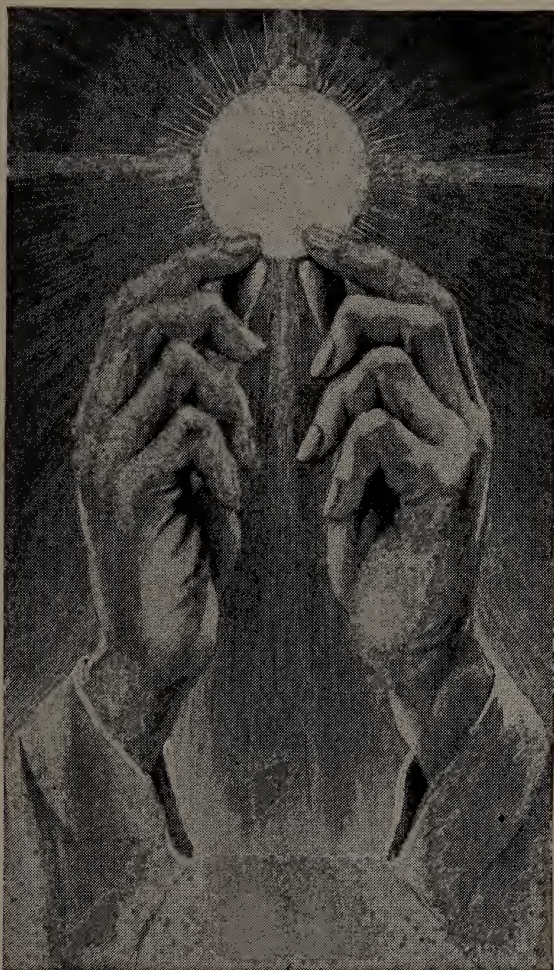


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The ceremonies...
c.2 ACJ 2078

The Ceremonies of the Mass

with Discussion Club Outline



By REV. CARROLL C. SMYTH

Declassified

THE CEREMONIES OF THE MASS

INTRODUCTION

WHAT would we say of the man who went to prison for debt with a gold mine at his door? What would we say of the drowning man who did not raise his hand to grasp at the saving beam floating above him? What would we say of the man who starved to death with the Bread of Life in sight? Unless he were totally, absolutely, blind we would certainly call him a fool.

In the Mass, the Church offers to every man a mine of limitless wealth, the infinite merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, wherewith to pay his debt to Divine Justice; to the man engulfed in a sea of trials and temptations, she extends the saving beam of the Cross; before him who hungers unto death with unfulfilled desire, she places the Living Bread from heaven. Truly in the Mass, "heaven may be had for the asking"; yet every priest is forced to admit, after but a short exercise of his ministry, that the greater number of Catholics neither understand nor love the Mass as they should, and consequently fail to realize its immense treasure of spiritual knowledge and grace.

Knowledge is the road to love and service. If Catholics did but know the deep lessons of the various symbols and liturgical ceremonies of the Mass, they would soon hold faster to its graces and lead lives more practically Catholic. They would also be a source of information and edification to our non-Catholic friends, who are ever watchful of all things Catholic, and eager to be informed about what they see and hear in a Catholic church.

Convinced that our people are not guilty of the folly of indifference, but are only blind to the benefits which would accrue to them from a deeper knowledge of the Mass, or too engrossed by the business of life in our over-busy century to find time to read a bulky volume on this important subject. we have been encouraged to prepare this brief explanation

of the purpose of the Holy Sacrifice, and of the meaning and liturgical significance of all that appertains to it.

To our busy working men and women, who wish to understand and to be able to explain the great central act of worship of our holy religion, its doctrine and liturgical aspects, we offer this little pamphlet in the humble hope that it may enrich Catholic hearts and lives with a greater knowledge and love of the Adorable Sacrifice.

The Altar

On entering a Catholic church the first thing that strikes the eye is the *Altar*. In every Catholic house of worship, be it a stately cathedral or a lonely mountain chapel, the altar stands forth prominently as the necessary emblem of the religious rite, because upon it sacrifice is offered and sacrifice is the very essence of religion, the crown of worship, the only adequate expression of the worship which man owes to God.

In the New Law the altar is the table upon which the Eucharistic Sacrifice is offered. It symbolizes the long narrow board at which Christ and His Apostles sat on the blessed night when Divine love emptied Itself and human hate outdid itself in plotting the death of the God-man. The Mass may be said outside a sacred place, but never without an altar or an altar stone.

In most of our churches the altar is built near or against the wall, so that the priest when saying Mass generally faces the east with the people behind him.

The altar may be made of wood or marble. In the early days of the Church they were of wood, similar to the table or board used by Christ our Lord at the Last Supper, but then Mass was often said in crypts or private houses, and the wooden altar had the advantage of being easily carried from place to place. As time went on and the religion of Christ gained a stronger foothold in the world, churches were built with more grandeur and magnificenc e, and the altar was erected of costly stone.

The altar is made of a single slab of stone, joined by cement to the supports, so that the table and support make one piece. On the table of the consecrated altar five Greek crosses are engraved, one at each of the four corners, and one in the center. In the middle of the altar is cut what we might call a "cavity," in which is placed the relics of two canonized martyrs, and to these is sometimes added, when possible, a relic of the saint in whose honor the church is dedicated. This enclosed "cavity" where the relics repose, is the spot kissed so frequently by the priest during the celebration of the sacred mysteries. The altar may be of any size, provided it be large enough for the celebrant to say Mass conveniently, and to carry out all the prescribed ceremonies.

Usually over the main altar in the church, is erected a canopy or *baldachino* as a protection to the tabernacle itself, against any dust which might perchance fall upon the place where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. It also serves as an ornament or as a convenient place wherein to expose the Sacred Host during the time of Forty Hours' Devotion or Benediction services.

The steps leading up to the altar have no particular liturgical meaning. According to a pious belief they typify the Mount of Calvary, up which our Lord walked to His death. They may be made of wood or marble.

There are two kinds of altars, *Fixed* and *Portable*.

A *fixed altar* is one attached to the wall or floor, as the name signifies, made up of a consecrated table and support built on a solid foundation.

A *portable altar* is one that may be carried from place to place. It, also, has a consecrated altar stone, where the Sacred Body and Blood of Christ rests during the Mass.

Consecrated Altar.—In almost every Catholic church the main altar is consecrated, whether the church be so or not. The discipline of the Church has always been most exact about consecrated fixed altars in our places of worship, and she has reserved the power of consecration to the bishop, in

order to impress upon the faithful the holiness and veneration of that place where the Holy Sacrifice is offered.

Privileged Altar.—A privileged altar is one on which a priest may gain a plenary indulgence every time he celebrates Mass thereon. Bishops have the power to declare “privileged” one altar in every church and oratory throughout their diocese.

The Tabernacle

The present form of *tabernacle* dates only from the sixteenth century. In the early part of the fourth century the Sacred Host was reserved in a specified place in the church. The receptacles were in the shape of a dove, and hung over the altar by a chain or cord. Before that time, owing to the persecution of the early Christians the faithful guarded the Blessed Sacrament in their homes.

Later on, an octagon-shaped tower made of wood or stone, and placed on the Gospel side of the altar, was used as a tabernacle for the Sacred Species. Today the tabernacle is built in the center of the altar, covered over usually by a canopy, and in it the consecrated Host is reserved.

The Sacred Congregation of Rites has laid down specified rules for the adornment and maintenance of the tabernacle. For instance, no relics or pictures may be placed before the tabernacle for the devotion of the faithful, nor may flowers adorn the door of the tabernacle so as to hide it from view. The interior of the tabernacle is covered with a white silken cloth, and the exterior with a curtain of white or of the color of the vestments used at the Mass on that day.

This explanation of the Catholic altar, while incomplete, may give some notion of its sanctity and veneration, so jealously guarded by the laws of the Church. Because of its sacred and precious use, and because it is the home of Him Who came that we might have Life and have it more abundantly, the faithful find within its shadow the comfort and consolation which they seek throughout the weary pilgrimage of life.

Ornaments of the Altar

The Altar Cross.—High above the altar in a most conspicuous position, we behold the image of Christ nailed to the Cross. No matter what the occasion, or how gorgeous the decorations, the severe yet beautiful outlines of the Crucifixion stand out prominently as the chief embellishment of the altar of God, and as a constant reminder to both priest and people, that the Sacrifice about to be offered is the same as was offered on Calvary. It is for this reason that a crucifix must be erected on the altar during the celebration of Mass.

The early Christians could not expose the Cross in public for fear of enemies, and of subjecting it to pagan insults, so we do not find it on the altar much before the sixth century.

Altar Candles.—The candles that burn upon the altar during the celebration of Mass are made of beeswax. The wax extracted by the bee from flowers symbolizes the pure flesh of Jesus received from His Virgin Mother. The wick of the candle typifies the Soul of Christ and the flame of His Divinity. These candles must be lighted during Mass. When a priest says Mass two wax candles are lighted on the altar. When a bishop celebrates Low Mass four candles are lighted. On feasts the altar is usually ablaze with lights, but this is for ornamentation and is not of obligation.

Our Catholic people should have in their homes at least one or two candles blessed by the Church, to do honor to our Lord when the priest comes to administer the Sacred Host to their sick or dying.

Altar Candelabra.—The gorgeous candelabra we see today upon the altar were not used in the days of the early Church. It was forbidden then to place anything on the altar except the relics of the saints and the book of the Gospels. The lights used about the altar were suspended from the ceiling or attached to the side-walls. Later on, in the sixteenth century, candlesticks came into general use.

Altar Cards.—The altar cards are placed on the altar to assist the memory of the priest in reciting the prayers of the

Mass. These cards did not come into use until the sixteenth century, and even today are not used by a bishop.

