

# "Pray The Mass"

POPE ST. PIUS X



## A Text-Book on the Mass

By

Rt. Rev. Mgr. JOHN T. McMAHON

M.A., Ph.D., H.Dip.Ed.

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PART I.

For Primary Schools.

THIRTEENTH EDITION REVISED



**Pellegrini & Co. Pty. Ltd.**

*Church Furnishers, Booksellers, School Suppliers.*  
ADELAIDE, BRISBANE, CANBERRA,  
MELBOURNE, PERTH,  
SYDNEY



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*Nihil Obstat:*

F. CAHILL, C.S.S.R.,  
Censor Deputatus

*Imprimatur:*

✠ RAYMUNDUS PRENDIVILLE  
Archiep. Perthensis

June, 1959.

60759 — 963

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REGISTERED AT THE GENERAL POST OFFICE,  
SYDNEY, FOR TRANSMISSION THROUGH THE POST  
AS A BOOK.

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WHOLLY SET UP AND PRINTED IN AUSTRALIA BY  
PELLEGRINI & Co. PTY. LTD.,  
522 KENT STREET, SYDNEY.

1959

## AN APPRECIATION

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*The Pictures of the Parts of the Mass  
were made at St. Patrick's College, Manly,  
with the gracious co-operation of the  
Vice-President,  
the Very Rev. Monsignor T. Veech, D. Sc. Hist.,  
and the Rev. Patrick L. Murphy, S.T.D.  
The author wishes to thank them and others  
who helped in the production.*

NOW AVAILABLE

# “Pray the Mass”

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## PART II

A Text-book for Catholic Schools

BY

Rt. Rev. Mgr. JOHN T. McMAHON

M.A., Ph.D., H. Dip. Ed.

For Post-Primary Grades



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# **“Pray the Mass.”**

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **AT MASS WITH THE PRIEST**

My dear Children —

Every week we are going to talk about the Holy Mass. We shall call the different parts of the Mass “steps,” so that we may follow the movements of the priest as he goes from the Sign of the Cross to the Last Gospel. We divide the action of the Mass into “steps” to remind us that praying the Mass is like climbing the Hill of Calvary in union with Our Blessed Lord. There are 33 “steps”, one for each year of Our Lord’s Life on this earth. At each lesson we shall take a number of these “steps” until we finish the whole Mass. I shall ask you questions, for example, “What colour were the vestments the priest wore last Sunday?” “What did the priest do when he came out on the altar?” “What did he do when he walked up the steps?” You will watch the priest on Sunday and be ready with your answers on Monday morning. You will quickly learn all about the different parts of the Mass if when walking to Church on Sunday morning you ask yourselves: “Now, what did my teacher ask me to watch the priest doing to-day? Oh yes, I remember, I am to watch him at the Offertory, to see how he offers up the Host, and pours the wine into the chalice.” Going to Mass with a question to be answered on Monday morning will help you to be very attentive to what the priest is doing. Then when you can answer the question of your teacher, you can ask some. You watched the priest carefully and saw what he did. It is your turn to ask questions now. “Please, teacher, why did Father kiss the altar?” or “Why did Father bless the water and not bless the wine at the offertory?” The more questions you ask the more

pleased your teacher will be to answer them. You will learn by watching what the priest does at each "step"; knowing what he does, ask why he does it, and you will never forget the parts of the Mass no matter how old you may grow.

I think, children dear, that we shall all be very happy when the time comes to talk about the Mass. We shall collect pictures of the priest at Mass, and have a small altar and a tiny priest to go over again all the "steps" that we have learned by watching the priest at Mass, and by asking why he did so and so.

### *Is the Mass an action?*

Before we begin to learn the "steps", I must tell you that the Mass is an action, the noblest action that man can perform on earth, the action that gives God the highest honour, the greatest praise, the most satisfaction, and the deepest thanks that He can receive. Young and tiny as you are, dear children, Almighty God wishes you to take a part in that action, and that is why you are to go to Mass on Sunday with questions to be answered on Monday, so that you may learn what the priest does, and, more important still, why he does it. Then, and only then, can you take part in this action, which is the Mass.

### *In what language is the Mass said?*

Listen to the priest. Can you understand what he is saying? No, he is speaking a language called Latin. That is the language of the Mass, which has also a few words in Greek and Hebrew. Why in Latin, you ask? Well, Latin is a dead language, that is, no people speak it to-day, and being a dead language it does not change like English and French, which are living and always growing. It is a great aid to Bishops and priests who speak different languages to have the Missal or Mass-book, written in Latin, a common language for all, and a language that does not change.

### *The Four Aims of the Mass*

One thing more, dear children, and we are ready to begin the 33 "steps". We come to Mass to do four things, namely: 1. To adore God, 2. To thank God, 3.

To beg God's pardon, 4. To ask God to help us.

We will pray the Mass better when we keep those four aims or ends in mind, and to help us to remember them, here is a little verse.

**Ask** till the Offertory

**Adore** at the bell

Till the communion beg **Pardon**

Then your **Thanks** tell.

Petition: Again and again the Missal prayers ask Almighty God to accept our offering of the Mass and ourselves with it. Unless God accepts, the Mass does not please Him.

God is most generous within the Mass and we should ask Him for many things.

Adoration: The Mass is the perfect act of adoring God. Through Baptism we became members of Christ's Mystical Body and so we can unite ourselves with Him in all the Masses He offers His Eternal Father this day and every day.

Reparation: Sin is an ugly, real thing which God hates. Through the Mass we beg God's pardon for our own sins and for all sinners.

Thanksgiving: For God's goodness to us, let us make the Mass a grand: 'Thank you, dear Lord'.

### *What is the Mass of the Catechumens?*

From the beginning of Mass to the Creed is known as the Mass of the Catechumens. In the early days of the Church, the Creed, or profession of faith of priest and people, closed the first part of the Mass, and all who were not yet baptized, the **Catechumens** (Greek: *katechoumenos*, under instruction), were dismissed as, without having received the sacrament of Baptism, no one was permitted to remain for the Sacred Mysteries of the Mass. 'Why' you may ask? In the beginning the Church was extremely careful not to expose the Blessed Eucharist to lack of respect. It was prudent to have pagans instructed and baptised before they took part in the Mass. The same danger no longer exists so we permit non-Catholics to attend the whole of Mass.



In the Mass of the Catechumens there are thirteen steps, namely:—1st. The Sign of the Cross; 2nd. The Opening Psalm; 3rd. The Confiteor; 4th. Kissing the Altar Stone; 5th. The Introit; 6th. Kyrie Eleison; 7th. Gloria in excelsis; 8th. Dominus Vobiscum; 9th. Collect; 10th. The Epistle; 11th. Changing the Missal; 12th. The Gospel; 13th. The Creed. Let us, children dear, learn something about each of these:

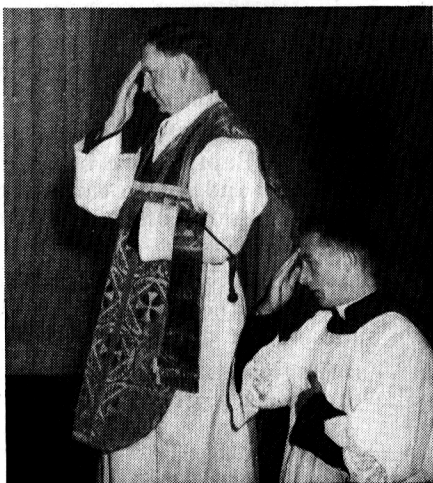
### **1st Step. The Sign of the Cross**

The priest makes the Sign of the Cross, and we make it with him. The sign of the Cross is made fifty-one times during the celebration of Mass.

Think of what you do when you sign yourselves and say: "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." That is an act of faith in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. If

you make the Sign of the Cross before everything you do and think of what you are doing, you will offer up all you do to God.

When Our Lady appeared in the Grotto at Lourdes to the little girl, Bernadette, she taught her how to make the Sign of the Cross very reverently and carefully, and Bernadette always remembered how Our Lady did it. Bernadette copied her Beautiful Lady and made the Sign of the Cross with so much love and meaning that she impressed everyone.



*The Beginning of Mass.*

The Mass is the biggest thing at which you can assist on earth. Begin well by making the Sign of the Cross slowly, carefully, and thoughtfully.

### **2nd Step. The Opening Prayer**

Read this opening prayer which the priest and Mass-server are saying at the foot of the altar. "I will go unto the altar of God," says the priest, and the Mass-server repeats: "I will go unto the altar of God." Still the priest stands at the foot of the altar, as if rooted to the spot, as if something were holding him back, as if the gates to the altar were closed. Then we see him bow down, and we hear his humble words: "I confess I am a sinner; I confess before all; I do so in a voice that all may hear, and say that it is through my fault, through my most grievous fault; and I appeal to the saints in heaven to help me in invoking the mercy of God."

### **3rd Step. The Confiteor**

To approach God on His altar, the soul must be purified by a confession of sin. Confession is properly made in a court, in this case, the holy court of heaven. This is the court of

God Almighty;  
its Queen, Our Lady Immaculate;  
St. Michael, God's champion against sinful Lucifer;  
St. John, the Baptist, preacher of penance;  
the Apostles,  
St. Peter, through whom Christ gave the power  
of forgiving sins;  
and  
St. Paul, author of those warning words:  
"Whosoever shall eat this bread, or  
drink of the chalice of the Lord unworthily,  
shall be guilty  
of the body and of the blood of the Lord";  
and  
all the Saints.

To these and to all present the priest confesses his sins. The server makes the same confession in the name of the people present. Let us make it with him.

Having made this humble confession of sin the priest no longer hesitates but ascends unto the altar of God. There is only one man who can approach God, and that is the humble repentant man who bows down his head and acknowledges his sins.

Let us, dear children, ever keep in mind that the passports that open the gates of heaven are humility and a contrite heart. At each Mass we attend, let us make in humility and sorrow the same confession of our sins which the priest makes before he goes up the steps of the altar.

When we strike our breast and say: "Through my fault," let us recall the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. How Our Blessed Lord loved the humble Publican, who stood afar off, deep in the shadows, not daring to raise his eyes to heaven, but striking his breast saying: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner!"

Our Blessed Lord will love us also if we say the Confiteor with humility and sorrow.

### *A Child's Act of Contrition*

"I am sorry, gentle Jesus,  
For the wrongs that I have done,  
For the sorrow I have caused You —  
Mary's tender little Son.

I am only little, Jesus,  
But I know I shouldn't do  
All those naughty little actions  
That have given pain to You.

But I didn't think, dear Jesus,  
Of the sadness in Your Eyes,  
When I was disobedient,  
And when I told those lies.

For I love You, little Jesus,  
And I know You love me, too,  
And You know I'm really sorry:  
Please forgive me, Jesus, do.



When I grow up, dear Jesus,  
Will You keep me in Your Heart,  
So that I may never wound You  
And from You never part?

Should I forget, dear Jesus,  
And sometimes give You pain,  
Just help me to be sorry  
And take me back again."

— J.D.

#### **4th Step. Kissing the Altar Stone**

Watch the priest go up the steps, bend down and kiss the altar, which, later on, he will kiss several times. Ask yourselves why? and keep on asking why? at each step until you can understand it all.

*Why, then, does the Priest kiss the Altar Stone?*

Underneath the cloths there is an altar stone. That stone is really the altar; the other is just a table upon which it rests. Listen to what the priest prays as he kisses the stone: "We beseech Thee, O Lord, by the merits of Thy saints, whose relics are here, and of all the saints, that Thou wouldst vouchsafe to forgive me all my sins." In that stone there is a well which contains the relics of some saints placed there by the Bishop when he consecrated the stone. Most of the relics come from the Roman Catacombs, those underground passages, like big rabbit-burrows, where the early Christians hid from the Roman soldiers.

