

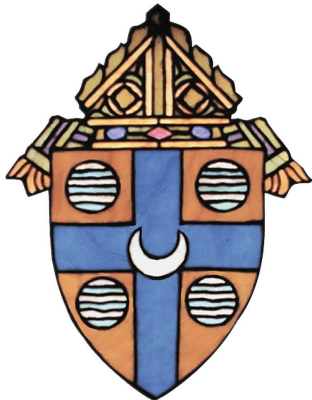


Rendering of a medallion from the Cathedral Church of the Immaculate Conception by Jane Bucci. Reprinted with permission.

Prayer of Self-Offering

Receive, Lord, my entire freedom.
Accept the whole of my memory,
my intellect and my will.
Whatever I have or possess,
it was you who gave it to me;
I restore it to you in full,
and I surrender it completely
to the guidance of your will.
Give me only love of you
together with your grace,
and I am rich enough,
and ask for nothing more.
Amen.

St. Ignatius of Loyola, priest, 1491-1556, and
Founder of the Society of Jesus (Jesuits).
This memorial is celebrated each year on 31 July.



Preparing for the *Roman Missal, third edition* in the Catholic Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

This nine-part series is to help the people of the diocese prepare for the new words and music that will be used at all Masses beginning on the weekend of the First Sunday of Advent, 26-27 November 2011. It also provides a guided way to pray for a fuller participation in Mass.

- Booklet 1 – Mass: Introductory Rites, Part One
- Booklet 2 – Mass: Introductory Rites, Part Two
- Booklet 3 – Mass: Liturgy of the Word, Part One
- Booklet 4 – Mass: Liturgy of the Word, Part Two
- Booklet 5 – Mass: Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts**
- Booklet 6 – Mass: Eucharistic Prayer
- Booklet 7 – Mass: Communion Rite
- Booklet 8 – Mass: Concluding Rites
- Booklet 9 – People's Parts for Mass

Office for Worship and
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Diocese of Springfield
in Illinois.
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