The Sanctuary Lamp

The sanctuary lamp burns day and night before the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is kept. It is a curious fact that in nearly all the early pictures of the Last Supper, a lamp is seen hanging over the table. This incident makes us realize what importance the early followers of Christ attached to the necessity of burning a light during the Holy Sacrifice. We read, too, in the Old Testament that God commanded the people to burn a lamp filled with the purest oil of olives before the Tabernacle of Testimony.

The sanctuary lamp, as we have it today, was not general in the Church much before the twelfth century. However, hundreds of years previous to this time it was a universal custom to burn lights before relics, and we can reasonably conclude that the custom extended to the place where the Holy Eucharist was reserved.

The law of the Church today makes it of strict obligation to keep a light burning perpetually before the Holy Eucharist. The responsibility of carrying out this injunction rests on the pastor of the church. The oil used in the sanctuary lamp is vegetable oil, signifying purity, peace, and godliness. The lamp is suspended from the ceiling by means of a chain. It may be of any kind of material.

To Catholics the world over, the sanctuary lamp is a beacon light, guiding them to the lonely Prisoner of the altar, Who "bringeth them unto their desired haven" of peace and forgiveness.

Altar Linens

The Corporal.—The corporal is a square piece of linen large enough to place under a chalice, and upon which a large host and a ciborium are placed, when new particles are to be consecrated for the people. The corporal must be made of pure linen. The reason is obvious, since the precious Body and Blood of our Lord rests on the corporal after the Conse-

cration. The priest spreads the corporal on the altar at the beginning of the Mass.

The Pall.—The pall is pocket-shaped, with a cardboard inserted in order to stiffen it. It is placed over the chalice to prevent dust from falling upon the Sacred Elements after the Consecration.

The Purificator.—This is a piece of linen used by the priest to cleanse the chalice after the Precious Blood has been consumed. It is folded in three layers, and when placed over the chalice is about three inches wide.

Finger Cloths.—They are used by the priest after he has washed his fingers at the *Lavabo* of the Mass, and after giving Communion. They may be of any decent material.

Altar Cloths.—The altar upon which Mass is to be said must be covered with three linen cloths. The practical reason for this rubrical law is, to have the altar cloths absorb the Precious Blood before It reaches the altar stone, if perchance any should be spilled. These cloths must be spotlessly clean because of the infinite purity of Him Who rests upon them.

When Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is given, an additional linen covering is placed over the others, lest they should become soiled or stained. These cloths typify the linen cloths that were wound about the Body of Christ before His burial.

It is a praiseworthy custom, to which we would urge our pious women, to procure linen and make corporals, palls, purificators, and altar cloths for use at the celebration of the Mass. If we would have deemed it a privilege and a blessing to have been among those who wrapped the dead Body of Christ in linen cloths and laid Him in the tomb, how much greater the honor, and how consoling, to make with our hands the sacred linens upon which His living Body and Blood rests during the Mass.

Vestments Used at Mass

The Amice.—The first vestment put on by the priest is called the amice. It is a short piece of linen, square in

shape, and blessed before being used. The purpose of this vestment is to cover the shoulders of the celebrant. In the Middle Ages the amice was first laid over the head, the ends falling upon the shoulders; then the other vestments were put on. When the priest reached the altar he threw back the folds of the amice, and it hung about his neck as a small cowl. It also formed a sort of a collar, protecting the chasuble from touching the skin. This is not the way of wearing the amice today. The only trace we have of the custom is the rubric which directs the priest in putting on the amice, to rest it for a moment on his head, praying God, *to protect him with the helmet of salvation from the wiles of the enemy*. The Dominicans and Franciscans may draw the cowl of their habit over their head in going to the altar, and in leaving it; a relic, doubtless, of the old way of wearing the amice. A small cross is sewed in the center of the amice which the priest kisses in putting it on.

The Alb.—The alb is the second vestment put on by the priest when vesting for Mass.

At just what time this particular garment came into use, is not positively known. Modern liturgical writers say that its origin is derived from the white linen tunic worn by Romans and Greeks under the empire. The fact, however, that the white tunic was an ordinary secular attire, makes it difficult to say just when our present alb became a distinctly liturgical garment. It seems certain that in the early centuries some sort of white tunic was worn by priests under the chasuble, and that in course of time it came to be looked upon as liturgical. It was always, as today, put on after the amice. It is made of pure linen to signify the self-denial and chastity befitting a priest; it hangs down to the ankles, to remind the celebrant that he is bound to practice good works to the end of his life.

In putting on the alb, the priest says: *Purify me, O Lord, from all stain and cleanse my heart, that washed in the Blood of the Lamb, I may enjoy eternal delights.*

In the early ages the alb was worn for all sacred functions, even in carrying Communion to the sick, but since the end of the twelfth century the surplice has taken the place of the alb in administering the Sacraments outside of Mass.

The shape of the alb is very much the same today as in the early centuries, except that it is somewhat fuller, and is more ornamented by lace and rich brocade, but this is merely for decoration. Like all other vestments, the alb is blessed before being used.

The Cincture.—The cincture is the cord or girdle which the priest wears about the alb. It is looked upon as a liturgical vestment. Its purpose is to draw up the loose fitting alb, so that the priest can move conveniently about the altar during the celebration of Holy Mass. The cincture is made usually of flax or hemp, although silk or wool may be used, especially on solemn feasts. The material is woven into a cord and ornamented with a tassel. The priest says in putting on the cincture: *Gird me, O Lord, with the girdle of purity, etc.*, suggesting that the vestment typifies the chastity of the celebrant.

The Maniple.—The maniple is shaped in the form of a band, a little over a yard long, and is worn on the left arm of the priest during the celebration of Mass. It is used only at that time. The color of this vestment follows the color of the chasuble of the day.

In the first centuries of the Church its purpose was to wipe away the perspiration from the priest's face, and to dry his hands, so that the vestments would not be soiled by them. It was then a plain cloth of good quality and served as a handkerchief. Today the maniple has three crosses embroidered upon it, one in the middle and one at each of its extremities. It is fastened to the left wrist by a string or a pin.

This particular vestment symbolizes the bands which held the hands of Christ when He was scourged at the pillar, or it may typify the cares and sorrow of this life which should be

borne with resignation, in view of our heavenly reward. This seems to be the most common view as to its symbolical meaning, since the priest says in putting it on: *May I deserve, O Lord, to bear the maniple of weeping and sorrow, in order that I may joyfully reap the reward of my labors.*

The Stole.—The stole is a long strip of a rich material, about as wide as the maniple, but three times as long. It is worn around the neck of the priest and crossed on the breast, where it is held by the cincture. When putting on the stole, the priest says: *Restore to me, O Lord, the stole of immortality which I lost through the transgression of my first parents, and though I approach unworthily to celebrate the Sacred Mystery, may I merit nevertheless eternal joy.*

The stole is worn only by bishops, priests, and deacons. For priests and deacons it is a specific mark of their deaconal and priestly orders. Deacons wear the stole like a sash, the vestment resting on the left shoulder, passing across the breast and back to the right side. We described above the manner in which priests wear the stole while saying Mass; when vested in surplice the vestment is not crossed on the breast, but hangs straight down on the sides. The bishop in saying Mass wears his stole like a priest, except that it is never crossed on his breast because the bishop wears a pectoral cross.

The stole is worn not only when saying Mass, but for other sacred functions, *i. e.*, in touching the Blessed Sacrament, and in administering the Sacraments.

The stole came into general use as early as the beginning of the ninth century, and the manner of its use then was essentially the same as today.

While there are no express laws concerning the material of the stole, usually silk or near-silk is used. For festivals it is generally ornamented with rich embroidery. The stole signifies innocence, justice, and the reign of Christ in the heart of God's priests.

The Chasuble.—The chasuble is the most conspicuous of

all the Mass vestments. It covers all the others. It is the last vestment put on by the priest when about to say Mass.

Liturgical vestments as we understand them today, were simply an adaptation of the dress worn in the Roman empire during the early Christian centuries. The priest, at first, in performing sacred functions at the altar was dressed as in civil life, but the custom grew of keeping for this purpose garments that were new and clean, and which were seldom, if ever, worn outside, and out of this practice developed the idea of a specified liturgical dress.

The chasuble was like the ordinary outer garment worn by the lower orders. It was a square piece of cloth, in the center of which a hole was made through which the head passed. With the arms hanging down, this garment covered the whole body. The inconvenience of this sort of chasuble caused its disuse, and in its stead others were designed. The sides of the chasuble were cut away, while the length before and behind remained unaltered. In the sixteenth century the sides were further diminished until today the shape has been so much modified that the sides of most chasubles scarcely fall below the shoulders and leave the arms free. The material of the chasuble must be of silk or some other rich cloth, and its color either white, red, violet, green or black. No other kind of chasuble can be worn. By the different color of the vestments, the Church teaches the faithful the nature of the solemnity which she celebrates.

White is used on the great festivals of the Trinity, the Saviour, the Blessed Virgin, the Angels, and of those Saints who, without shedding their blood, gave testimony to Christ by the purity and virtue of their lives.

Red is used on the feast of Pentecost, and on the feasts of the Apostles and Martyrs. It signifies the love of God for man, and also the love of the Apostles and Martyrs for God.

Green is used on days when there is no special solemnity and is an emblem of the hope that at the last day our bodies shall rise from the dust of the grave.

Violet is the color of penance, and is used during Lent and Advent.

Black is used on Good Friday, at funeral Masses, and during offices for the dead.

Like all other liturgical vestments, the chasuble is blessed by a priest before it can be used.

In putting on the chasuble the priest says: *O Lord, Who hast said: "My yoke is sweet and My burden light" grant that I may so carry it, as to merit Thy grace.*

In its figurative meaning the chasuble is the emblem of charity, for it covers the whole body, as charity should cover the soul of the priest.

All of the vestments worn by the priest in saying Mass have some reference to the Passion and Death of Christ our Lord.