*But why are the Catacombs so rich in Relics?*

As the priest kisses the altar stone we are back in the great open-air theatre in Rome called the Colosseum. Opposite is the royal box and in it sits the emperor. We see the band of Christian prisoners. Watch them, young and old, rich and poor, being led before the royal box. They are asked to give up Christ and young and old refuse. The soldiers leave the arena; the great audience of thousands of Romans are on tip toe, excited, eagerly awaiting the raising of the doors that will let

loose hungry wild beasts on the Christians. A mighty cheer rings round the Colosseum as the savage wild beasts tear their defenceless prey limb from limb.

The show is over. The great audience goes home. The arena is stained with blood, the blood of the martyrs. Under cover of night friends enter the arena, gather up the bones, all that is left, and bring them back to the Catacombs where they are buried with many others in stone tombs.

In that altar stone which the priest has kissed, are relics of some of these early martyrs. How proud we should be that we belong to the same faith for which the martyrs died! How old that Church is that brings us back to the days of the Catacombs and the Colosseum!

### 5th Step. The Introit

The priest moves to the right, the **Epistle** side, where there is the big book called the **Missal**, and reads a psalm which we call the **Introit** or beginning prayer in the Missal for that day's Mass. For each Mass there is a special Introit which indicates what the Mass of the day will be like.\*

### 6th Step. Kyrie Eleison

The priest comes to the centre of the altar and says: "Kyrie Eleison." These are Greek words meaning "Lord have mercy upon us." Kyrie Eleison is said six times and Christe Eleison three times. They have been said in the Mass for nearly 1500 years. This is a prayer for mercy. While you ask for mercy for yourselves and for others, recall the day when the ten lepers "standing afar off" called out as Our Blessed Lord and His disciples passed by: "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" He heard their appeal as He always does when made to Him in confidence. With the same confidence and trust in His Mercy, let us say: "Kyrie Eleison! Christe Eleison!" and He will make us clean.

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\* Epistle (Latin: *epistola*, a letter)  
Missal (Latin: *Missale*, Mass Book)  
Psalm (Greek: *psalmos*, a song, a chant)  
Introit (Latin: *introitus*, entrance)

Jesus did not pass by that town again, and had not the lepers roused themselves they would never have been cured. Let no Mass pass by without a humble cry for mercy at the Kyrie Eleison.

### **7th Step. Gloria in Excelsis**

The priest remains at the centre of the altar and says the "Gloria": "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men of good-will." These words of joy and praise were first sung by the angels on the hill-sides outside Bethlehem as they appeared to the shepherds in the darkness of the night, and announced the glad tidings that Christ was born in a stable over at Bethlehem. In seasons of penance, such as Lent and Advent, when the priest wears violet vestments, there is no "Gloria." The "Kyrie Eleison" is always said.

#### *At the Gloria*

"I offer,  
Every flower that ever grew,  
Every bird that ever flew,  
Every wind that ever blew,  
To praise Thee God!

Every cloudlet here below,  
Every flake of virgin snow,  
Every human joy and woe,  
To bless Thee, God!"

### **8th Step. Dominus Vobiscum**

The priest kisses the altar, turns round and says: "May the Lord be with you," and the server answers: "And may He be with You also." The words of the priest — "May the Lord be with you," beg a blessing on the people so that they may join with special devotion in the prayer that follows. The answer, "And may He be with You also," is spoken by the server for the people, to call down a blessing on the priest.

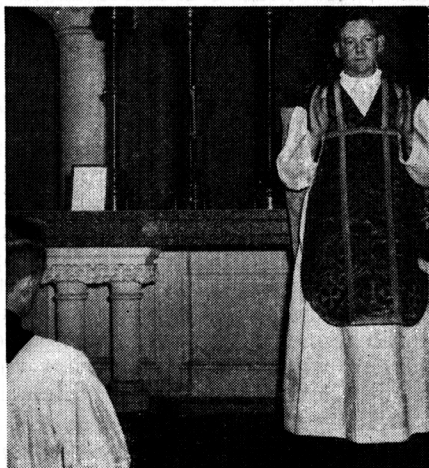
#### *Why is Dominus Vobiscum said so often?*

During the Mass the priest greets the people with



the salutation — “The Lord be with you” — eight times.

Four times he turns from the altar to do so. The “Dominus vobiscum” of the priest is like the “Pay attention” of the teacher when he would direct the attention of his pupils to something important. Each time you see the priest turning towards the people, opening his hands, and saying “Dominus vobiscum” loud enough for you to hear him, remember that he is asking



*The Dominus Vobiscum.*

God to bless you so that you may say the prayer that follows with great devotion, and that you may unite with him in offering up the Mass.

The word “goodbye” was originally “God be with you,” and that is almost the same as “Dominus vobiscum.” Did someone say “goodbye” to you, you would not keep silent, so, when the priest says “May the Lord be with you,” answer in your hearts: “And may He be with You also.”

### **9th Step. The Collect**

Watch the priest bowing towards the Cross saying: “Oremus” “Let us pray,” let priest and people pray together. Note his arms outstretched, recalling the custom in Eastern lands. Our Blessed Lord prayed thus from the Cross. The priest is reading a prayer, called the Collect, which, like the Introit, is different for each Mass.

### *Why is the Collect so called?*

The prayer is called a **Collect\*** because it represents the united prayer of all the assembled people, presented to God, through Jesus Christ, by the priest.



*The Collect.*

The **Collect** always begins with: "Oremus", and usually ends with: "Through Our Lord Jesus Christ," which means we are praying through Him, asking Him to accept our prayers and place them before His Eternal father. In those Masses where the "Collect" is addressed to our Saviour Himself, the ending is: "Who with the

Father and the Holy Ghost liveth and reigneth, God for ever and ever. Amen." The server answers: "Amen." That is a Hebrew word meaning: "So let it be." When you answer "Amen" with the server you are making the prayer yours, and asking God to count it as if you had said it.

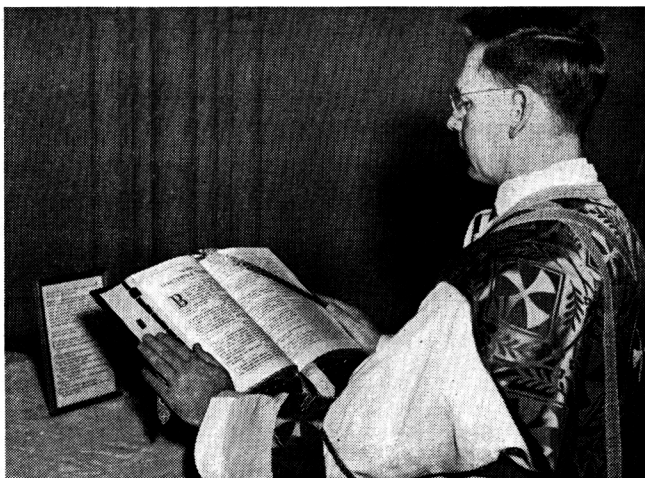
### **10th Step. The Epistle or Lesson**

The **Collects** said, the priest begins to read the **Epistle** or Lesson.\* Watch his hands resting on the Missal as he reads some portion of one of the Epistles or Letters written by the Apostles, or some Lesson or Reading of the Old Testament.

#### *Why are the priest's hands resting on the Missal?*

When we receive letters from our dear ones, we

- Collect (Latin: *collecta*, gathered, collected together)
- Lesson (Latin: *lectio*, a reading)



*The Epistle.*

hold them affectionately in our hands while reading them. That is the reason why the priest's hands are on the Missal. He is reading the letters posted to us in every Mass.

This reading from the Scriptures is called the Epistle because what was usually read in olden times was some extract from the letters (epistles) written by the Apostles, particularly St. Paul, who wrote 14 out of the 21 Epistles. Through these Epistles the Apostle sent instructions, advice, and encouragement to his scattered children, whom he was unable to visit again because of the great distances. How eagerly those little bands of the early Christians drank in every word that came to them through these Epistles! The Epistles have lessons for us also. At each Mass the Church, just like a dear Mother, gives us short, interesting little lessons, always different, to help us to learn more about saving our souls. At the end the server says: **Deo Gratias:** thanks be to God for this helpful letter.

### **11th Step. Changing the Missal**

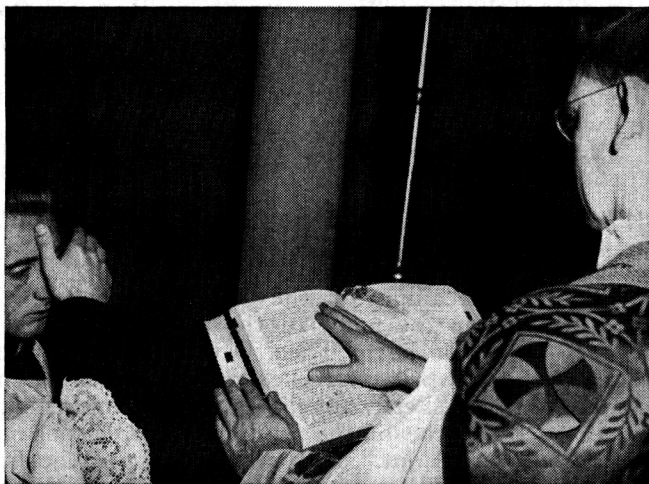
The server comes to the Epistle side to move the book. The priest turns to walk to the Gospel side, but pauses at the centre of the altar. There, aware of his unworthiness to proclaim the Gospel, he bends low, and appeals to God to cleanse his heart and lips as the lips of the prophet Isaias were cleansed with a burning coal.

As he moves towards the book, there is a big stir in the church; all the people are now standing, alert and attentive, for in the Gospel they shall hear the voice of God, and to bring that home to them the book has been changed from the Epistle to the Gospel side, and standing, they await its message.

#### *Why move the Missal?*

The changing of the Missal represents the difference Our Lord's coming made. Under the Old Law the Jews looked forward to His coming. Now that He has come we change the book for the Gospel, which tells us about Our Lord's life on earth.

### **12th Step. The Gospel**



*The Gospel.*

### *Why do we stand at the Gospel?*

We stand up to do honour to Our Lord whose story the Gospel tells. He is our King, so, we stand to hear about Him just as people stand to hear a proclamation from an earthly king. We stand also as the knights of old stood round their master, ready to do whatever he bade them.

Watch the priest; he makes the Sign of the Cross with his thumb on the Missal at the beginning of the Gospel to be read, and then he makes three little crosses with his thumb, one on his forehead, one on his lips, and one on his breast.

### *Why make those three little crosses?*

We must follow the priest's example, and, as we make them, let us remember that the cross on our forehead prays that the Gospel may be in our minds, that we may know and understand all it teaches; the cross on our lips means that we must speak the Gospel. That word "Gospel" means "good news," "good tidings," and who ever heard of anyone receiving a bit of good news and keeping it to himself? Therefore, we make the Sign of the Cross on our lips to remind ourselves that we must try to spread the Gospel, the "good news" about Our Lord. We make it on our breasts that He may abide in us, and make us love Him, for, once loving Him, we will keep His words and try to please Him.

Make those three little crosses slowly for each of them is a prayer.