The *amice* is the veil which covered the face of Christ.

The *alb* the garment in which He was clothed by Herod.

The *cincture* the scourge ordered by Pilate.

The *maniple* the rope with which He was dragged through the city.

The *stole* the rope which fastened Him to a pillar.

The *chasuble* the purple garment worn before Pilate.

Altar Vessels

The Chalice.—The chalice is the cup which contains the wine and water of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. It occupies the first place among the sacred vessels. The base and stem of the chalice may be of any metal, provided it be clean and suitable, but the cup must be of gold or of silver lined with gold. The legislation of the Church regarding the material from which chalices should be made, was not as rigid in the early days as it is now. So far as it is possible to collect any information regarding the chalices in use among the early Christians, the evidence seems to favor the prevalence of glass, though cups of more precious metal were also in use. In the seventh and subsequent centuries, the Councils of the

Church laid down specific laws for the making of chalices. Probably the most famous decree is that attributed to a certain Council of Rheims, where we read: "That the chalice of the Lord together with the paten, if not gold, must be entirely made of silver. Let no one presume to say Mass with a chalice of wood or glass."

Before the chalice and paten are used at the Holy Sacrifice, they must be consecrated by the bishop with holy chrism. Strictly speaking, only priests and deacons are permitted to touch the chalice and paten, but permission may be given to sacristans and those appointed to take charge of the vestments and sacred vessels.

Occasionally we hear some criticism passed upon the priceless value and beauty of this particular altar vessel, as though critics would say: "This should have been sold for much, and the money given to the poor." Did they but realize and believe that the chalice is the resting place of Christ's Precious Blood, they would admit that gold and precious stones are not too extravagant for so holy a use.

The Paten.—The paten is a eucharistic vessel of precious metal upon which the element of bread is offered to God at the Mass, and upon which the consecrated Host rests after It is broken.

The word paten comes from a Latin form *patina* or *patena*. It seems to have been to designate a flat open vessel like a plate or dish. Such vessels in the first centuries were used in the service of the altar, probably to collect the offerings of bread made by the people, and also to distribute the consecrated fragments. These were brought down to the communicants, who received a portion with their own hands from the *patina*.

The Ciborium.—The ciborium is the altar vessel used to contain the Blessed Sacrament. The word ciborium probably comes from the Latin word *cibus*, meaning food, since it is used to contain the "Food of Heaven." The ciborium resembles the chalice, but the cup is round instead of oblong,

and has a cover surmounted by a cross. It is generally of gold or silver, although baser metals are allowed, but the interior of the cup must be lined with gold. The ciborium is not consecrated, but simply blessed by a bishop or, in this country, by a priest.

While the Sacred Hosts are in the ciborium, it is covered with a white silk cloth. It cannot be handled except by priests and levites in sacred orders. When purified it may be touched by any cleric or even the sacristan when authorized. Receptacles corresponding to ciboriums were in use during the first three centuries. The Blessed Sacrament was not kept in the church, owing to the danger of profanation and persecution, but the people were allowed to keep It in their homes to be received at time of death. It was reserved in a silver box called "The Ciborium." Later on the name was retained for the receptacle in which the Sacred Host was reserved in the tabernacle of the church.

Altar Wine.—Wine is one of the two elements absolutely necessary for the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The pure juice of the grape, naturally and properly fermented, must be used for the valid and licit celebration of the Sacred Mysteries. The wine can be white, or red, weak or strong, sweet or dry.

Since the validity of the Sacrifice depends on the genuine quality of the wine, the priest must carefully investigate its purity. To prevent any serious infraction of this law of the Church, the altar wine is usually purchased from a reliable manufacturer direct, who respecting the responsibility of the clergy with regard to the licit celebration of Mass, sees to it that the requisite quality of wine is provided. If the wine turns to vinegar or becomes corrupted or is too much diluted with water, it cannot be used.

Altar Breads.—Bread is the second element absolutely necessary for the Sacrifice of the Mass. Whether Christ used ordinary table bread or some other bread especially prepared for the Last Supper, we have no means of verifying from the sacred text.

In the Western Church the altar breads are round in form. It was formerly the custom for the pious laity to present the flour from which these breads were made. The altar breads are made generally by nuns. At one time these wafers were made very large, and from them small pieces were broken for the Communion of the laity, hence the word "particle" for the small host. Today both large and small hosts are made for consecration. In order that there be a valid consecration, the hosts must be made of wheaten flour, mixed with natural water, and baked in an oven or between two heated irons. They must not be corrupted. Any other method used for making the hosts is forbidden.

In the Western Church unleavened bread is used, and in the Eastern Church leavened bread, with but few exceptions. It is the probable opinion that our Lord used unleavened bread, since the Jews were not allowed to have leavened bread in their houses on the feast day of the Azymes.

Altar Missal.—The altar Missal is the book containing the prayers said by the priest at the altar when offering the Holy Sacrifice. It is divided into two essential parts. One division is made up of that portion of the liturgy which is said in every Mass, *i. e.*, the prefaces and the canon, and the remainder of the book is devoted to those parts of the liturgy which change from day to day, according to the festival. Each Mass includes an *Introit, Collect, Epistle, Gradual or Tract, Gospel, Offertory, Secret, Communion, and Post-communion*, the passages of each title being printed in full.

The Missal begins with the Masses to be said from Advent to Christmas, inclusive. After the *Ordo Missæ*, or The Rule or Order of the Mass, and the Canon, comes the Masses of the season from Easter to the last Sunday of Pentecost. Then come the proper Masses of special feasts of the year. To these Masses are added a number of what are called *Votive Masses*, and Masses for the dead. The Missal contains also a number of rubrics, and a calendar for the guidance of the priest in High and Low Masses.

The first printed edition of the Roman Missal was in use at Milan about 1474. Many editions followed, but it was left for the Council of Trent, under the guidance of the Pope, to see to the revision of a Catechism, Breviary, and Missal. This revision appeared in 1570, and Pope Pius V published a Bull, or a decree, ordering the new revised Missal to be used, and no other, in all the dioceses and Religious Orders of the Latin Rite, excepting those who could prove a prescription of two hundred years. The older Orders, like the Carthusians and Dominicans were allowed to keep their ancient liturgical usages. The last revision of the Missal occurred under Pope Leo XIII in 1884.

Altar Rail.—The railing which guards the sanctuary and separates the latter from the body of the church, is called the altar rail. It is termed also the Communion rail, because the faithful kneel there to receive Holy Communion. It may be made of wood, metal, or marble, and is generally about two feet high, and the upper part from six to nine inches wide. The Ritual orders that a linen cloth be extended before those who receive Communion in order to catch the Sacred Particle, if by accident It should fall from the hands of the priest. This cloth is fastened on the sanctuary side, and drawn over the top of the rail at the time Holy Communion is given.

In many churches today we find that the Communion cloth has been dispensed with, and in its place a gilt paten, with handle attached, is used. This seems to be more practical and surely more hygenic. This paten is either carried by the server at the Mass, or passed by communicants, one to the other. It is not consecrated like the paten used by the priest at Mass. After Communion has been given, the priest purifies the paten, in case any small particles of the Host may have fallen upon it.

Altar Cruets.—The cruets are two small vessels used to contain the wine and water used at Mass. They are made of glass, in order to be easily cleaned, and to distinguish

easily the wine from the water. They are covered to keep dust and flies from the elements.

In the early days of the Church, the people used to carry the wine used at Mass in a jar-shaped vessel. It was then received by the deacon and poured into the chalice. We have a reminder of this custom at a Solemn High Mass, when the deacon pours the wine into the chalice before presenting it to the celebrant.

The Object of the Mass

The Mass is the highest act of religion wherein Christ, as the Head of the human race, sacrifices His Body and Blood to acknowledge God's sovereignty over Him and over all mankind. Jesus Christ is the chief celebrant in every Mass, and at the altar renews His profession of perpetual service.

We realize our inability to pay God adequate honor and glory. Our endeavors, even the best of them, are futile, when we consider our sinfulness, clad as we are in infirmity from head to foot. Our unworthiness to give God the homage He deserves is supplied for in the Mass by the perfection of the God-man, Who gives infinite honor and glory for us to God's Majesty. One Holy Mass gives more glory to God than the adoration of all the angels and saints in heaven, more even than could be given by Mary herself.

Our reason tells us that God has a right to our gratitude because of the many spiritual and temporal favors He has showered upon us. God has done more for man than for the angels. Yet man is the neediest and most ungrateful of all creatures.

Christ in the Mass renders infinite thanksgiving to God, and we by uniting our gratitude to His, return to the Eternal Father the thanksgiving He deserves from us. We are all sinners, we need someone to appease God's anger and to act as mediator for us. Christ in the Mass takes upon Himself this duty by sacrificing His Body and Blood upon the

altar renewing the Sacrifice of Calvary, and thereby atoning for man's iniquity and ingratitude.

You have received many temporal and spiritual blessings in your lifetime. Have the Mass offered in thanksgiving and assist at the Holy Sacrifice for the same intention. You are anxious about your friends and relatives who are leading bad lives. Through the Mass you may infallibly appease the anger of God which you and they have incurred, and may secure them graces which, if accepted, will lead them back to God.

For a soul in the state of grace, the Mass satisfies a part of the punishment due forgiven sin, wards off the chastisements of God. For the soul in purgatory, the Mass is the surest and quickest way of paying his debt and releasing the prisoner from its purging fire.

Devotions may come and go in the Church, some are more popular than others, but the Mass is, or should be, the devotion of every age and of every people. The Mass can never leave us, and the last Mass on earth will be the signal for the angel's trumpet to call the dead to judgment. St. Alphonsus says: "God Himself cannot cause any action to be performed which is holier and grander than the Mass."

Prayers Said in the Mass

The prayers said in the Mass are the prayers of the Church. The Church herself is responsible for these prayers. She watches over every word with anxious care and is jealous of any alteration or addition.