### *Why does the priest kiss the Missal at the end of the Gospel?*

When the reading of the Gospel is ended, the server answers in the name of the people: "Laus tibi, Christe!"—"Praise be to Thee, O Christ!" The priest kisses the initial words of the extract just read, saying at the same time: "Per evangelica dicta deleantur nostra delicta"—"By virtue of the words of the Gospel may our sins be blotted out." Thus the reading of the holy Gospel is closed with a chant of thanksgiving, a kiss, and a prayer. The book of the Gospels was always held

in veneration, and when the priest kisses the open page of the Missal he expresses the sentiments of himself and of us who are present. In Requiem\* Masses the kissing of the Gospel and the prayer are omitted. The Church wishes us to concentrate on the thought of helping the souls of the faithful departed in Masses for the Dead, and consequently, she omits the exterior sign of joy (the kiss), and the prayer which begs a blessing on the living.

After listening to the voice of Christ preaching to us in the Gospel, what should we do next? Make an act of faith, of course, and that is what we are going to do now when we stand, as the priest proclaims the "Creed," which we follow in our books.

### **13th Step. The Creed**

"Credo" is a Latin word which means: "I believe." When we say the Creed at Mass we mention a list of things we believe. We may not understand all that this long Creed contains. Nevertheless we can join in its act of faith by whispering: "Dear Lord, I believe all that this Creed proclaims, every single word of it, and I believe it all because the Catholic Church says so."

This Creed is called the Nicene Creed; the one you usually say is the Apostles' Creed. The martyrs who died in the Colosseum at Rome did so because they believed in the Creed, and faced torture and death rather than deny any single truth in the Creed. We say it standing for we are proud of the memory of the martyrs who faced the wild beasts, torture, and death with the song of Faith on their lips.

We genuflect when the priest says: "And was made man." for that recalls the birth of Jesus at Bethlehem.

### ***What is the Mass of the Faithful?***

From the Offertory (Latin: *offere*, to offer) to the Last Gospel was known as the Mass of the Faithful in the early days of the Church, because those who remained to participate in the Holy Sacrifice were the Faithful (full of faith) who had preserved the grace

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\* *Requiem* (Latin: *requies*, rest).

of Baptism, or had renewed it through the Sacrament of Penance.

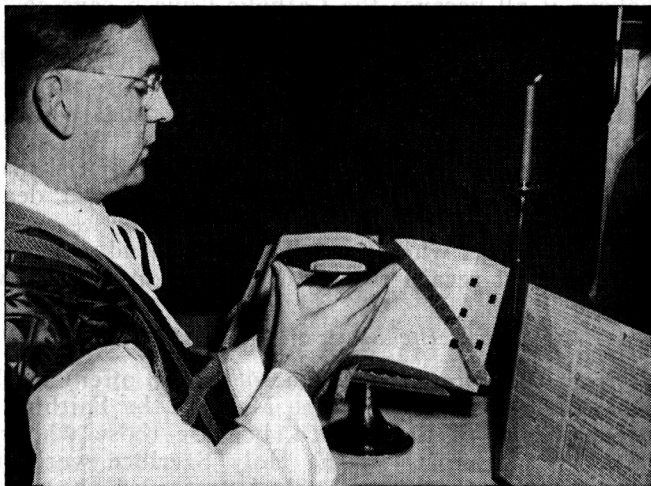
We may divide the Mass of the Faithful into three parts: the Offertory, the Canon, and the Communion.

#### **14th Step. The Offering of the Host**

We sit down now but that does not mean that we need not attend. We sit down so that we can watch the priest more closely. The priest uncovers the chalice and taking the paten in both hands, he raises his eyes to the crucifix and immediately lowers them upon the host, reciting at the same time the Offertory prayer.

The Offertory means making a present of something to God. Here, the priest, looking forward to the Consecration, presents "the unspotted Host," namely, the Body of Jesus under the appearance of bread to the Heavenly Father, to beg pardon for his own sins and the sins of us all.

As the priest says the Offertory prayer, let us join with him by offering ourselves to God. If we wish to please God, we must present our hearts, as a gift, on



*The Offering of the Host.*



the paten with Jesus: "O my God, I place myself on the paten. I wish to be offered with Jesus by the hands of the priest. I will never more grumble about anything. Whatever you do is right."

*How did the Offertory collection originate?*

At the Offertory there was a great scene of bustle in the early days of the Church. The faithful came in procession to lay their gifts before the altar; alms and clothing were collected for the poor, and the names of benefactors were read out. To-day all that is gone, and the only reminder of that busy scene is when the men move around the church to take up the Offertory collection. Do not let the Offertory box pass you by, but, young as you are, save something for the plate each Sunday.

*At the Offertory*

"Ah, what gift or present  
Jesus, can I bring?

I have nothing worthy  
Of my God and King.

But Thou art my Shepherd,  
I Thy little lamb,  
Take myself, dear Jesus,  
All I have and am."

— S.S.J.

**15th Step. Wine and Water**

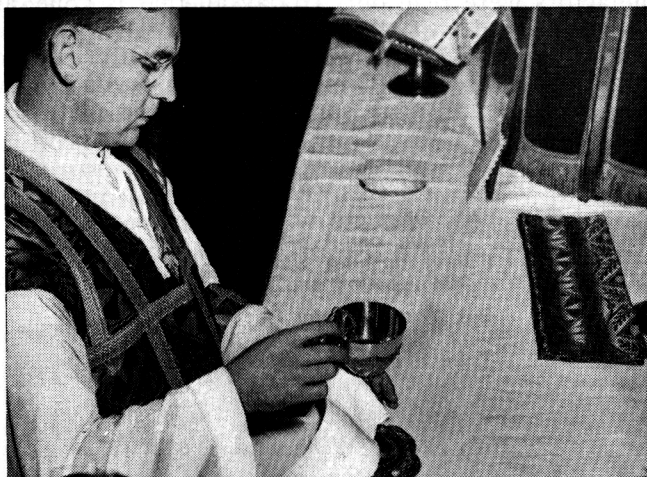
Keep your eyes on the priest and you will see him wiping the cup of the chalice and moving towards the Epistle side of the altar, where he takes the cruet of wine from the boy and pours some of it into the chalice. He then blesses the water in the cruet and lets fall a drop of it into the wine.

*Why does the priest mix this drop of water with the wine?*

1. The prayer he says as he blesses the water speaks of "the mystical union of this water and wine." To understand that one must remember that Our Lord has two natures: He is God and Man. His two natures, Divine and Human, are so closely united that nothing can separate them. The drop of water mixed with wine

shows how Our Lord's Divine Nature is joined with His Human Nature.

2. Another thing we learn is about ourselves. The rich coloured wine stands for Our Lord; the colourless water stands for us. When the water is mixed with the wine, it shows how we must be made one with Christ. Once the priest drops the water into the wine, he cannot get it back again, for that drop of water becomes wine. So must we be united with Christ; we must become one with Him.



*The Wine and Water.*

Let us think of this the next time we watch the priest letting the drop of water fall into the chalice. Union with Christ! How pleasing to God this makes us! Keeping that thought before us will help us to avoid sin which alone can separate us from Christ.

3. The mixture of water with the wine reminds us of the blood and water that flowed from the side of Christ when opened by a spear while He hung upon the Cross.

4. Water is mixed with the wine in the chalice because in Our Lord's day wine was never taken without water.

*Why does the priest bless the Water and not the Wine?*

To answer that we must remember the mixture of water and wine and what it signifies. The wine symbolises Christ Who has no need of a blessing. The water stands for us who greatly need a blessing. The Sign of the Cross does not apply so much to the water itself as to us represented by the water.

The blessing of the water is omitted in a Requiem\* Mass, for then we join with the priest in offering the Holy Sacrifice for the relief of some suffering soul in Purgatory. In a Solemn Requiem Mass the sub-deacon does not bring the Missal to be kissed by the celebrant. The water is blessed because it represents us on earth who are still liable to sin, and in need of a blessing. The Holy Souls in Purgatory are saved from further sin and do not need a blessing.

### **16th Step. The Lavabo**

The priest, looking forward to the Consecration, offers the Blood of Christ under the appearance of wine, saying: "We offer up to Thee, O Lord, the Chalice of Salvation." The priest bows his head. With eyes on the corporal, there comes to him the thought that humility and a contrite heart please God most, and thus he prays: "Humbled in mind and contrite in heart may we find favour with Thee, O Lord." He blesses the gifts just offered to God.

*Why does the priest wash his fingers?*

Then he goes to the right. There the server is ready to pour the water over the priest's fingers. As he does so, he says a psalm, which we now call the Lavabo, containing these words.

"I will wash (Lavabo) my hands among the innocent: O Lord, I have loved the beauty of Thy House."

In a few minutes these hands will touch the Body of Christ. Just as he prayed that his lips should be purified before he read the Gospel so now he feels the need of purifying his hands.

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\* Requiem (Latin: *requies*, rest)

*What resolutions should we make during  
the Offertory?*

While the priest is washing his fingers remember how freely Christ offered Himself for us, and thank Him again and again for doing so. St. Paul tells us that Our Lord "emptied Himself" because He loved us so much. As He once offered Himself on the Cross, He now permits the same sacrifice to take place before us in the Mass that we may be present, and may receive some of the grace He pours out at these precious moments.

If He loves you so much, then should you not return His love in the same way? Why not love Him in a way that costs you something, and yet, is freely given? Every time you give up something, every time you share with others without grumbling, you are paying Him back. Offer all these "acts" to Him, and you will then, in a small way, "empty" yourself of selfishness for His sake.

*A Prayer for Self-control*

Sweet Jesus, ever watchful over me,  
Let not my thoughts be evil,  
Let not my words be wild,  
Let not my acts be wilful,  
Watch the door of my lips  
That I may tell no lie.

Grant me grace to guard my senses  
Strength to keep my temper,  
Courage to deny myself.  
Amen.

— Father W. Roche, S.J.

**17th Step. Orate, Fratres**

The **Orate, Fratres** is like a leave-taking prayer. While saying it, the priest makes a complete turn, to signify that he is to enter, alone, the Holy of Holies. He does not turn to the people again until after the Communion. "Pray, my brothers (Orate, Fratres), that my sacrifice and yours, may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty."

The server hastens to reply in the name of all present: "May the Lord receive this sacrifice from thy hands,

to the praise and glory of His name, likewise, for our good, and for that of all His Holy Church." Let each of us, in silence, make an offering of himself, so that priest and people may unite in prayer.

### **18th Step. The Preface**

The priest reads the secret prayers in silence, until the last which he ends by saying in a loud voice: "World without end. Amen." (Per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen). The people are roused. They hear the priest giving them that greeting which nearly always means that he wants to call their special attention:

"Dominus vobiscum!"—"May the Lord be with you!"

"Lift up your hearts!" cries out the priest. "Yes," answers the server gladly, "we have already lifted them up."

Priest and people are stirred at the thought of His coming. He is about to arrive!

Let us give him a great welcome!

Yes, I know what we will do. Let us greet Him as the children did many years ago when He came to Jerusalem riding upon an ass.

"Hosanna! Hosanna!"

"Blest is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!"

Immediately the boy bends towards the bell which he rings clearly, and the Preface is over, and we are entering the Canon! "Preface" means coming before, a preparation for what is to follow, an introduction. The "Preface" in the Mass is a fervent "Thanks be to God!" and there are many "Prefaces" because at different seasons and feasts there are different reasons for saying "Thanks be to God!"

### *To Praise and Pray*

Praised be Thou, King,  
And blessed be Thou, King,  
Of all Thy gifts good  
And thanked be Thou, King:  
Jesu, all my joying,  
That for me spilt Thy Blood;  
And died upon the Rood;  
Thou give me grace to sing  
The song of Thy praising.

A XIIIth Century poem.

## 19th Step. The Sanctus

The server rings the bell three times as the priest says "Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus" — "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth." Back to the first Palm Sunday we go to hear the people and the children singing their "Hosannas," as Christ rode into Jerusalem seated upon an ass. If you had been there, how you would have added your voice to those shouts of joy!

"Sabaoth" is a Hebrew word meaning armies, hosts. So we sing at the Sanctus: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Armies!" "Hosanna" is another Hebrew word which means a shout of joy and triumph. Its equivalent to-day would be: "Long live Christ the King!"

### *At the Sanctus*

"Thy people in the sunlit street,  
Throw palms and flowers beneath Thy Feet;  
Then song of praise the children sing  
To honour Thee, their Lord and King.

I want to join the happy throng,  
I want Thee, Lord, to hear my song,  
To Thee my love and praise I bring,  
Hosanna to my God and King!"

## The Canon

### *Why is the Canon so-called?*

The Sanctus bell warns us that the **Canon** (from a Greek word which signifies a rule, or law) is about to begin. This, the most important part of the Mass, is appropriately called the Canon, because it is fixed, allowing only of slight changes on a few great feast days.

The priest now prays in a low voice, soft like a whisper. We can notice the silence and feel the stillness that comes from the altar to the people; it fills the church with an air of expectation, the holy hush before something big that is about to happen.

There are five steps in the Canon namely: 20th. The Memento for the Living; 21st. The Consecration; 22nd. The Elevation; 23rd. The Memento for the Dead; 24th. Nobis quoque peccatoribus; 25th. The Little Elevation.

## 20th Step. The Memento for the Living

There are two prayers, one said before the Consecration, and one said after, which are called "diptychs." Diptychs were folding tablets of wood, metal, or ivory that were used for registering, in a long list, the names of living and of dead people whom one wished to mention by name in the "Memento for the Living," or at the "Memento for the Dead."

This is a beautiful idea and we can rest assured that He will hear and heed our petition for those not present. He always did so while on earth as we can see from the quick response to the centurion's request to heal his servant, lying sick at home.

Watch the priest's hands, and you cannot miss the diptychs. The hands of the priest are more eloquent than words now. He joins them, and bends his head



*The Memento for the Living.*

until his chin almost touches the tips of his fingers, and in that thoughtful attitude he recalls by name those for whom he is offering the Mass, and also those to whom he has promised to give a "Memento." Often

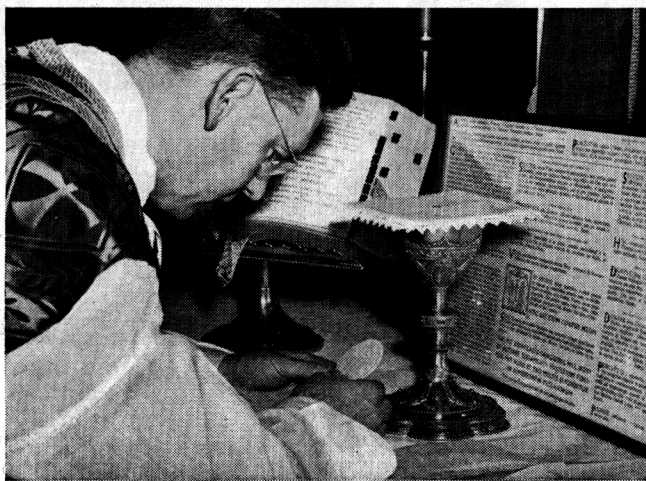
ask the priest to give you a "Memento," that is, to mention your name at the "Memento for the Living." When the priest's hands tell you that he is at the "Memento," how wonderful it is to be present and to know that your name is being mentioned!

### **21st Step. The Consecration**

When the priest spreads his hands over the chalice the altar boy rings the bell to warn us that the solemn moment of the **Consecration** is approaching.

"Do this for a commemoration of Me," said Our Lord at the Last Supper. To help us to realise that Our Lord's command is obeyed in the Mass, the Church leads us to the upper room wherein, on the night before He was crucified, He changed bread and wine into His Body and Blood.

It is the evening of Holy Thursday. In an upper room in the City of Jerusalem He is seated at a table with His Apostles. A silence reigns within. Outside, under the starlight, the olive trees in the garden are very still. They too seem awed at what is about to take place.



*The Consecration of the Host.*



Let St. Luke describe what follows: "And taking bread, He gave thanks, and brake; and gave to them, saying, This is My body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me.

"In like manner the chalice also, after He had supped saying: This is the chalice, the new testament in My blood, which shall be shed for you." (St. Luke XXII, 19 and 20.)

What Our Lord did at the Last Supper the priest does at the Consecration. What Our Lord said at the Last Supper, the priest says now, using the very words of Christ.

Read carefully and thoughtfully the words of the Missal —

"Who, the day before He suffered took bread into His holy and venerable hands, and with eyes lifted up towards heaven, unto Thee, O God, His Almighty Father, giving thanks to Thee, did bless, break, and give to His disciples, saying: Take, and eat ye all of this. For this is My Body."

### **22nd Step. The Elevation**

When the priest holds up the white Host for you to see, look up at It, and say: "My Lord and my God." For saying this aspiration while gazing at the elevated Host with faith and love, Pope St. Pius X has granted an indulgence (June 12, 1907) of seven years and seven quarantines (40 days).

The priest uncovers the chalice, and, holding it in



*The Elevation of the Chalice.*

both hands, he says: "In like manner, after He had supped taking also this excellent chalice into His holy and venerable Hands, also giving thanks to Thee, He blessed and gave it to His disciples, saying: Take and drink ye all of this; for this is the chalice of My Blood of the new and eternal testament, the mystery of faith; which shall be shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins. As often as ye do these things, ye shall do them in remembrance of Me."

The **Consecration** (Latin: *consecrare*, to make sacred) is the central act of the Mass. It is so called because something most sacred is done. Christ's own words are used to change the bread and wine into His Sacred Body and Blood, and Christ's own actions are repeated. The Sacred Host and the chalice, containing the Precious Blood, are raised aloft so that all may see and adore them. This is known as the **Elevation**.

#### *At the Elevation*

"On the Cross uplifted high  
Our Jesus, Victim, pleads,  
'Father, forgive them,' that love-cry  
For sinners intercedes.  
O Sacred Host, 'My Lord and God!'  
Blot out my sinful deeds.  
Ah, it is for me, His erring child  
That Jesus dies and bleeds."

— S.S.J.

#### **23rd Step. Memento for the Dead**

Soon after the Consecration we will see the priest bow his head until his chin almost touches the tips of his joined hands. This is the precious moment in the Mass when we are asked to pray for the dead. There is in Purgatory some one we knew, a father or mother, brother or sister, school-mate or play-mate, and all of these expect us to remember them now by mentioning them by name, and asking God to have pity on them.

#### *Prayer for the Dead*

Have pity, Lord, have pity,  
On all the countless dead,  
From countryside or city  
Who face Thy throne of dread.

Remember, Thou Who sparest  
So gladly at our need,  
Remember what was fairest  
In thought and word and deed.

Forget their long delaying  
To do as conscience bid,  
Forgive their wilful straying,  
They knew not what they did.

For sight of Thee they languish,  
With love of Thee they pine;  
Take pity on their anguish;  
Have mercy, they are Thine.

— Father W. Roche, S.J.

### **24th Step. Nobis quoque Peccatoribus**

Since the Sanctus we have not heard the priest's voice. He has read the prayers in the Missal in a subdued voice like a whisper. That silence is called the "holy hush" of the Mass, and commemorates the silence of Our Blessed Lord on the Cross. The silence of the Canon is broken once by the words: "Nobis quoque peccatoribus", which mean "To us sinners also". One of the seven words which broke the silence of Calvary was spoken to the "good" thief. St. Luke narrates: "Neither dost thou fear God, seeing thou art under the same condemnation. And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward for our deeds: but this man hath done no evil. And he said to Jesus: Lord, remember me when Thou shalt come into Thy Kingdom. And Jesus said to him: Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." (St. Luke, XXIII, 40-43).

Jesus rewarded the "good" thief with the promise of paradise for having confessed his guilt aloud and for rebuking the other thief because he blasphemed. Recall this scene from Calvary as you strike your breast saying: "Nobis quoque peccatoribus"; "To us sinners also."

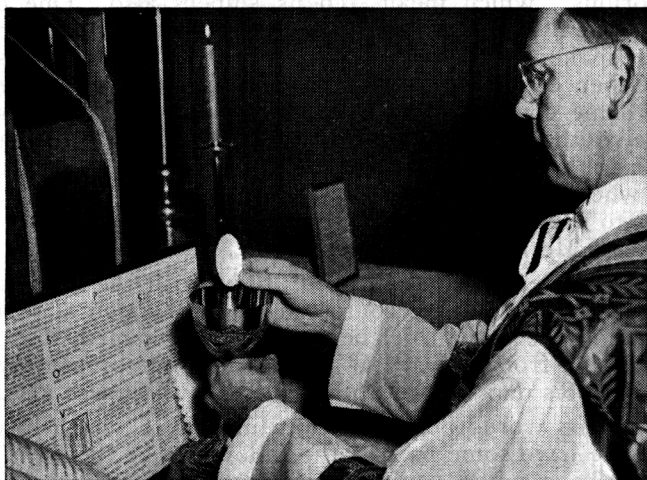
These words begin a beautiful prayer which asks that we have some part in the fellowship of the Saints. If we have not a special friend among the saints we should begin at once to cultivate devotion to one.

Being members of the Church through the Sacrament of Baptism we are already united with the saints in this life and we hope that they will pray for us to

die a holy death and be with them for ever in heaven. This is possible through the merits of Christ, and so the priest concludes that prayer: "Per Christum Dominum Nostrum" — "through Christ Our Lord." "Nobis quoque peccatoribus" — "To us sinners also" — rings out the priest's voice piercing the stillness of the Canon. Having acknowledged himself and his people sinners, he goes on with much more confidence: "On us, who put our trust in the multitude of Thy tender mercies, deign to bestow some place and fellowship with Thy saints . . . ."

We ask for much, but those in the presence of the King can ask for much. When we come to Mass we are as near to Our Blessed Lord as the Apostles were, we gather round Him as closely as they did, and, to the eyes of FAITH, He should be as present to us as He was to them on mountain and lake shore.

### **25th Step. The Little Elevation**



*The Little Elevation.*

We must watch the priest attentively or we will miss the "Little Elevation." He makes the Sign of the

Cross three times over the Chalice and Sacred Host. He uncovers the Chalice, genuflects, and taking the Sacred Host in the fingers of the right hand he makes the Sign of the Cross three times saying: "Through Him, and with Him, and in Him is unto Thee, God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory; for ever and ever. Amen." At the words "all honour and glory," he raises the chalice for the "Little Elevation." That prayer is called a "doxology."\* In general, this word "doxology" means a short verse praising God. The greater "doxology" is the "Gloria in excelsis" in the Mass. The shorter form, which is the one generally referred to under the name "doxology," is the "Gloria Patri" (Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost).

How different we should all be if in all we did, we did it "through Him, and with Him, and in Him."

#### *What are the Steps of the Communion?*

From the Pater Noster to the end of Mass there are eight steps, namely:—26th. The Lord's Prayer; 27th. Breaking the Bread; 28th. Agnus Dei; 29th. Domine, non sum dignus; 30th. Corpus Domini Nostri Jesu Christi; 31st. The Ablutions; 32nd. The Last Blessing; 33rd. The Last Gospel.