The many prayers we read in spiritual books, even those written by saints, cannot all claim to be prayers of the Church. Many good people are ignorant of this. By "prayers of the Church" we mean pre-eminently the Scriptures, and such prayers as are prescribed in the Mass and in all public services, which the Church has approved. In these she teaches her doctrine and preserves her creed.

The prayers said at Mass are the warmest outpourings

of the Church's heart, in the most sublime act of worship which earth offers to heaven. No words can exaggerate their beauty, nor the reverent tenderness they display for God's Majesty. Every feeling of the heart finds adequate expression in her supplications, as she mourns, and rejoices, thanks, beseeches and invokes her God. These prayers are preserved from error; they are consecrated by age; they teach us how to pray as no other prayers can.

The prayers of the Canon of the Mass (that portion of the Holy Sacrifice which begins with the prayers said by the celebrant immediately after the *Sanctus*) are almost the same today as they were in the beginning of the seventh century, when St. Gregory the Great died. For thirteen hundred years, virgins, martyrs and confessors, the needy and the weary, the innocent child and the penitent, the monarch in his palace, the prisoner in his cell, have satisfied their hearts' longings in the very same prayers which we hear said in the Mass today.

Why are those prayers so little used by our Catholic people? Why are the oftentimes uninteresting and dry formulas found in some of our prayer books, preferred to the Missal? Why are the prayers of a man held dearer than the prayers of the Church? The only answer is that the Mass is not known, not studied, and therefore not appreciated, nor loved as it deserves.

Why Go to Mass?

There are Catholics who frequently remain away from Mass, and say they cannot see how it can be a great sin: yet for a Catholic to miss Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation is a serious breach of God's law, and everyone should know the reason why it is so grievous a sin.

The answer to the question: *Why go to Mass?* should be obvious from the foregoing remarks on the Holy Sacrifice. In order, however, to impress this obligation more clearly, to show more fully the reasonableness of the Church's law, we will give a more detailed reply to this important query.

In the regulation of human conduct, persuasion produces more enduring results than authority. Certain it is that we render instinctive and unquestioning obedience only to an authority which we recognize as legitimate, nor is this unreasonable. Approval of the source demands acquiescence. Moreover, it requires no argument to manifest the accentuated willingness with which we discharge an obligation, whose necessity and utility we realize apart from the authority that imposes it. Following this uncontended proposition, we intend to give a brief resume of the reasons that dictated the first command of the Church: *To hear Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation*, which binds under pain of mortal sin. We know the Church to be the oracle of God, and hence do not require her to supply us with the reason for each special commandment. Faith in her authority commands our ready obedience. However, there is no reason why the dogmas and commandments of the Church should not be examined by the human mind. She invites such scrutiny, always, of course, under her supervision. We must perforce be brief, but we shall endeavor to be plain and simple in this explanation.

Law of Adoration.—We all readily admit that there is a God. *I believe in God.* By that I mean that I know there is a Being from Whom I have come, and upon Whom I am absolutely and unqualifiedly dependent. From the recognition of the existence of such a Being there follows a fourfold obligation, and that from merely natural reason. If I believe in God, I must adore Him, I must propitiate Him, I must petition Him, I must thank Him. *Adoration, Reparation, Petition, and Thanksgiving*; these constitute the fourfold duty which every man must discharge towards his Creator.

Render to God the things that are God's. We are not free in this; we are bound. The first duty is *Adoration*. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. The world and all they who dwell therein. In Him I live and move and have my being." Certainly such a powerful Being is to be adored by the work of His hands.

Law of Propitiation.—Nay, more, I know I have offended this Person. I know this from the testimony of that voice which is in me, but seems so strangely apart from me. "Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy great mercy, for I have done evil in Thy sight. Behold I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Surely this is the voice of sin-conscious humanity. 'Tis the record of human experience, hence the second duty of *Reparation*.

Law of Petition.—Besides I know my weakness. Times without number have I discovered it. I know my instability, "I know that there dwelleth not in me, that is in my flesh, that which is good, for to will is present with me, but to accomplish that which is good, I find not, for the good which I will, that I do not, and the evil that I will not, that I do." These are the words of St. Paul, but they are the natural cry of the human heart at the sight of its manifold weakness. Who shall deliver me? The grace of God. Hence this third duty, *Petition*.

Law of Thanksgiving.—Finally, we owe the duty of *Thanksgiving*. "What shall I render to the Lord for the things He hath rendered to me?" All that I have comes from Him. My life, my health, my friends, my material and spiritual well-being. Surely the natural impulse is one of gratitude. Thus have we man's fourfold obligation. *Adoration, Reparation, Petition, and Thanksgiving*, all flowing as a necessary consequence from man's recognition of the existence of God.

It requires but a superficial view of the history of the human race to see how the human heart has everywhere recognized these obligations, how men have ever striven to fulfill them whether at Jerusalem in the worship of the One only God, or among the nations wandering in the darkness of ignorance and superstition. Their acknowledgment of these four duties of religious worship may not have been explicit, but implicitly they ever strove to discharge them.

Another fact that stands out in the worship of all na-

tions, whether of the true God, or of idols, is this, that *sacrifice* was ever the form that was considered the appropriate worship for the Deity, or for what men in their ignorance believed to be such. It is simply impossible to explain this prevalence of the idea of sacrifice on merely natural grounds. It seems most probable that this was a primitive revelation never lost by man, even in his wildest wanderings from the truth.

Space forbids us to enter into a history of the idea of sacrifice. suffice to say that it may be defined as an offering of an object by a priest to God alone, and the consuming of it, to acknowledge that He is the Creator and Lord of all. In its purest form it was found among the Jews, whom God preserved intact from the corruption infesting the rest of the world. The Jewish laws laid down elaborate directions and a gorgeous ceremonial for the offering of sacrifice, and this sacrifice was ever regarded as the supreme act of worship by which man discharged one or all of the duties he owed to God.

Another thing equally potent with regard to this sacrifice was its figurative, representative character; it was but a shadow of the Sacrifice which was to come. "Sacrifice and oblation of holocausts and burnt offerings Thou didst not desire, but a body Thou hast prepared for Me." In Christ was fulfilled the perfect sacrifice—the oblation made on the gloomy heights of Golgotha by the great High Priest of humanity. There was offered to God an act of perfect worship such as had not been offered from the foundation of the world. There Christ our Brother, clothed in the vestments of our common humanity, discharged amply and completely our fourfold obligation of *Adoration, Propitiation, Petition* and *Thanksgiving*.

Never was *Adoration* of God so perfect. The humiliating conditions of His death, joined to death itself, was a most profound acknowledgment of God's supreme dominion over life and death.

The *Reparation* there offered was also most complete. That mangled figure, the bleeding gaping wounds were so many mouths pleading for man's forgiveness. The infinite value attached to every act He performed, erased the handwriting that was against us.

What more eloquent *Petition* could we offer to secure for us the helps we need than that same Sacrifice! With what a means are we therein furnished to discharge in a most perfect manner the duty of *Thanksgiving* which we owe to God! The tragedy of Calvary is then the central fact of all history, the greatest and most important event that ever happened.

Now we must remember that this Sacrifice is eternal. It is not an isolated happening, for the Priest Who offered it "ever lives to make intercession for us." Christ, and Christ alone, is our Priest. By the Sacrifice of Mount Calvary, and by that alone, we are saved. This is our condition. We are obliged to discharge a fourfold obligation to God; we can only do so fully and completely through the Sacrifice of Mount Calvary. The question is, how are we to do it? Christ has left us the means. The night before He died, He took bread and blessed it, and said: "This is My Body," and He took wine and blessed it and said: "This is My Blood." Then said He to His Apostles, "Do this for a commemoration of Me." There and then He established the channel by which we were to be put in communion with Him on Mount Calvary, and that channel we call the Mass.

The priest we behold, the vestments, the candles, the elements, the prayers, are but the machinery through which this tremendous effect is accomplished. So that when you assist at Mass you are actually brought into immediate contact with Christ on Calvary, you have applied to your soul the merits of His Passion, and He discharges for you the necessary duties which you owe to God. Is it any wonder then, that Saints have found it impossible to speak

adequately of the dignity and sublimity of the Mass? It is beyond words. As well try to describe the unseen and unutterable Majesty of God. As well try to do the impossible, as try to describe the glory of this august act. By it God is more perfectly adored than by all the choirs of the heavenly host. It is more satisfying to His offended Majesty than the blood of all the martyrs. It obtains more for us than the prayers and sufferings of the army of the Saints, with the Blessed Virgin Mary at its head, and it is an act of *Thanksgiving* more complete than the praises of the court of heaven through all eternity.

With this knowledge before our mind, should we need a command to compel us to hear Mass? On the contrary, should we not prize it as a precious privilege to kneel in the glorious light that, once shining from Calvary, has never failed. If we are weak, how grand to come and rest beneath the Cross, to gather strength for the conflict against sin and temptation, to revive our courage, to refresh our drooping spirits by the contemplation of the Crucified. If we are bowed with grief and the iron has entered our soul, how helpful to come and gaze at our lives in the light of the Cross, and learn there that God's ways are best!

If, heretofore, we have been remiss in our attendance at Mass, let us never again be guilty of such a violation of duty. Keeping ever before us the beauty and worth of the Mass, let us assist at it whenever practicable, thus following steadily after the Light that never fails, growing accustomed to Its radiance here, that one day we may be admitted among the throng gathered about the throne, crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of hosts.

The Prayers and Parts of the Mass

For the sake of clearness, we will divide the Mass into four parts.

The *First Part* is from the beginning of the Mass until the Creed, inclusive. It is the preparation of the priest

and the people for the Sacrifice, expressing and instilling the idea of praise, confidence, humility and petition, the knowledge of God's will and the profession of faith.

The *Second Part*, from the Offertory to the end of the Preface, is the preparation of the oblations, which are the material of the Sacrifice, and the suggestion of more pious sentiments in priest and people. These prayers ask God to bless and accept what we offer, and bid us raise our minds and hearts to contemplate and praise His Majesty.

The *Third Part* is the Sacrifice proper. It extends from after the Sanctus to the Communion.

The *Fourth Part* comprises what follows the Communion till the end of the Mass, and is principally a thanksgiving.

The Prayers at the Foot of the Altar

The priest having vested in the sacristy, proceeds to the altar and places upon it the chalice which he carries in his left hand. He prepares the Missal, descends to the foot of the altar, and there genuflects. Convinced of his own unworthiness, he dreads the august Sacrifice, and, therefore, in union with his servers, who represent the people, he asks the divine mercy in his own behalf, before he ventures to perform the work of the ministry.

First he blesses himself with the sign of the cross, to show that all his hopes are based upon the merits of Him Who died for us upon the Cross, then with the servers he recites "An Antiphon,"¹ taken from the Forty-second Psalm, *Judica me, Deus* (Judge me, O God, etc.).

This Psalm recited by the priest at the foot of the altar, was written by David when he had fled the country to avoid the wrath of Saul. It expresses the exile's longing to worship at the altar of his God, in union with his people.

It is, therefore, a most fitting expression of the sentiments of the priest about to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice. The

¹ In the early Church it was customary to divide the attendants into two parts, and have them sing alternately the verses of a psalm or hymn—selections so rendered were called "Antiphons," a word meaning opposed voices.

words are as follows: *Judge me, O God! And distinguish my cause from the nation that is not holy; deliver me from the unjust and deceitful man. For Thou art God, my strength; why hast Thou cast me off? And why do I go sorrowful, whilst the enemy afflicteth me? Send forth Thy light and Thy truth, they have conducted me and brought me unto Thy holy hill, and into Thy tabernacle. The Psalm concludes with the doxology Glory be to the Father, etc.*

Now the priest bows still lower, confessing himself a sinner, in the words of the *Confiteor*. As a sign of his deep sorrow he strikes his breast, as did so many penitents in the Scriptures, he then asks the intercession of the Church triumphant in heaven, and the Church militant on earth; the servers also ask God to have mercy on him. He then stands erect, while the servers, bowing in the posture of humility, confess their sinfulness and implore intercession in their behalf. The priest beseeches God's mercy for them, as they did for him, and further prays for the pardon and remission of their sins and his. In the ensuing prayers he expresses the joy and consolation which is expected from the promised mercy of the Lord. *Thou wilt turn, O Lord, he says, and bring us to life, and Thy people shall rejoice in Thee. Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy and grant us Thy salvation. O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come unto Thee. The Lord be with you and with thy spirit.*

After these prayers he goes up to the altar, praying as he ascends the steps that God may take away from him and from the people their sins, that they may go up with pure minds to the holy place. Arrived at the altar, the priest kisses the spot where the relics are placed, as a mark of reverence for Christ, Whom the altar represents, as well as for the saints whose relics are there preserved. At the same time he asks God by the merits of those saints whose relics are there, as also of the other saints in heaven, to deign in His mercy, to lessen the temporal punishment still due to the sins of him who ventures to approach.

How appropriate also are these sentiments for the faithful, and how better can they assist at the Holy Sacrifice than by using a prayer book, which gives in English the exact words recited by the priest in Latin while saying Mass!

The Introit

To the Epistle side of the altar, where the Missal is open the priest now goes to read the *Introit*, which consists generally of parts of a Psalm appropriate to the liturgical season. The name *Introit*, or Entrance, refers to the original custom of singing an entire Psalm at the entrance of the clergy and people, to give all time to reach their places.

Before beginning the *Introit*, the priest makes the sign of the cross upon himself, but in Masses for the dead he makes it over the book, to express his desire to have the merits of Him Who was crucified applied to those in whose behalf he intends to offer the Mass.

The *Introit* ends with the doxology, in homage to the Infinite Majesty. Then before the middle of the altar the priest recites alternately with the servers *Kyrie Eleison* three times in honor of the Eternal Father; *Christe Eleison* three times in honor of the Eternal Son, and *Kyrie Eleison* three times in honor of the Eternal Holy Ghost. This is a Greek petition for mercy meaning, *Lord have mercy on us, Christ have mercy on us*. The Western Church has always used certain Greek and Hebrew phrases in her liturgy as a sign of her perfect communion in faith and government with the Eastern Church. Among the Hebrew words used are *Amen, Alleluia, Hosanna, etc.*

The Gloria

The priest then intones the *Gloria*, which is continued by the choir at a High Mass.

The opening words of this sublime song were first chanted by the angels at the birth of Christ in Bethlehem. It is not known who composed the remainder of the prayer, but it was in use, as we have it today, before the Council of

Nice in the third century. At first only the bishops recited this anthem on the important feasts, but Pope Symmachus, in the fifth century, extended its use to Sundays and feasts of martyrs, although priests were permitted to say it on Easter Sunday only. After the tenth century this restriction was lifted, and the privilege of saying it was allowed to priests and bishops in every Mass that admits of it.

The *Gloria*, since it is a hymn of joy, is omitted on Sundays and ferial days during Advent and Lent and in Masses for the dead. After the *Gloria*, the priest kisses the altar and turns to the people and says: *Dominus Vobiscum* (The Lord be with you). The servers answer in Latin: *And with thy spirit*. He kisses the altar to receive the salute of affection from Christ, represented by the altar, then turns to the people to communicate the blessing to them. He then returns to the book and calls to the people to pray by saying: *Oremus* (Let us pray). With hands extended, in the manner of a supplicant, he reads or sings the prayers appropriate to the occasion. These prayers are called *Collecta* or *Collects*. They are so called because they are prayers for the collected assembly. It is as if the priest had gone out among the people, and inquired of each what particular relief or favor he should ask for him at the hands of God. At the end of the *Collecta*, *Amen* is said. This Hebrew word, *Amen*, means "so be it." It indicates that the people present desire God to grant what the priest has asked in their name.

The Epistle

The priest then reads the *Epistle*. This word signifies a letter, but in the Mass it is understood as an extract or portion of the Scriptures. The Jews in their meetings read the writings of Moses and the Prophets, so the Christians imitated their example, and likewise read portions of the Old Testament. As soon as the Epistles were written, readings from the Old Testament were supplanted by these Epistles of the Apostles. In some Masses, however, extracts from the Old

Testament are still used. The reading of the Scriptures served to instruct the faithful, and to encourage them to a pious life. At the end of the *Epistle*, the server says: *Deo Gratias* (Thanks be to God), in gratitude to God for having led us to the knowledge of divine truth, by the teachings of the Prophets and Apostles. While reading the *Epistle* the priest rests his hands on the Missal, to remind him of the obligation resting on him, not only to read the law, but also to do what it prescribes, the hands being indicative of labor.

After the *Epistle* the priest reads a few verses taken from the Psalms, followed by an *Alleluia*, repeated twice, to which is added another verse with one *Alleluia*. These verses are called the *Gradual*, because they were once read from the steps of the pulpit, the Latin word for step being *gradus*. The book is then removed to the side of the altar to the right of the crucifix. It is called the *Gospel* side, because from there the *Gospel* is read or chanted.

The Gospel

The *Gospel* has always been regarded as one of the principal parts in the preparation of the Mass proper, therefore the priest calls upon God to cleanse his heart and his lips, before he ventures to read it.

Bowing down before the middle of the altar, he says: *Cleanse my heart and my lips, O Almighty God! Who didst cleanse the lips of the prophet Isaias with a burning coal, and vouchsafe through Thy gracious mercy, so to purify me that I may worthily proclaim Thy holy Gospel, through Christ our Lord. Amen.* He then makes the sign of the cross upon his forehead, his lips, and his breast, to show that he will openly profess the faith of his crucified Redeemer. He previously marks the same sign upon the book, where the *Gospel* begins, to show the source whence that faith is derived. The changing of the book from the *Epistle* side to the *Gospel* side was originally done for practical reasons, but it has also a symbolical significance showing the trans-

fer of the law and authority from the priesthood of Aaron to that of the Apostles. At the conclusion of the *Gospel* the servers say: *Laus tibi Christi* (Praise be to Thee, O Christ), to express our gratitude to the Redeemer for the blessing of His heavenly teaching, and the priest kisses the book in token of his love for the word of God. In early times when the *Gospel* ended, if there was to be no sermon, the catechumens were immediately dismissed, and the Mass of the faithful began behind closed doors. Jews and pagans were also forced to retire with the catechumens. The *Credo* was not sung till all these had left the church.

The Credo

The *Credo* is intoned at a High Mass² by the celebrant alone, to show that the doctrine of the true Church is delivered to the faithful by those only who have received the commission from Christ. The *Credo* might be termed a transition from the Mass of the catechumens to the Mass of the faithful, and cannot properly be called a part of the Mass, as this, correctly speaking, begins with the *Offertory*.

For this reason, it is not said every day, only on Sundays, the feasts of our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, the Angels, and the feasts of the Apostles and Doctors of the Church, who by word or writing helped to spread the faith.

This *Credo* recited at the Mass is an amplification of the Apostles' Creed.

The Offertory

The word *Offertory* has a twofold meaning. In one sense it is a verse introducing the act of oblation. In a larger sense the whole office from this to the *Preface* is an offertory. After saying to the people, *Dominus Vobiscum* (The Lord be with you), and inviting them to pray with

² High Mass is always offered by the celebrant, assisted by deacon and sub-deacon. Low Mass is offered by but one priest with a server. The *Missa Cantata* is really a Low Mass, oftentimes, but erroneously called High Mass.

him, *Oremus* (Let us pray), the priest says the *Offertory* referred to, and then offers the bread and wine.