#### **26th Step.—The Lord's Prayer**

Who could compose a prayer worthy of such a moment? Only Christ Himself. This is Our Lord's own prayer. What a wonderful time to say it! Our Lord is lying on the corporal, and looking down on the Sacred Host, the priest uses Our Lord's own words, saying: "Our Father, who art in Heaven . . ." Say it with the priest, and say it slowly and thoughtfully. We say "Our" Father, not "my" father, for we must think always of others as well as ourselves. The Pater Noster ends the silence of the Canon.

#### **27th Step. Breaking the Bread**

The priest, taking the Sacred Host, divides It in two over the chalice. He lays one half down on the paten, and from the other he breaks off a little bit, plac-

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\* Doxology (Greek: *doxe*, praise; *logos*, word)

ing the bigger part on the paten. Holding the little bit between thumb and first finger, the priest makes the sign of the cross three times over the chalice, saying — “The peace of the Lord be always with you, and then drops the little bit into the chalice.

The breaking of bread (**fractio panis**) recalls the scene at the Last Supper. St. Luke tells what happened: “Then he took bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them saying: This is My Body which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me.” (St. Luke XXII, 19.)

St. Luke also tells us of the two disciples on their way to Emmaus. You know the story, how He spoke to them on the way, and they knew Him not. “And they drew nigh to the town whither they were going: and he made as though he would go farther. But they constrained him, saying: Stay with us, because it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in with them. And it came to pass, whilst he was at table with them he took bread, and blessed and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.” (St. Luke, XXIV, 28-30).

They knew Him in the breaking of bread.

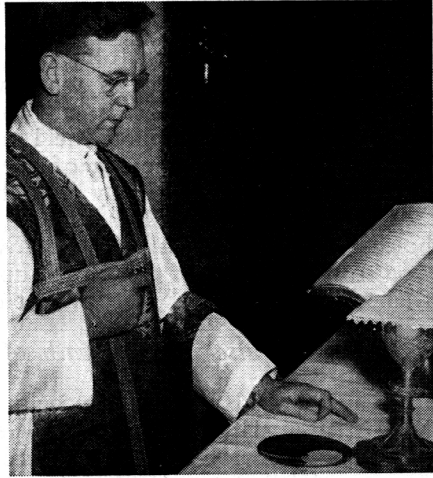
At first there were no churches like ours, so the people met secretly, usually in the evening, in private homes for the reading of the Gospel and the Breaking of Bread, as the Blessed Eucharist was lovingly called by the early Christians.

### **28th Step. Agnus Dei**

The priest strikes his breast as he says the “Agnus Dei” three times: “Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world.” After each of the first two he adds a cry for mercy (“Have mercy upon us”), and after the third a single cry for peace (“Grant us peace”). As the “Lamb of God,” through His Death on the Cross, restored peace and harmony between God and man, so now we entreat that same “Lamb of God”, Victim for our sins on the altar, to give us peace by binding our poor hearts to His Divine Heart, all the days of our lives.

*What does "Lamb of God" mean?*

One day St. John the Baptist was preaching to a large crowd on the banks of the river Jordan. He paused, and pointing to the figure of a young man approaching, he said: "Behold the Lamb of God; behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world." (St. John 1, 29.)



*The Agnus Dei.*

The young man was Our Lord coming to the Jordan to be baptized by St. John. Hearing and understanding the words spoken by St. John, the people looked with wondering eyes upon Our Lord, thus addressed as the "Lamb of God." Their thoughts went back to the great prophet Isaias, who foretold that Jesus, the Messiah, would be a "man of sorrows," and that our sins would be laid upon Him.

Here are the sad but beautiful words of the prophet Isaias, words which we should all learn by heart.

"How should we take account of him, a man so despised?

"Our weakness, and it was he who carried the weight of it, our miseries, and it was he who bore them.

"A leper, so we thought of him, a man God had smitten and brought low;

"And all the while it was for our sins he was wounded, it was guilt of ours crushed him down; on him the punishment fell that brought us peace, by his bruises we were healed.

“Strayed sheep all of us, each following his own path; and God laid on his shoulders our guilt, the guilt of us all.”

(Isaias. 53:3-6)

The words of St. John the Baptist: “Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1, 29), mean that Jesus is the Lamb spoken of by the prophet, the Lamb of God, Who is to take upon Himself the sin of the world; the Lamb of God sent into the world by God the Father to be led as “a sheep to the slaughter,” and to be “dumb as a lamb before his shearer.” We know how Jesus, the Lamb of God, took the sins of the world upon His shoulders and, then, carried them away, far out of God’s sight.

*What else does “Lamb of God” mean?*

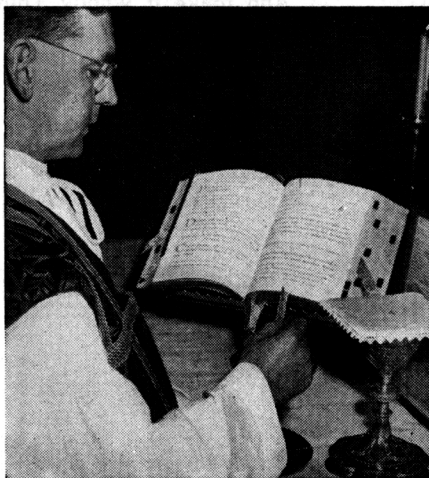
In the Old Law there was no confession as we have it now. How then did the people seek pardon for their sins? Listen, and I shall tell you. One day each year was called the Day of Expiation, upon which the people asked God’s pardon for the sins of the year past. It was a day of strict fast; the people ate no food from sunset of the previous evening until the evening of the festival. The High Priest offered a calf for his own sins and the sins of his household, and two goats, one of which was slain, for the sins of the people. Twice he entered the Holy of Holies, taking with him on the first occasion the blood of the calf, and, on the second, the blood of the goat, to be sprinkled, or poured out, as the rite prescribed. Then, laying his hands upon the head of the live goat, he confessed the sins of the people. The goat was then driven out into the wilderness, and went wandering about the desert, as a sign that God had answered the people’s cry for mercy and forgiveness. You have often heard the word “scapegoat” — someone else gets the blame for what you did. So it was with the goat that was driven out into the desert, wandering on, always driven back to the desert until it died. Christ as the Lamb of God, though sinless, took upon Himself the sins of the world, and bore them away out of God’s sight.



### 29th Step. Domine, Non Sum Dignus

The priest is about to receive Holy Communion. He takes the Sacred Host in the left hand, and, striking his breast with the right hand, says three times: "Lord, I am not worthy (Domine, non sum dignus) that Thou shouldst enter under my roof: say but the word and my soul shall be healed."

How vividly that manly figure of the centurion comes back to us! St. Matthew tells us what happened: "And when He had entered into Capharnaum. there came to him a centurion, beseeching Him And saying: Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, and is grievously tormented. And Jesus saith to him: I will come and heal him. And the centurion making answer, said: Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof: but only say the word, and my servant shall be healed. And Jesus, hearing this, marvelled; and said to them that followed Him: Amen, I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel.



*The Priest's Communion.*

And Jesus said to the centurion: Go, and as thou hast believed, so be it done to thee. And the servant was healed at the same hour." (St. Matthew: VIII, 5-13).

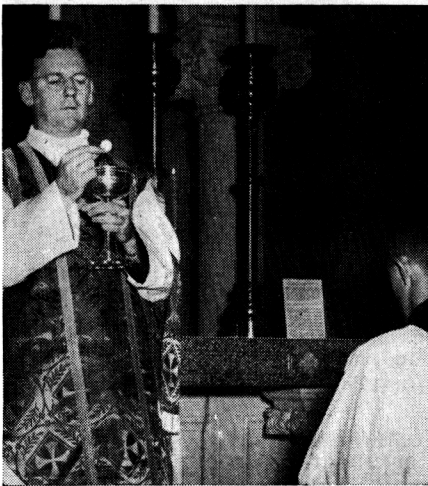
We can never be worthy to receive Our Lord, but He will make our hearts less unworthy if we say those words of the centurion, in all faith and humility. This is a perfect prayer for such a moment.

## *I Am Not Worthy*

"My God I am not worthy  
That Thou shouldst come to me,  
Send forth Thy Grace, and heal my soul,  
And make it fit for Thee.

"Oh, make it less unworthy  
Of Thee, its Guest Divine;  
For Thou alone canst work the change  
And make it wholly Thine."

### **30th Step. Receiving Holy Communion**



*The Ecce Agnus Dei (Communion)*

While the priest is consuming the Precious Blood, the altar-boy says the confiteor and the people move up to the altar rails. The priest holding a Sacred Particle over the Ciborium and facing the people, says the words of St. John the Baptist: "Ecce Agnus Dei" — "Behold the Lamb of God!" That should encourage us, and as we walk to the rails, keep saying

the words of the Centurion: Lord, I am not worthy!" At last the wonderful moment comes when the priest stands in front of you. Listen to what he says to you, for he says the same words to each communicant: "Corpus Domini Nostri Jesu Christi custodiat animam tuam in vitam aeternam. Amen."—"May the Body of Our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul unto life everlasting." The Latin word "custodiat" means to set a guard over, to

place a sentry on watch over your soul. That Holy Body, so full of grace, power, and strength, will heal your weaknesses, help you over difficulties, and grant you courage in dangers.

Having received Him with faith and love, go back quietly to your place; never mind about your prayer-book, and talk to Jesus within you, as a child talks to a loving father. Tell Him all you need. Do not forget to thank Him for coming to you. And going home, ask Him to show you how you may practise the new strength, that He has given you. Ask Him to send you each day some little trial, some cross, that you will gladly bear for His sake with His aid.

### *At the Communion*

Can it be my Saviour calling:  
"Come, my child, come unto Me?"  
O dearest Lord, tho' all unworthy  
Joyfully I run to Thee.  
God and man, I here adore Thee,  
Veiled in bread from human eye,  
Love for me has thus transformed Thee  
That thou mayst me sanctify.  
Come, sweet Jesus! Mary Mother,  
Make my soul a garden fair  
Into which my God may enter  
And with me abide fore'er.

— S.S.J.

### **31st Step. Cleansing the Chalice**

Having distributed Holy Communion the priest places the ciborium in the tabernacle. He then takes the chalice in his right hand and extends it towards the server, who pours some wine into it. Watch the priest moving the chalice around, so that the wine cleanses the cup of the chalice. This is called the **ablution**,\* or purifying of the chalice.

Look at your Mass-book and join with the priest, who prays for the congregation present as well as for

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\* Ablution (Latin: *abluer*e, to cleanse)

himself. "Grant, O Lord, that what we have taken with our mouth, we may receive with a pure mind; and that from a temporal gift, it may become for us an everlasting remedy." The priest, having consumed the first ablu-  
tion, takes the chalice, holding his fingers over the cup, and moves towards the server, who pours wine, and then water, over his fingers. The priest wipes his fingers, and, going to the centre of the altar, prays:



*The Ablutions.*

saying it for himself.

After drying and covering the chalice, the priest returns to the Mass-book and reads the "Communion," a short devotional prayer which changes with each Mass.

Moving towards the centre of the Altar the priest kisses it and turns to the faithful with the customary salutation—"Dominus vobiscum" (May the Lord be with you). Answer in your hearts—"And may He be with you also." Returning to the Missal, the priest bows towards the crucifix, opening his hands and saying—"Oremus" (let us pray) as an introduction to the last

"May Thy Body, O Lord, which I have received, and Thy Blood, which I have drunk, abide in the very depths of my soul; and grant that no stain of sin may remain in me whom Thy pure and holy Sacraments have refreshed. Who liv-  
est and reignest for ever and ever. Amen."