In ancient times it was customary for the people at this part of the Mass to bring to the altar offerings of bread and wine. They also offered other provisions, which after the needs of the altar were supplied, were sent to the bishop's house, and used for the support of the clergy or the wants of the poor. Later on donations in kind were discontinued and donations of money substituted, and instead of being brought to the altar, they were collected from the people throughout the church.

Whilst offering the bread, the priest says: *Accept, O Holy Father, Almighty eternal God, this immaculate host, which I, Thy unworthy servant offer unto Thee, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offenses and negligences, and for all here present, as also for all faithful Christians, both living and dead, that it may be profitable for my own and for their salvation, unto life everlasting. Amen.*

After the offering of the bread, the priest puts wine and water into the chalice. The wine is poured in without prayer or blessing, but in pouring the water he makes the sign of the cross over it and recites the following prayer: *O God, Who didst wonderfully form the substance of human nature, and more wonderfully still, regenerate it, grant us by the mystery of this water and wine, to be united with the divinity of Him Who deigned to become partaker of our humanity, Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.*

These few drops of water are mixed with the wine in imitation of Christ, Who probably did the same thing at the Last Supper; since that was an Eastern custom. There is also a mystical reason, *viz.*, to signify the union of the humanity with the divinity of Christ our Lord.

Then the priest offers up the chalice containing the wine and water saying: *We offer unto Thee, O Lord! the chalice*

of salvation, beseeching Thy clemency, that in the sight of Thy Divine Majesty, it may ascend with the odor of sweetness for our salvation, and that of the whole world. Bowing, he says: *In the spirit of humility and with a contrite heart, let us be received by Thee, O Lord, and grant that the Sacrifice we offer in Thy sight may be pleasing to Thee, O Lord, God!* Then raising himself and looking up to heaven, he implores the descent of the Holy Spirit: *Come, O Sanctifier Omnipotent, Eternal God, and bless this Sacrifice prepared in Thy holy name.* He then walks to the Epistle side of the altar, and washes his fingers. This is a relic of the early days of the Church, when the bishop or priest received the gifts of the people personally, and could not avoid soiling his hands. The washing of the fingers also signifies the purity which should adorn the soul of him who offers the Holy Sacrifice. While washing his fingers, the celebrant recites the Twenty-fifth Psalm, *I will wash my hands among the innocent, etc.*

Returning to the middle of the altar, he bows down with hands joined, and prays to the Holy Trinity to accept the Sacrifice about to be offered. He kisses the altar in token of gratitude to God; turns to the people and extends his arms as one in earnest supplication, saying: *Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father.*

The prayers which follow are called *Secretae, i. e.*, secret, because in ancient times the priest said them secretly so as not to disturb the singers who stood near the altar. With these prayers the *Offertory* ends.

The Preface

The *Preface* is a prayer of preparation for the *Canon* of the Mass, or an invitation to praise God. In High Masses the *Preface* is sung by the celebrant. There are many Prefaces, varying according to the season or feast celebrated.

The celebrant sings or recites the *Preface* commencing with the declaration, *that it is truly meet and just, becoming and useful, always and in all places, to give thanks to God for His blessings.* He then mentions the nature of the festival and the disposition appropriate, and calls upon the people to render their praises through Jesus Christ our Lord, uniting their voices with the angels singing, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts, etc.* The celebrant here ceases the chant, and it is taken up by the choir.

The Canon

The word *Canon* means a rule, and is applied to these prayers, because, although the other prayers of the Mass have changed, those of the *Canon* have varied little since the earliest times. The *Canon* is the fundamental part of the Mass that comes after the *Offertory* and before the *Communion*. It is the consecration prayer, the great eucharistic prayer in the Mass of the faithful.

The *Canon* is not the work of one man, nor was it composed all at one time. These prayers represent the last stage of a development that had been going on gradually from the first days, when Roman Christians met together to obey the command of Christ and celebrate the Eucharist in memory of Him. Since the time of Pope St. Gregory I the *Canon* of the Mass has remained fixed in its present order.

The celebrant reads the Canon of the Mass in an inaudible voice. This is a very ancient custom, and is intended to make us realize that the change effected in the bread and wine, is the effect of the invisible and imperceptible operation of the Holy Ghost. At the opening words of the *Canon*, which follow immediately after the *Sanctus*, the priest bows down profoundly with his hands joined and resting on the altar. When he reads the words, *these gifts, these presents, these holy and unspotted sacrifices*, he kisses the altar, and then standing erect makes the sign of the cross three times over the bread and wine.

Memento of the Living

In this part of the *Canon*, the priest begs God to bless in a special manner those living persons of whom he makes particular mention. In ancient times the custom was to read aloud the names of all who were to be especially remembered. This custom was abandoned in the fourteenth century.

Communicantes

The prayer that follows is call the *Communicantes* because of its opening words: *Communicating with, and having the memory in the first place of the ever glorious Virgin Mary, Mother of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, as also the blessed Apostles and martyrs, Peter and Paul, Andrew, James, John, Thomas, James, Philip, etc.*

In the early days of the Church it was the custom in the *Canon*, to mention the names of all the martyrs, but as the number increased only the martyrs of the earliest period of the Church's history were retained, and even of these not all are mentioned here. Some are found in the *Canon* after the Consecration.

Up to this time the priest has prayed with extended hands; he now extends them over the offerings in the ancient form of blessing. In the Old Testament the Jews were required to lay their hands upon the head of the victim before it was slain. The spreading of the hands of the priest over the oblations, is to testify that all human atonement is insufficient to appease God's justice, and to express the desire that the Almighty would accept the Sacred Flesh and Blood of His Son as a sacrifice and ransom for the sins of the world.

The *altar bell* is rung when the priest spreads his hands over the bread and wine, just as it was each time the priest pronounced the words, *Sanctus, Sanctus, Sanctus*. This is to give notice to the people that the awful and mysterious moment of the Consecration is at hand, and it is rung again

during the Elevation to call us to an act of adoration, and finally, before the Communion of the priest, it is rung to notify those who wish to receive Holy Communion to approach the altar rail.

After removing his hands from the offerings, the priest joins them, and while saying the prayers designated, he makes five crosses over the oblations. This is a further blessing of the bread and wine about to be consecrated.

The Consecration

After blessing the elements, the priest takes the Host in his hands and, lifting his eyes to heaven, blesses it again, and says: *Who (namely Jesus Christ) the day before He suffered, took bread into His venerable hands, and with eyes uplifted to heaven, to Thee, O God, His Father Almighty, giving thanks to Thee, He blessed, broke, and gave to His disciples saying: Take and eat ye all of this, for this is My Body.* After the consecration of the bread he takes the chalice in his hands, and consecrates the wine contained therein by these words of the *Canon: This is the chalice of My Blood, etc.* The Catholic Church has always believed and taught that the words of our Lord at the institution of the Sacrament are those that consecrate, and, therefore, immediately after the *Consecration*, follows the *Elevation*.

The Elevation

The priest holding the Blessed Sacrament in his consecrated hands, genuflects on one knee, rises, lifts the Host up above his head to show It to the people, replaces It on the corporal and genuflects again. The custom of elevating the Sacred Host and chalice immediately after the *Consecration*, was not introduced until after the heresy of Berengarius of France, who, in the eleventh century, began to raise doubt about the Real Presence. This adoration of the consecrated Host and chalice began as a protest against his errors and apostasy. Originally the *Elevation* took place

at the conclusion of the *Canon*, when the priest still lifts the chalice and Sacred Host from the altar, though he does not show it to the people. This is called the *Minor Elevation*.

Memento of the Dead

Shortly after the *Consecration* the priest says: *Be mindful, O Lord, of Thy servants and handmaids who are gone before us with the sign of faith, and repose in the sleep of peace, etc.* In the early centuries at this part of the Mass, it was customary to publish the names of the dead who were to be prayed for. This reading of the names also indicated that the persons whose names were called had died within the fold of the Church. The names of heretics and excommunicated persons were not called.

The Canon of the Mass ends shortly after this *Memento*, when the priest elevates the Host and Chalice together in the so-called *Minor Elevation*.

Communion

Before receiving the Sacred Host, the celebrant breaks It into three parts. This custom dates from the Divine institution of the Mass, and hence the Sacrifice itself was known among the early Christians as the "Breaking of the Bread" (Luke xxiv. 35; Acts ii. 46; and xx. 7, etc.).

This breaking of the bread had a practical purpose, because the Hosts were much larger then than now, resembling somewhat the unleavened bread used by the Jews at the feast of the Passover. Such a Host the priest divided in order to receive a part himself in Holy Communion, and to distribute the rest in small particles to the people. Today the Host is broken into three parts, one of which is put into the chalice, and the other two parts are consumed by the priest in *Communion*.

Spiritual writers tell us that the breaking of the Host shows forth the death of Christ on the Cross, when bowing down His head, after saying: "All is consummated," He gave

up the ghost. As the separate consecration of bread and wine manifests the Lamb slain, so the reunion of the species of bread with the species of wine, shows the reunion of Christ's soul with His body after death. Unleavened bread is used at the Mass, because it was used by Christ Himself at the Last Supper.

Agnus Dei

The *Agnus Dei* is a prayer which the priest addresses three times to our Lord. Translated into English it means: *Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.* The third time instead of *have mercy on us*, he says: *grant us peace.* Then follow three beautiful prayers which the priest says devoutly before he consumes the precious Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. The first prayer is for peace, the second is for perseverance, and the last for a worthy Communion.