Let us all join in that beautiful petition, each one

prayer, the "Post-Communion." This prayer, like the "Collect" and the "Secret," varies with each Mass, and, usually, is a prayer of thanksgiving.

### **32nd Step. The Blessing**

The priest closes the Missal, and, coming to the centre of the altar, says:

Dominus vobiscum	: May the Lord be with you.
Et cum spiritu tuo	: And may He be with you also.
Ite, Missa est	: Go, this is the dismissal.
Deo gratias	: Thanks be to God.

#### *What does "Mass" mean?*

The Holy Sacrifice takes its name from this phrase: "Ite, Missa est": "Go, this is the dismissal." "Mass" comes from "Missa" which equals "missio," a dismissal or sending away. Since in earlier times this phrase came just before the Offertory, when the unbaptised, the Catechumens, or converts under instruction were dismissed, people came to call the Sacrifice that followed after the act of dismissal by the word indicating dismissal. Thus the name "Mass." In the circumstances surrounding the infant Church it was not prudent to allow converts to remain for the more solemn parts of the Mass. So formerly we had two dismissals, one before the Offertory, and this later one, which alone remains to-day.

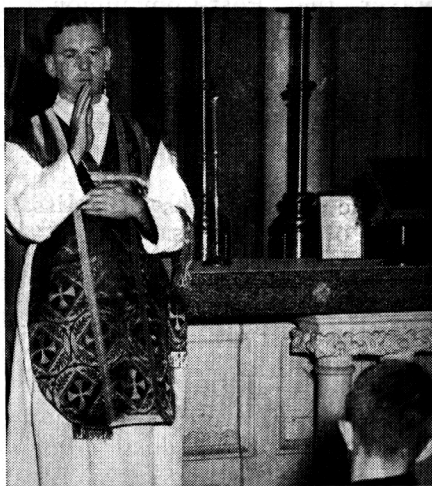
If no "Gloria" is said then the priest says in place of "Ite, Missa est":

Benedicamus Domino	: Let us bless the Lord.
Deo gratias	: Thanks be to God.

At a Requiem Mass the priest says:

Requiescant in pace	: May they rest in peace.
Amen.	: Amen.

Having announced the "dismissal," the priest turns towards the altar, bows low in an attitude of reverence, and recites a beautiful prayer that sums up all that we mean to do during Mass. The prayer addresses the Blessed Trinity, to Whom the Holy Sacrifice has been offered. Bow your heads, children dear, and read from your Mass-books what the priest is saying before the altar.



*The Last Blessing.*

"O most holy Trinity, may Thy servant's worship please Thee; and grant that the sacrifice which I, though unworthy, have offered up to Thy Majesty, may be accepted by Thee. May it atone to Thee, who art so merciful, for my own sins and the sins of all those for whom I have offered it; through Christ our Lord. Amen."

Thus for the last time the priest humbly prays for himself and "for all those for whom I have offered it," and you are included among those every time you assist at Mass.

Pressing his lips to the altar, as an act of reverence to the relics of the martyrs contained therein, the priest raises his eyes and hands towards the cross, as if to draw strength before calling down the blessing of the Holy Trinity on all present, and, turning to the people, he blesses them, saying, "May Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, bless you. Amen."

This is a very special blessing. It is the blessing of the Church, and, consequently, be careful to apply it to yourselves. What do you think of children who are looking around, or hunting for caps, or fidgeting with a bag, while the priest blesses us? The blessing is omitted in Masses for the Dead.

*Deo Gratias: Thanks be to God*

For coming down from heaven to us,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For coming as a little Babe,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For being born among the poor,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For growing as we grow, and feeling what we feel,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For loving little children,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For taking away our sins,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For saving us from evil,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For coming to us in Holy Communion,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For living with us in our souls,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For staying upon our Altars,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For sharing with us Thy mother's love,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.  
For every good thing that comes to us,  
Jesus, we thank Thee.

Amen.

—Father W. Roche, S.J.

**33rd Step. The Last Gospel**

Stand up for the Gospel, or "Good news." Make the three little Signs of the Cross; one on the forehead, one on the lips, and one on the breast. Stand erect, not lounging on one foot, for you stand in honour of Christ, the King of Kings.

The priest is reading the opening chapter of St. John's Gospel. That chapter tells us that Our Lord was

from the beginning the Son of God and that He came on earth: "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us" (here we genuflect).

Make a final effort to think about Our Lord during the Last Gospel. The more we think about Him the more will He make Himself known to us, and, of course, the more we know Him the more we love Him, and strive to become like Him. And to be like Our Lord is the thing that matters most in life. For striving to be like Him, we grow pleasing in His eyes; we please others more and we grow happier in ourselves.

### *The Mass*

**"The gleam of a golden chalice,  
The tinkle of silver bell,  
A King to an earthly palace  
Comes down in His love to dwell.**

**The sound of a holy word  
Floats over the bread;  
The heart of heaven is stirred,  
And earth bows down its head.**

**One half an hour on earth,  
The length of a little Mass,  
Christ lives again from His birth  
Till the last great blood drops pass.**

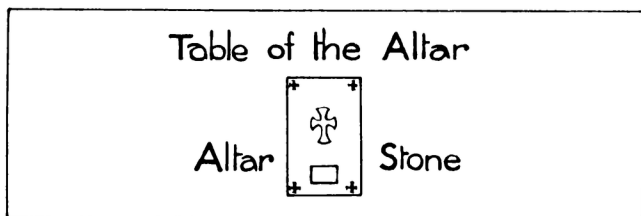
**The priest goes down to rail  
With the little Host in his hand;  
And God meets the hearts that wail  
In this dark and dreary land."**



## CHAPTER II

### PREPARING THE ALTAR FOR MASS

Every Catholic child should know how to answer the priest at Mass, and how to prepare the altar. In this vast land we never know when we may be called upon to do one or both. Come then, and let us see what is to be done.



#### The Altar Stone

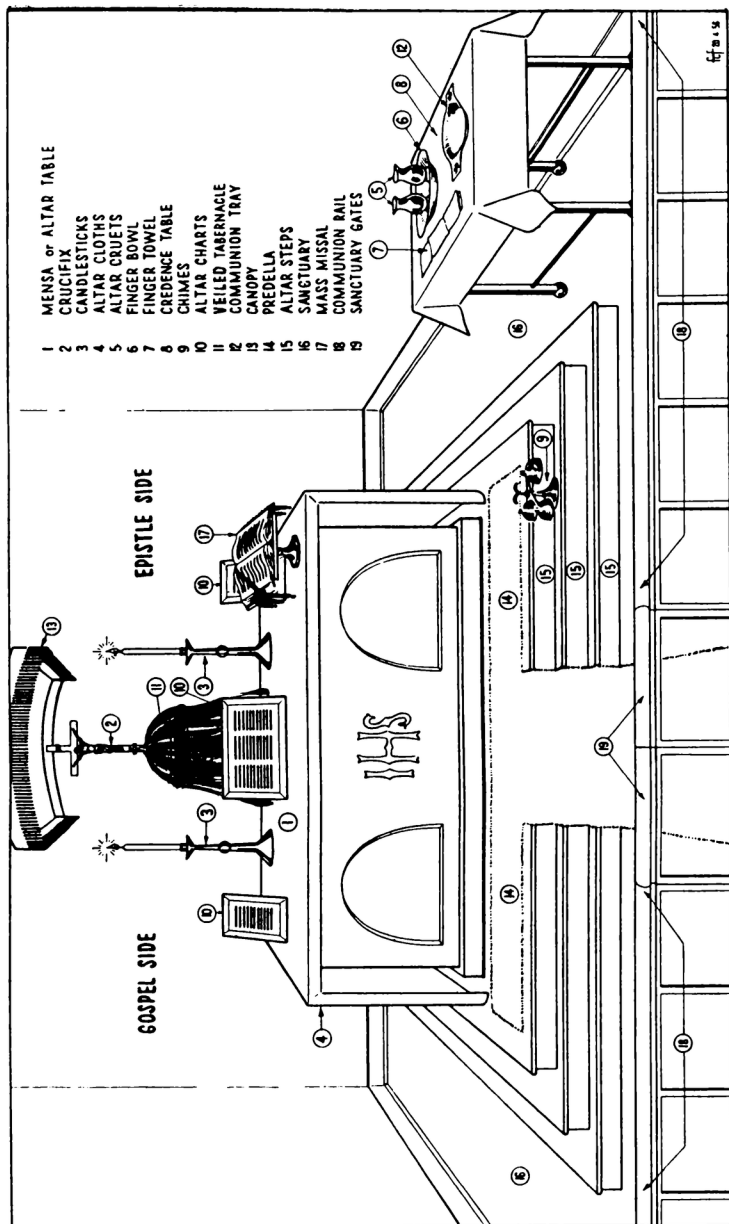
The **Altar** (Latin: *altus, altare*, high place) is a raised table upon which the Holy Sacrifice is offered. Whatever be its material, a stone is set in its centre. This stone has been consecrated, that is, made sacred or holy, by a Bishop, and without it Mass may not be celebrated. On it rests the Sacred Host and the chalice.

In the stone is a well which contains the relics of some saints. In the early Church, Mass was usually celebrated on the tombs which contained the relics of the martyrs.

Sometimes Mass has to be said in a school, in a hall, or out in the open air. The priest brings with him a small altar stone. During the Wars our priests had little ones which were easy to carry in their kit.

The altar stone stands for Christ, Who was the stone the builders rejected.

Three linen altar cloths are to cover the altar. The two under ones cover the table of the altar. The top one descends to the floor at both sides.



## Charts

There must be a **crucifix** (Latin: *crux*, cross; *crucifixus*, fastened to a cross), which the priest can see, two wax candles, and a stand for the **Missal** (Latin: *missale*, Mass Book). There are three charts, and here most of the mistakes are made. Put the large one in the centre, before the **Tabernacle** (Latin: *taberna*, tent, a small tent or dwelling). Where will the other two go? Have a look at these two charts. On one two prayers are printed: namely, the prayer said at the mixing of the drop of water with the wine, and the Lavabo. Ask yourself: At which side of the altar does the priest wash his fingers? At the Epistle side. Put that chart there. The other one, on which the opening chapter of St. John's Gospel is printed, must go to the Gospel side.

## Cruets

At the Epistle side, place a table whereon are laid the cruets, one for wine, the other for water, an ablution bowl for the Lavabo, and a small linen towel. A warning bell should be placed on the altar steps so that the boy may announce the Sanctus, the Consecration, and the Communion.

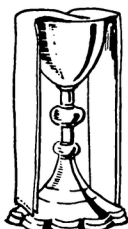
## The Sacred Vessels

The word "sacred" (Latin: *sacra*, holy; *facere*, to make) means "to make holy." These vessels that are "sacred" are blessed, dedicated, that is, given over exclusively to the service of the altar. They are "consecrated" (Latin: *consecrare*, to make sacred) to God.

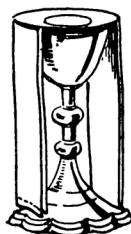
**Sanctuary** (Latin: *sanctuarium*, sacred place) is that part of the church reserved for the **celebrant**. "To celebrate" (Latin: *celebrare*) means to gather in crowds, to gather frequently, in order to show honour and love for something or someone of exalted merit. That is the reason why our Catholic people gather in numbers regularly on Sundays, and frequently on week-days, to **celebrate** Holy Mass with the priest.