Communion of Priest and People

After reciting the prayers for peace, perseverance, and a good Communion, the priest genuflects and takes in his hands the Sacred Host, saying: *I will receive this heavenly bread, and I will call upon the name of the Lord.* Then recalling his unworthiness, he strikes his breast thrice, saying each time: *Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.* After receiving the Sacred Host, the priest remains for a few moments in silent prayer. Then adoring the Precious Blood in the chalice he says: *What shall I give to the Lord for all that He hath given to me.*

He gathers up any particles that may be upon the corporal, and places them in the chalice containing the Precious Blood, saying: *I will take the chalice of salvation and I will call upon the name of the Lord. Praising the Lord, I will call upon Him, and I shall be saved from my enemies.* He then makes the sign of the cross with the chalice, and before drinking the Precious Blood says: *May the Blood of our*

Lord Jesus Christ preserve my soul to eternal life. Amen. While purifying the chalice afterwards he recites a prayer of thanksgiving for the gifts received at Mass, and asks God to preserve them in his soul.

After the priest has consumed the Body and Blood of our Lord, those who are to receive Communion, approach the altar rail. The priest removes from the tabernacle the *ciborium* containing the Sacred Hosts, and after giving an absolution to the people he administers the Blessed Sacrament to those at the altar, saying: *May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve your soul to everlasting life. Amen.*

It was almost a universal practice in the early days, for the entire congregation to receive Communion at the Mass. Later, when the people's fervor began to wane, the priest used to bless ordinary bread to be distributed to the people who did not go to Holy Communion. It served as a reminder to those who were neglecting the holy custom of daily Communion. The encyclical of Pope Pius X, of blessed memory, urging daily Communion, is but the revival of the ancient practice of the Church.

The Postcommunion

Having received Holy Communion himself, and having communicated the people, the priest purifies the chalice, first with wine, and then with wine and water, pouring forth in prayer his gratitude for the gifts received in the Sacrifice, and asking at the same time that he may preserve these gifts in his soul. He cleanses the cup of the chalice with the purificator, places upon it the paten and pall, and covers it with the silken cloth. He then proceeds to the Epistle side of the altar, to read a verse from one of the Psalms or a short selection from the Scriptures. This prayer is called the *Communion*, because in the early centuries it was usually much longer than it is at the present time, and was

chanted while the people came to the altar to receive Holy Communion.

The celebrant then kisses the altar, turns to the people and says: *Dominus Vobiscum* (The Lord be with you). Returning to the Missal he recites or chants the *Postcommunion*, which is a prayer of thanksgiving for the grace of having received Holy Communion at the Holy Sacrifice. Closing the book he again salutes the people with the words: *Dominus Vobiscum*, and then dismisses them with the words: *Ite Missa est* (Go; the Mass is ended).

In the Masses of Advent and Lent instead of *Ite Missa est*, the priest says: *Benedicamus Domino* (Let us praise the Lord). In olden times this was an invitation for the people to remain for the prayers after Mass, which were said on the Sundays of Advent and Lent, and so it happens that on these days the law still requires these words to be used (Let us praise the Lord).

In Masses for the dead, when black vestments are worn, the priest at this part of the Sacrifice says: *Requiescant in pace* (May they rest in peace).

After the *Ite Missa est*, the celebrant says a prayer in his own behalf, in which he begs God to make the Sacrifice he has offered useful for him and for those for whom it was presented. He then kisses the altar, lifts his hands and eyes to the cross, turns to the people, and making the sign of the cross over them says: *May Almighty God, the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, bless you. Amen.* This blessing was introduced in the tenth century. The older custom of not blessing at all is still retained in Requiem Masses, because, in these Masses, the blessing is principally intended to be applied to the dead.

After giving the blessing the priest goes to the Gospel side of the altar, and reads the Gospel of St. John, if no other be assigned by the rubrics, for that day. The Gospel of St. John was particularly chosen to be read because it contains appropriate references to the celebration just ended.

Why Mass Is Said in Latin

It is true that much edification might be derived from prayers said in which all could follow and understand, but in using the Latin tongue the Church has good and sufficient reasons. The Church began at a time when Latin was the best known language in the civilized world. The doctrines of our religion were practiced and recorded in this tongue. Although it is now a dead language, we can be certain that our belief corresponds with the early preachers of the Gospel, since by retaining their language we retain their exact ideas and thoughts.

Again, by the use of Latin in the Mass, the Church expresses the unity and harmony of all Catholics in matters of religion. Scattered though they be, all over the world, Catholics are as one family before God. They have the same faith, the same Sacraments, the same government, the same Sacrifice, and it seems fitting that they should have a common language. We may travel in many distant lands, but we are always at home in a Catholic church, since the sameness of language and ceremony makes us feel that we are not strangers, but members of the same household. Finally Latin has been adopted as the language of the Church, because by this tongue bishops and clergy can easily communicate with Rome. Without a common tongue, the Pope would be forced to employ many secretaries speaking the many languages of Christendom.

Conclusion

It is sincerely hoped that these notes on the Mass will prove of genuine benefit to many in understanding and appreciating this most important act of our holy religion, for no Catholic can love his faith or practice it as he ought who fails to realize what the Mass means in the Divine plan of man's redemption.

This little pamphlet makes no pretensions to any detailed and learned explanation of the Holy Sacrifice. It is a mere outline of the doctrine and rubrical signification of the various ceremonies connected with the Mass. May it serve, nevertheless, to stimulate and substantiate a more ardent Catholic faith in the Holy Sacrifice; and may it lead at least a few to study more deeply, in the writings of holy and learned men, this fathomless treasure of the Church—the Sacrifice of the Mass.

THE MASS

OUTLINE OF A UNIT COURSE FOR STUDY CLUBS

LESSONS

- I. THE ALTAR.
- II. ALTAR LINENS AND VESTMENTS USED AT MASS.
- III. THE SACRED VESSELS, ETC.
- IV. THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.
- V. THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS (Continued).
- VI. (A) PRAYERS AT THE FOOT OF THE ALTAR.
(B) THE INTROIT, KYRIE, GLORIA, AND DOMINUS VOBISCUM.
- VII. FROM THE ORATIONS TO THE CANON.
- VIII. FROM THE CANON OF THE MASS TO THE END.

STUDY CLUB OUTLINE ON THE MASS¹

Lesson I

THE ALTAR

- I. *The Altar*
 - (a) What is the purpose of the altar?
 - (b) What does it symbolize?
 - (c) What may it be made of?
 - (d) What should it be made of if possible?
 - (e) What is the altar stone?
 - (f) If a priest says a Mass elsewhere than in a church, such as in a house, an Army building, on board ship, etc., does he use an altar stone?
 - (g) What is a consecrated altar?
 - (h) What is a privileged altar?
 - (i) Why is the altar so important in the Catholic Church?

¹ The Outline was prepared by the National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D. C.

- II. *The Tabernacle*
- (a) What is its purpose?
 - (b) Why so prominent a part of the altar?
 - (c) Is this reason the same as for the preservation of the Blessed Sacrament formerly in a hanging receptacle in the shape of a dove over the altar?
 - (d) How is the interior of the tabernacle adorned?
 - (e) What is the exact meaning of "tabernacle"?
- III. *Crucifix*
- (a) Why is a crucifix placed over the altar?
 - (b) Must the figure of Christ be attached to the cross over the altar?
- IV. *Altar Candles*
- (a) What is their purpose?
 - (b) What do they symbolize?
 - (c) What are they made of? Why?
 - (d) How many candles on the altar for a priest's Low Mass? A bishop's?
 - (e) How many usually as a minimum for High Mass?
 - (f) What was used before candles?
- V. *Altar Cards*
- (a) Why are parts of the Mass printed on altar cards?
- VI. *Sanctuary Lamp*
- (a) What does it symbolize?
 - (b) What is its immediate purpose? By day? By night?
 - (c) What kind of oil is burned in it?

REFERENCES

Dunney: *The Mass* (Macmillan, New York City).
 Consult also the article on *Altars* in *Liturgy*, Vol. I, p. 346, of *Catholic Encyclopedia* for Lessons I and II, and the article on *Vestments*, Vol. XV, p. 388, *Catholic Encyclopedia*.

Lesson II

ALTAR LINENS AND VESTMENTS USED AT MASS

I. *Altar Linens*

- (a) *Corporal*: What is the corporal? What does "corporal" mean and why is the name used?
- (b) *Pall*: What is the pall? Why is it called "pall"?
- (c) *Purificator*: What is it? Its purpose? Why called "purificator"?
- (d) *Finger Cloths*: What are they? When used? Are different ones used after the Offertory and after giving Holy Communion? Why?
- (e) *Altar Cloths*: How many altar cloths are used on the altar? Why? What are they made of? What do they symbolize?
- (f) Why should the altar cloths, etc., be well cared for?

- II. *Name the vestments in the order the priest puts them on.*
- III. *Answer the following questions for each of the priest's vestments*
- (a) What is it?
 - (b) What is its purpose?
 - (c) What is its origin?
 - (d) What does it symbolize?
- IV. *Colors of the vestments*
- (a) What various colors are the vestments?
 - (b) What is the purpose of having various colored vestments?
 - (c) What does each of the colors symbolize?

REFERENCES

Dunney: *The Mass* (Macmillan, New York City).
 Consult also the article on *Altars* in *Liturgy*, Vol. I, p. 346, of *Catholic Encyclopedia* for Lessons I and II, and the article on *Vestments*, Vol. XV, p. 388, *Catholic Encyclopedia*.

Lesson III

THE SACRED VESSELS, ETC.

- I. *The Chalice*
- (a) What is the chalice?
 - (b) What is its purpose?
 - (c) What may it be made of?
 - (d) Why is it made of precious metals and ornamented?
- II. *The Paten*
- (a) What is it?
 - (b) What is its purpose?
 - (c) What may it be made of? Why such a regulation?
- III. *The Ciborium*
- (a) What is its purpose?
 - (b) Why is it usually covered with a cloth?
- IV. *Altar Wine*
- (a) Why is wine used for the Mass?
 - (b) What safeguards are thrown around the purchase of wine for the Mass to be sure that it is pure?
- V. *Altar Breads*
- (a) What are altar breads made of?
 - (b) Are the altar breads of the Mass and the altar breads for the Communion of the laity made of the same substance?
 - (c) Who usually makes them?
- VI. *Altar Railing*
- (a) What is the reason for separating the sanctuary from the body of the church by a railing?
- VII. *Altar Cruets*
- (a) What are they?