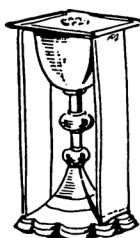
The Chalice



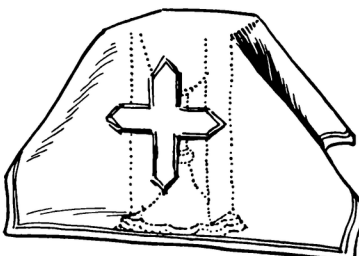
Chalice and Purificator



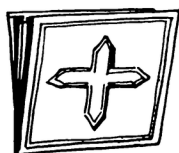
Chalice, Purificator & Paten with host



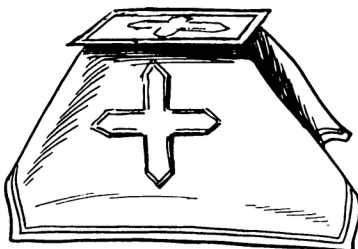
Paten and Pall  
Chalice, Purificator,



All now covered by Chalice Veil —  
note the different parts under the Veil



The Burse and  
the Corporal



The Chalice completely covered

# THE DRESSING OF THE CHALICE

## 1. The Chalice

The **Chalice** (Latin: *calix*, a cup) is a goblet-like vessel; the cup must be at least gilt inside. The chalice, called the Holy Grail, used by Our Lord at the Last Supper, has inspired many a knightly quest in days gone by. The chalice must be consecrated by a Bishop.

Some writers look upon the chalice as a symbol of the Sacred Heart from which Christ's saving Blood flowed. Others look upon it as representing the Virgin Mary, who gave Christ to the world.

## 2.—The Paten

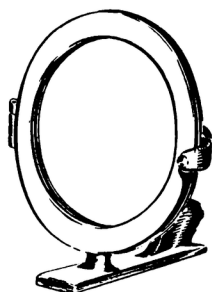
The **Paten** (Latin: *patina*, dish or disc) is a little plate, concave on one side, and at least gilt. It must be consecrated by a Bishop, who anoints the interior with chrism.

The paten, upon which the Host rests, is a figure of the Cross. It is also taken to represent the openness of heart (Latin: *patere*, to lie open) with which the Apostles listened to Our Lord's teachings.

During the Passion the Apostles fled and hid themselves for fear of the Jews. In solemn High Mass the sub-deacon covers up the paten with the humeral (Latin: *humerus*, a shoulder; a veil draped around the shoulders) veil, and, in Low Mass, the paten is hidden under the corporal from the beginning of the Canon to the Pater Noster, that is, during that part of the Mass which commemorates Our Lord's Passion.

## Preparing the Chalice for Mass

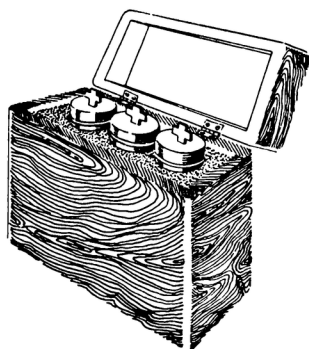
Watch the priest preparing the chalice for Holy Mass. He puts a narrow strip of linen over the cup. That is the **Purificator** (Latin: *purificare*, to cleanse, purify) or linen cloth which the priest will use to cleanse the chalice before the pouring of the wine at the Offertory, and again after the **ablution** (Latin: *abluere*, to cleanse) following the Communion.



Lunette



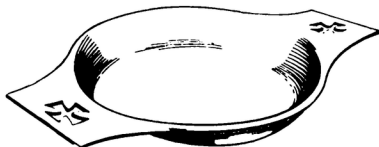
Monstrance



Oil Stocks in Case



Ciborium



Communion Plate



Combination  
Oil Stocks

On the purificator, the priest places the paten, containing a large **Host**, and covers it with the **Pall** (Latin: *pallium*, mantle, coverlet) which is made of a square piece of linen, marked with a cross, and stiffened with starch or cardboard. Over all is the **Chalice Veil** (Latin: *velu*, covering). The chalice, the ciborium in the tabernacle, and the tabernacle are all covered, each with its own special veil.

On top rests the **Burse** (Latin: *bursa*, purse or pouch) containing the corporal. The **Corporal** (Latin: *corpus*, a body) is a linen cloth on which the Body of Christ rests after the Consecration.

### 3. The Ciborium

When the priest distributes Holy Communion to the people, he uses a cup-shaped vessel, like the chalice, but having a lid. This is called the **Ciborium** (from the Greek word "*Kiborion*", the name of a drinking cup, so called because it was shaped like the leaves of an Egyptian plant. "*Cibus*" is the Latin word for food. We may think of the Ciborium as the chalice-like vessel which contains the Heavenly Food). When the ciborium contains consecrated particles it is covered with a white silken veil. When empty, the priest purifies it during Mass, and lays the veil aside until it is refilled and consecrated. The ciborium is placed on the corporal, and at the consecration of the bread, its lid is removed while the priest adores the Sacred Host.

### 4. The Pyx

The **Pyx** (from the Greek word "*pyxos*" meaning a box-tree, and thus "*pyxis*," a box-wood receptacle, or box) is the sacred vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is brought to the sick and dying. It is like a large

watch case. It is gilt inside. The large pyx, which holds the lunette with the Host for Benediction, is kept in the tabernacle.

## 5. The Monstrance

The **Monstrance** (Latin: *monstrare*, to show, expose) or **Ostensorium** (Latin: *ostendere*, to show) is the sacred vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is exposed during Benediction. The **Lunette** (Latin: *luna*, moon) is circular in shape, like the full moon. The lunette must be at least gilt. It is fitted into the large pyx and kept in the tabernacle.

### INVITE MARY TO MASS

On the way to Mass let us say to her: "Mary, Mother of God and my Mother, unite ever more closely your two children, Jesus, your Son, and me, your child." Whenever the name of Mary is mentioned in the Ordinary of the Mass, let us summon her to our side and ask her help to say that prayer well. She will accompany us on the way home and in her company we shall live the Mass this day.





Priest in  
Amice



Priest in  
Alb



Priest adjusting  
the Cincture



Priest putting  
Maniple on left  
arm



Priest with  
the Stole



Priest in Chasuble  
is now completely  
vested

# HOW THE PRIEST VESTS.

## CHAPTER III

### WATCH THE PRIEST VESTING

*What is the origin of Vestments?* The Apostles and the bishops consecrated by them celebrated Mass in the ordinary lay clothes of the day. After a time lay fashions changed but the Church clung to the old fashions. Gradually the practice grew of making the clothes worn during Mass as beautiful as possible, befitting the sacred functions a priest performs.

Just as her Basilicas were the Roman courts of Justice, so the vestments worn by the priest at Mass recall the robes, official and ordinary, of an earlier period. The vestments are historical links with the early Church.

*What do the Vestments signify?* The vestments speak to us in the oldest language, the language of signs. Each vestment represents something. When we see the colour of the vestments worn, we can learn something about the Mass that is being said. The vestments recall for us some incidents in the Passion.

*Do Vestments aid devotion?* Yes. When we watch the priest vesting we shall hear him praying as he puts on each vestment. These prayers are very expressive, pointing out those virtues that the priest should pray for as he puts on the vestment.

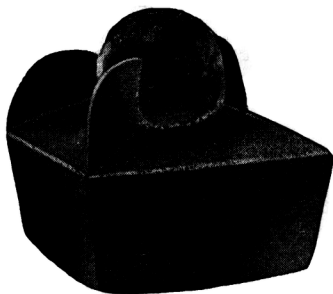
Vestments are worn because (1) they remain links with the costumes, ordinary and official, of a period now past; because (2) they speak in signs and symbols; and because (3) they have a devotional meaning for the priest.

### Cassock

Come into the sacristy (Latin: *sacristia*, vestry) and watch the priest vesting (Latin: *vestimentum*, covering) for Mass. The long black garment that he is wear-

ing is called a **cassock** (Italian: *casacca*, a great-coat). The cassock or soutane is a close-fitting garment reaching to the heels, and fastened down the front with small buttons. It is the ecclesiastical uniform of all priests and clerics except those who, being members of religious orders or congregations, have a distinctive habit. The cassock of the Pope is white. Pope St. Pius V, crowned Pope in 1566, was the first white-clad Pope. He was a Dominican friar who continued to wear his white habit as Pope, and thus set the fashion which has continued ever since. Bishops who were Dominicans also wear a white cassock. The cassock of cardinals is red; of bishops and other prelates, purple; and of all other clerics, black. In some countries the cassock is the ordinary outward garb worn by clerics in the streets.

### **Biretta**



The cap worn by the priest is called a **Biretta** (Italian for cap). Formerly it was a soft round cap. Later three ridges or peaks were added so that it could be taken off and put on more easily. The biretta is worn by all clerics from cardinals down on entering and leaving the church and during ceremonies. Cardinals wear

red; bishops, purple; and priests, black.

### **The Mass Vestments**

The priest washes his fingers and prays that God's grace may enable him to serve the altar without stain of mind or body. He then begins to vest.

That we may appreciate the vestments better, let us ask ourselves three questions about each vestment:—

1. Why is it so called?
2. What is its origin?
3. What does it stand for?

## **The Amice**

This is a rectangular or square piece of linen, covering the neck and shoulders, with tapes or strings attached to the corners to fasten around the body. The strings may be white or coloured. A small cross is in the centre.

### **1. *Why is it so called?***

The name comes from the Latin "amictus," which means a wrap, mantle, or covering.

### **2. *What is its origin?***

An amice was worn by ancient priests during sacrifice. The amice has been used as a liturgical vestment since about the year 800. Formerly it was worn covering the head, and some religious orders, for example, the Dominicans, still use it in this way until the beginning of Mass.

### **3. *What does it stand for?***

The amice symbolises a helmet, a protection for the head. It recalls the headgear worn by soldiers in battle, for example, the "tin-hats," or steel helmets, worn by soldiers and civil defence workers during the Second World War.

When the priest vests for Mass he is preparing to withstand the assaults of Satan: he is going forth to battle against the powers of evil. As he kisses the cross on the amice, he prays: "Place, O Lord, upon my head the helmet of salvation that I may be armed against the evil one."

## **The Alb**

This is a long linen robe extending from the neck to the feet.

### **1. *Why is it so called?***

It is called "alb" because it is white, from the Latin "albus" meaning white.

### **2. *What is its origin?***

It is a survival of the Roman citizen's dress, the tunic, an inner linen garment.

3. *What does it stand for?*

The alb denotes purity. As the priest puts it on, he says: "Make my soul white, O Lord, and my heart clean, that purified in the Blood of the Lamb, I may possess eternal joy." When Herod was angry with Christ he put on Him a white garment and sent him back to Pilate dressed as a fool.

### **The Cincture or Girdle**

This is the doubled cord of linen which the priest puts around his waist.

1. *Why is it so called?*

Because it encircles the waist, and acts as a girdle to keep the alb tidy. It may be made of silk, wool, linen, or cotton. The girdle or cincture is of the colour of the day.

2. *What is its origin?*

The ancient priests wore a cincture or girdle during sacrifice. The long flowing garments of the East made the girdle necessary. To-day the girdle, cincture, or cord forms part of the monastic dress in the East and West.

3. *What does it stand for?*

It symbolises chastity. As the priest puts it on, he says: "Gird me, O Lord, with the cincture of purity and extinguish in my loins all evil desire, so that, the virtue of continency and chastity abiding always in my heart, I may better serve Thee."

Our Blessed Lord girded Himself at the Last Supper to wash the feet of the Apostles.