REFERENCE

Dunney: *The Mass* (Macmillan, New York City).

Lesson IV

THE OBJECT OF THE MASS

1. What is the highest act of religion? Why?
2. Why is man unable to pay God adequate honor?
3. Why has God a right to man's gratitude?
4. Tell why we should unite our gratitude to Christ's at Mass.
5. Why should we have the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered for ourselves, relatives and friends?
6. Why should we attend Mass in the state of Grace?
7. Why is the Mass the devotion of every age and people?
8. What does St. Alphonsus say of the Mass?

PRAYERS SAID IN THE MASS

1. Why does the Church so carefully guard the prayers of the Mass?
2. What is meant by "prayers of the Church"?
3. Describe the beauty of the prayers of the Mass.
4. What is the Canon of the Mass?
5. What is said of the Canon?
6. Why are the prayers of the Mass so little understood?

WHY GO TO MASS?

1. What is the Church's law regarding attendance?
2. Show the need of Church authority.
3. What is the first command of the Church?
4. What commands our obedience to Church authority? (Discuss.)

LAW OF ADORATION

1. What do we mean by "I believe in God"?
2. What four obligations to God follow from merely natural reasons?
3. Why must we "render to God the things that are God's"?

Lesson V

Review Lesson IV.

LAW OF PROPITIATION

(Offering, Action, or Sacrifice That Makes the Governing Power Kindly Disposed Toward the Offender)

1. What does our conscience prompt us to say to God?
2. Why have we a duty to make reparation to God?

LAW OF PETITION

1. Show our dependence on God.
2. Discuss what St. Paul says about our instability.

LAW OF THANKSGIVING

1. Why should we offer thanksgiving to God? Show that man has always recognized his obligations to God.
2. Why has sacrifice been offered by all nations? Explain.
3. What is sacrifice? Tell of sacrifice among the Jews.
4. What were the Jewish laws of sacrifice? How was the Jewish sacrifice a shadow of the Sacrifice of the Mass? Discuss the quotation: "Sacrifice and oblation," etc.
5. How did Christ discharge an obligation to God? How was Christ's *adoration* perfect?
6. How did Christ "erase the handwriting that was against us"?
7. Why is Calvary the central fact of all history?
8. Why must we remember that the Sacrifice of Calvary is eternal?
9. Show that Christ left us the means to discharge our obligations to God.
10. How should we assist at Mass? Why is the Mass a complete *Thanksgiving*?
11. Why should we hear Mass without a command? Show that attendance at Mass is a privilege.

Lesson VI

THE MASS

The remaining outlines follow the Mass as translated in English Missals or Mass Books. Any such may be used. If none is available, use a prayer book that has a direct translation of most of the Mass.

The following parts of the Mass vary nearly every day: Introit, Orations, Epistle, Gradual (and Tract), Gospel, Prayer at the beginning of the Offertory, Secret Prayers, Communion, and the Postcommunion Prayers. These parts are called the Proper of the Mass. The Preface of the Mass, which comes after the Secret, varies occasionally. The rest of the Mass is the same. It is called the Common or Ordinary of the Mass.

A. Prayers at the Foot of the Altar

1. Why does the Mass start with the sign of the cross?
2. Whom does the server represent when he says the prayers with the priest?
3. What is there in the spirit of the Psalm that it is chosen as an introduction to the Mass?
4. Why the Confiteor of the priest?
5. Why the Confiteor of the server?
6. Why the note of joy in the prayers immediately following the Confiteor?
7. Note the spirit of hesitancy before the Holiness of the Mass in the prayers of the priest as he ascends and kisses the altar.

B. *The Introit, Kyrie, Gloria, and Dominus Vobiscum*

1. Find the Introit of next Sunday in the Missal. Why called Introit?
2. Note from what it is quoted. Every Introit is taken from the Bible and usually contains the "Glory be to the Father."
3. What do "Kyrie Eleison" and "Christe Eleison" mean?
4. Why are Greek words used?
5. The "Gloria" is said in all Masses except Requiem Masses, most low Votive Masses, and Masses during which purple vestments are worn.
6. Read carefully the "Gloria," noting the grandeur of the praise of God in the first part, and the supplications and the reasons for the supplications in the last part.
7. The first Dominus Vobiscum. Whom does the priest ask God to help and be with in the "Dominus Vobiscum"?

REFERENCE

Dunney: *The Mass* (Macmillan, New York City).

Lesson VII

FROM THE ORATIONS TO THE CANON

1. Turn to the Orations of the following Sunday. Probably three are designated, the first being the Oration proper to the Mass of the day and the other two being selected from a group of prayers chosen by the Church. Corresponding prayers to these Orations are also said at the *Secret* of the Mass and the *Postcommunion*.
2. Read at least the Oration proper to the Mass carefully and note the request made and how it refers to us.
3. The Epistle. From what is it taken?
4. The Gradual (and Tract when it is said). Read carefully to note the meaning.
5. What do *Gradual* and *Tract* mean?
6. Note the prayers before the Gospel.
7. From what are the Gospels always taken?
8. Why is the Nicene Creed so called?
9. What are the two reasons for the name "Offertory"?
10. Note the distinction between the prayer "the offertory" and the whole *Offertory* section of the Mass.
11. Read carefully the prayers said: (1) at the offering of the bread; (2) at the pouring of the water into the chalice; (3) at the offering of the wine; (4) the prayer said bowing down over the bread and wine; (5) the blessing of both; (6) at the washing of the hands; (7) the prayer asking the Holy Trinity to accept the offering; (8) the request made of the people; and (9) their response to the request. (N. B.—Note how the people join with the priest in these offerings and how most of the prayers are said in the name of priest and people.)

12. *The Preface.* The usual Sunday Preface is that in honor of the Trinity. There are special prefaces for Easter, Christmas, Feasts of the Blessed Virgin, etc. The beginning and end of each Preface is the same. Read the following Sunday's Preface as indicated in the Missal.
13. Why is it called the *Preface*? What is it a preface to?
14. What are the outstanding points in the *Preface*?

REFERENCE

Dunney: *The Mass* (Macmillan, New York City).

Lesson VIII

FROM THE CANON OF THE MASS TO THE END

1. From here to the prayers named *Communion*, and the *Postcommunion*, the Mass prayers are the same every Sunday except parts of the third and fourth of the prayers on certain Sundays. The Consecration of the bread and wine, which changes them into Christ's Body and Blood, and the Communion are both included in the Canon.
2. The best procedure to follow here seems to be to have one of the members read the Canon aloud, prayer by prayer, and then have a priest explain each prayer. If this cannot be done, in reading prayers of the Canon, note especially the following points:
 - (a) The first prayer offers the sacrifice for the welfare of the Church and all Catholics.
 - (b) The second offers the sacrifice for all living, and especially for all those present.
 - (c) The third honors the saints and their intercession.
 - (d) The fourth asks God to bless us and save us.
 - (e) The fifth asks God to accept the offering that it may be changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.

Consecration

(f) Then comes the Consecration, first of the bread and second of the wine, in the words of the account in the Gospels of the Last Supper, closing with the words of Christ that gave to the Apostles and their successors the power to say Mass.

(g) The next three prayers remind us of the grandeur of the Sacrifice of the New Law, and the sacrifices of the Old Law and ask God to bless especially all who receive Communion.

(h) Then comes the prayer for the dead.

(i) Follows after this, a humble recognition of our sinfulness and a prayer that we attain Heaven in union with the saints.

(j) Then a declaration of our dependence upon Christ and the honor and glory that come through Him to the other Persons of the Blessed Trinity.

(k) The Our Father said in response to Christ's Precept and example.

(l) The prayer "deliver us from evil," is amplified. Peace and freedom from sin are sought through Christ our Lord and the Blessed Trinity.

(m) Dropping a small particle of the Host into the chalice, the priest asks the life everlasting to all who receive Holy Communion. What is the meaning of this act?

(n) The priest asks that the peace of the Lord descend upon the people and the people respond with the same prayer for the priest.

(o) "Agnus Dei" asks mercy and peace from the Lamb of God.

(p) Follow three prayers, the first for the peace and unity of the Church, the second for remission of sins, the keeping of the commandments, and union with God, and the third that the Holy Communion be not unworthy and filled with merit.

(q) The priest takes up the bread of Heaven and calls upon the name of the Lord and in his own name and the name of all humble declares our unworthiness to receive God.

(r) The priest consumes the Sacred Host, asking for eternal salvation.

(s) In joy, he takes up the chalice of salvation and, receiving It, asks again for the salvation of his soul.

(t) Here the laity receive. The Confiteor is said, the priest pronounces over them and all the people the words of the absolution, and holding up the Sacred Host so all may see It and asking them to behold the Lamb of God Who takes away the sins of the world, continues with a confession of our unworthiness to receive God. In giving Communion, he prays that the Communion will save the soul of the Communicant.

(u) Then follow two short prayers during the purification of the Chalice that the Holy Communion be "an eternal remedy" and that no sin remain in the priest.

3. *The Communion* and the *Postcommunion* prayers of the Sunday following should be read. The two are separated by the priest's asking again that the Lord be with the people and are followed by the same prayer and the announcement that the Mass is ended, varied in the penitential season with "Let us bless the Lord."
4. The Mass closes with a prayer to the Trinity that the Mass be an acceptable sacrifice, the Blessing of the people, and the Last Gospel. The last words of the Mass are the words of the people spoken by the server, "Thanks be to God."

REFERENCE

The Mass, Its Doctrine, Its History—the story of the Mass in pen and picture, by Abbot Cabrol, O.S.B. (P. J. Kenedy & Sons. New York City.)