### **The Maniple**

The priest puts on his left forearm a silk embroidered band which falls in equal lengths on both sides.

1. *Why is it so called?*

It is called a maniple from the Latin "*manipulus*" meaning folded together, because originally it was a folded handkerchief.

## 2. *What is its origin?*

It goes back to the times when the Consuls of Imperial Rome carried an ornamental handkerchief as a badge of their office. It also had a practical purpose, originally, a cloth, or towel, wound round the forearm, was necessary to wipe the perspiration off as people worked in the fields. The practice continues among the tillers of the soil, and factory workers.

## 3. *What does it stand for?*

The maniple symbolises good works, hinting of toil, trial, and sweat. As the priest fastens it on his left forearm he prays that God may banish sloth, and inspire him with good works:

“Let me merit, O Lord, to wear the maniple of tears and sorrow, so that one day I may come with joy unto the rewards of all my labours.”

## **The Stole**

Watch the priest putting around his neck a long narrow vestment which he crosses over his breast, and holds in place with the cincture.

## 1. *Why is it so called?*

The name comes from the Latin word “stola” meaning a long garment. Since the ninth century the name “stole” has been restricted to a liturgical vestment worn by bishops, priests, and deacons.

## 2. *What is its origin?*

In the Roman world all officials wore a stole to show that they were on duty and actually performing the duties of their office.

The stole is a liturgical decoration to be worn during the celebration of Mass, the administration of the sacraments, preaching, and in blessings. Deacons, priests, and bishops wear a stole in different ways. The deacon taking part in ceremonies wears the stole over his left shoulder, while he fastens the ends together under his right arm.

When the priest is robed in the alb, he crosses the stole over his breast and holds it there with the cincture. The bishop, who already wears a pectoral cross (from the Latin "pectus" meaning breast) allows the two ends of the stole to hang loosely down over the alb.

3. *What does it stand for?*

The stole symbolises service, arduous, yet blessed and honourable, expected from those who serve God in the sanctuary. The stole reminds us also of the garment of sanctity in which the priest should serve God, and be a shining light to men.

As the priest puts the stole around his neck, he prays: "Retain to me, O Lord, that stole of immortality, which was lost to me by my first parents; and though unworthy I approach Thy Sacred Mystery, nevertheless grant me to merit joy eternal."

The stole or robe of immortality was lost by Adam, and restored by Christ.

## **The Chasuble**

This is the principal vestment which we see the priest wearing during Mass. Sometimes it has a cross on its back to remind priest and people of calvary.

1. *Why is it so called?*

The name comes from the latin "casula," meaning "a little house."

2. *What is its origin?*

The chasuble was originally a large mantle or cloak worn out of doors, like a mackintosh cape with an opening for the head, an all-weather cloak without sleeves, that covered the whole person.

The Druids of Tara scoffed at St. Patrick for coming dressed "in a little house pierced for his head." St. Patrick wore the long flowing chasuble which had to be raised at the sides to allow the hands freedom of action. The assistants at Mass helped the celebrant by holding it up. This practice continues in Solemn High Masses when the deacon and sub-deacon lift the shoulders of the chasuble during the incensing of the altar. A trace

of the custom may be seen when the acolyte raises the end of the chasuble at the Elevation.

In the course of time the sides of this ancient bell-shaped vestment were cut to give the arms of the celebrant more freedom.

### 3. *What does it stand for?*

It symbolises the yoke of Christ. As the priest puts it over his head, he prays:

“O Lord, Who has said: ‘My yoke is sweet, My burden light,’ grant that I may be enabled so to carry that yoke and burden as to earn Thy grace. Amen.”

## COLOURS OF THE VESTMENTS

The Church uses five colours for the vestments. Each colour expresses her feelings. “The violet robes of penance become her,” says a writer, “as do the white of joy, while no less fitting is the red of sacrifice, and the green of hope. Even the black of sympathy with the sorrow of her children is becoming.” The symbolism of colours was adapted and regularized very gradually. The five colours are:—

### 1. **White**

White vestments denote purity, innocence, sanctity. They are worn on: (a) the feasts of Our Lord and the Holy Trinity; (b) on feastdays of Our Blessed Lady; (c) on the feastdays of Angels; (d) on the feastdays of all saints who were not martyrs. In the “Ordo” white vestments are indicated: *alb.* (from “*albus*” — white).

### 2. **Red**

Red is the colour of fire and blood. Red vestments are used in: (a) Masses of the Holy Ghost, such as Pentecost, to remind us of the tongues of fire which descended upon the Apostles; (b) on the feastdays of the Holy Cross; and (c) on the festivals of all saints who shed their blood for the faith. In the “Ordo” red vestments are indicated: *rub.* (from “*ruber*” — red).



### 3. Violet

Violet is expressive of penance. It is used during Lent and Advent, on vigils, and on the feast of the Holy Innocents. In the "Ordo" violet vestments are indicated: *viol.* (from "violaceus" — violet).

### 4. Green

Green is the colour of hope. In the green corn growing lies the hope of the harvest. Our Catholic faith desires to extend its boundaries until it embraces all nations and all peoples. Green vestments are generally worn on the Sundays after Pentecost to express our hope that the faith may grow and increase. Except during Lent and Advent green vestments may be worn on days that are not saints' feastdays. In the "Ordo" green vestments are indicated: *vir.* (from "viridis" meaning green).

### 5. Black

Black is the badge of mourning, and is used in Masses of Requiem. Black is also used on Good Friday. In the "Ordo" black is indicated: *nig.* (from "niger" meaning black).

Cloth of *Gold* vestments may be used for white, red, or green. Cloth of *Silver* vestments may replace white.

*Rose* coloured vestments may be used on the third Sunday of Advent ("Gaudete" Sunday), and on the fourth Sunday of Lent ("Laetare" Sunday), because these Sundays are somewhat joyful in the midst of penitential seasons, and rose-colour is less penitential than purple. "Gaudete," and "Laetare" are the opening words of the Masses of these Sundays, and both signify "re-joice." In the "Ordo", rose coloured vestments are indicated "ros." (from "rosacea", rose-coloured).

## APPENDIX

### Suggestions for Teaching the Mass

I have called this Text-book — “Pray-the-Mass” — because these are the words used by Pope St. Pius X to urge the faithful to active participation. Pope Pius XI, also appealed for a more active participation by the laity in the Mass. He said: “The faithful come to the sacred places of worship to draw piety from its chief source by active participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. It is really necessary that the faithful should not assist at the sacred ceremonies like outsiders or mute spectators.” How may the Pray-the-Mass-with-the-Priest ideal be fostered within our class-rooms? I offer the following suggestions:—

1. Aim at a devotional participation. Lead them to see, to question, and thus to understand everything the Priest does at the Altar. From the infant classes to the leaving grades sow “WHYS” in the minds of your pupils. Send them to Mass with questions to be answered, and listen patiently to their observations. Through this preparation of the head the children will gradually realize that the Mass is their's to offer, in union with the priest, and what is their's naturally attracts them. Trained to observe what the priest is doing at the altar and why he is doing it, the children are ready to grasp the necessity of an interior participation, a self-offering, a self-surrender. Our teaching will be fruitful if we succeed in leading the children to look in upon themselves and ask: “How can I co-offer the Mass with the priest if I have nothing to offer? What of myself do I put into the Mass? Have I anything to place on the paten to be offered to Him? What of myself will I pour into the chalice this morning? And if I am empty-handed this morning, what shall I give Him this coming day, something that is not easy to give?” Thus will the children learn to live the Mass in their daily lives, to bring all back to the altar, and there to gain strength to do the little extra for His sake.

2. The Mass deserves one full teaching period each week. Friday as the Massday has much to recommend it — it is the day of the Sacrifice of the Cross, and it is near Sunday's Mass.

At all examinations and in all reports in religion, the Mass should receive a special part and mention.

“Pray the Mass” Part I is suitable and sufficient for children up to twelve years of age.

3. A class reading of the Mass prayers in Latin helps the children to tune their ears to the sound of the Mass language. If the child can recognise by their sound one or more words of the prayers in the Ordinary, which the priest says aloud, then our teaching has prepared him for a more intimate and self-satisfying participation in the Mass.

4. Encourage the children to follow the priest's example in praying their Missals. The priest does not merely read the Missal, as one silently reads a book. No, he reads some prayers aloud, and in the others, the secret prayers, he forms the words with his lips, as he does while reciting his Office. This practice will increase the concentration and attention of children during Mass.

5. One way to a better appreciation of the prayers of the Ordinary is to make them one's own through memorising, and then using them at private devotions. For example, the prayer ascending the altar might be profitably said by a child on the way to Mass. The prayer on kissing the altar-stone may be used as a short act of contrition. The prayer while changing the Missal is a suitable preparation for listening to a sermon at any time. The prayer said on mixing the water with the wine may be used during a visit to the Blessed Sacrament.

As ejaculations, the *Kyrie Eleison*, the *Domine non sum dignus*, the prayers after Communion are helpful. Spiritual guides recommend us to turn the mind and heart towards God at intervals throughout the day, to throw, as it were, a network of prayers over all we attempt and do. In cultivating that admirable Christian habit, the child should be encouraged to use the prayers of the ordinary.

6. Using Mass Instruction Cards, coloured ones for the Ordinary, with the prayer added, and white ones for the Proper, with the title only, encourage the child to build up for himself the marvellous structure of the Mass "an edifice of words," words of profound and eternal meaning. The child sees spread before him on a table the parts of the Mass of the Catechumens, and of the Mass of the Faithful.

Having thus visualized the plan and sequence of the Mass, the child will readily memorise the parts or "steps," as we call them, in the text.

7. *More memory work is desirable. All children can do it and enjoy it.*

Begin with the Mass of the Catechumens and send the steps from the Sign of the Cross to the Creed around the class as a memory drill. If any child does not know his step, he stands up and sits down immediately, and on to the next child the question goes. In the Mass of the Faithful make three sub-divisions, namely, (a) From the Offertory to the Canon. (b) From the Canon to the Communion. (c) From the Communion to the end. Open Friday's religion period with

this drill. Five minutes to this exercise, if one perseveres with it throughout the year, will teach every child under twelve to know the parts of the Mass in order.

8. The 33 "steps" are but the scaffolding on which we build doctrine and devotion. Children of this age-group need activity, object lessons, dramatizations, projects — planning and doing rather than sitting and listening.

9. The Mass and Holy Communion are the shortest, and surest way to Heaven. God intends us to build our spiritual lives, and those of our children, on the Mass. We become holy by prayer and penance, we ask and we give. We soar to God on two wings, petition and self-denial. We, and the children we teach, may look on the paten as the plate for our petitions and the chalice as the cup inviting our acts of self-denial.

We might summarise the offering of our hearts to God at Mass by the following easily remembered verse:

The paten to pray  
The chalice to pay  
United to Jesus  
In this holy way  
We are one with the priest  
In each Mass we pray.

10. Send this text-book into the homes and commission the children to become apostles of the Mass to parents and adults. The children ask questions each Sunday, and if the answers are not known, put this text in the hands of the family.

May this little book continue to help converts to know and love the Holy Mass.

JOHN T. McMAHON,  
Archdiocese of Perth,  
Western Australia.

Thirteenth Edition. Revised.

WHOLLY SET UP, PRINTED AND DISTRIBUTED BY  
THE PUBLISHERS

**Pellegrini & Co. Pty. Ltd.**

ADELAIDE, BRISBANE, CANBERRA,  
MELBOURNE, PERTH,  
SYDNEY