

THE
QUEEN'S
WORK
DISCUSSION
CLUB
SERIES

PART I

Rooney, Richard L.

Light on . . .

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Light on
The
Liturgy

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

by *RICHARD L. ROONEY, S. J.*

THE QUEEN'S WORK

3742 West Pine Boulevard

St. Louis 8, Mo.

Light on the Liturgy

a

Discussion Outline

Part I

By

RICHARD L. ROONEY, S. J.



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LIGHT ON THE LITURGY

Whither Away?

Before you begin the present outline, it may help you to see just where you should arrive at its ending.

It is as natural a thing for man to worship God by prayer and vow and sacrifice as it is for him to breathe (Discussion I).

Since this is so, then he *must* worship God. Because of his nature this worship must be both external and social. (Discussion II)

Finding out from Discussions III and IV that men are not only many but in a sense one, we decide that there should be for them one liturgy (Discussion V) and one sacrifice (Discussion VI).

That one sacrifice is the sacrifice of Calvary and is prolonged in the Mass, in which the whole Christ is both priest and victim (Discussion VII).

Turning then to the liturgy of the Mass, we proceed from the priest's entrance into the sanctuary to the offertory prayer. In other words we embrace the prayer part or the nonsacrificial part of the Mass. (Discussions VIII through XI) We end Part I of our outline with the transition from the speech-part to the action-part of the Mass by a consideration of the Credo (Discussion XII).

The remainder of the great action of the Mass will be taken up in Part II of this outline, which will be published early in 1944.

DISCUSSION I

WE WORSHIP GOD

1. Ah, Worship!

The Ordinary human beings among us, when we come in contact with some excellence in another—the physical strength and skill of a fullback, the beauty of a movie star, the cleverness of a scholar, the persuasive personality of a salesman, actor, or orator—instinctively recognize that excellence, and by force of sheer admiration we exclaim, "What a mind! . . . What a person! . . . What heroism! . . . How terribly clever!" In other words we "worship" the person who possesses that excellence. If you

do not agree with this, then get out your Webster dictionary and find the definition of worship: 1) to have and to express excessive or ardent admiration. 2) an act or series of acts (internal alone or externalized as well) by which a person acknowledges the excellence, worth, or superior position of another.

DISCUSSION

1. Pull that second definition apart in order to be sure that you understand its every word. (Note that we are not yet talking about divine worship.)
2. Who are the actors taking part in the little drama depicted by the word worship? What role do they play?
3. Can a nonthinking being worship?
4. Can a human being worship an inanimate thing? (As a matter of fact human beings do do this: *v.g.*, the sacred cow of India.)
5. What powers must the worshiper possess? What qualities must the worshiped have?
6. Considering the word as we have so far defined it, can we apply it to a man's tipping his hat to a woman? a soldier's saluting his officer? a university's granting a degree? a nation's decorating a hero?
7. To what kind of worship do we ordinarily restrict the word in present usage?
8. Pause here, take the general definition given above, and see if you in this group can change it so that it fits the idea of worship of God.

2. And So Divine Worship

Using the notions of worship in the wider sense that we have just discovered, we see how we can now fashion a definition of the worship of God.

We have first of all a person—rather three persons—possessing the infinite excellence of divine nature. These same divine three have the superior position of being man's first cause, supreme master and Lord, and last end. From Him, his creator, man comes. On Him man is utterly dependent. Toward Him he is traveling as to the aim and goal, the only full giver of the happiness which he seeks in all he does.

In the second place there is man himself. He has a mind, with which on the one hand he can see and recognize God's infinite perfection and on the other hand his own dependence on Him. With this same mind he also sees and recognizes the wonderfulness that is his because of this very dependence, because of the make-up that God has given him, because of his destiny.

This sight of God and himself and the recognition of the interrelationship between himself and God fill man's mind. That mind in turn presents this truth to his will as good. Allured by the sight and the good contained therein, that same will orders the man to such an act or series of acts as will acknowledge God's greatness and his own dependent littleness: acts of respect, deference, honor, and homage.

In a word man worships God. *Divine worship* then may be defined as: *An act or group of acts suitable for a man to make acknowledgment (fitting in some degree at least) of the infinite worth and excellence and absolute Lordship of God.*

DISCUSSION

1. Now who are the two characters in the dramatic action of worship?
2. What excellence does God have?
3. In what way is He superior to us? How greatly superior?
4. How can man's mind see and know God's superiority and wonderfulness, since he has never seen God?
5. Let everyone in the group memorize the above definition of divine worship.
6. What acts would you say are fitted and suitable to make acknowledgement of God's marvelous goodness, beauty, and power? You should find that these acts can be reduced to two main kinds. What are they? Define each kind.

a. Prayer

As it is used here, the word prayer is not to be restricted to the narrow sense of mere petition to God for something we need or something proper for us. Here we consider the word in the wider sense of simply directing our minds and hearts to God, of contacting Him.

DISCUSSION

1. What is prayer?
2. How many kinds of prayer are there?
3. Private prayer is divided into two main branches. What are they?
4. Which of the two is common to both private and public prayer?
5. What four elements should there be in any real prayer?

Analysis and experience will show that such direction and contact can and should take four forms.

a. *Adoration and praise* These are a formal and explicit acknowledgment of God's wonderfulness of mind and will and nature and of the utter dependence of our own mind and will and nature on His. They spring from an attitude of soul born of the conviction of God's infinite perfection, supremacy, creatorship, and Fatherhood. Almost involuntarily we cry out: "Dear God, I think you're wonderful."

b. *Thanksgiving.* Gratitude is the least return we can make to our divine benefactor and Father for the lavish outpouring of His gifts on the world, on our own individual selves, and on others. That gratefulness should be expressed in prayer. The latter should contain not merely "Give me . . ." but "Thanks a million" as well. (How is thanksgiving an act of worship? What is its source especially?)

c. *Reparation.* The sight of God's awful holiness and infinite goodness to us on the one hand and our own sinfulness on the other forces us to our knees and wrings from our hearts a cry of deep contrition. We tell our wonderfully loving Father that we are sorry for our stupid and selfish ingratitude and rebellion. We ask His pardon. We promise to make amends for the future. Prayer should be an expression of our profound regret, our sincere apology, our renewal of allegiance.

Whence comes a desire for making reparation?
Why is it fitting? How does it fit into our notion of worship?

d. *Petition.* The realization of our utter helplessness of ourselves, the knowledge from bitter experience of our weakness, the thought of the many obstacles and difficulties lying ahead—between where we are now and our final goal—might frighten and discourage us did we not know the love and goodness and

power of Our Father. The realization of these however and the knowledge that He is most willing to aid us send us to Him again to ask with confidence for all that we need to live as He would have us live: for strength against our feebleness, for courage against our cowardice, for the grace to come at last to His eternal embrace.

Why is petition worship? Why is petitionary prayer only one-quarter worshipful? Why do most people think of prayer in terms of such petitions? What is the prime aim of prayer, to get or to give? Give reasons for your answers.

b. Sacrifice

DISCUSSION

Let each of the group here give his ideas of what sacrifice is, its place in the scheme of worship, etc.

Since this topic will be taken up more fully later on, it will suffice here to give but a definition. From the definition however it will be seen how sacrifice embraces all the elements of worship. In fact it is man's most perfect external expression of his internal attitude of worship, of his adoration and praise, of his thanksgiving, reparation, and petition.

Sacrifice is . . . an act

whereby some material object
is offered to God
and destroyed
or altered in some way
in token
of God's supreme ownership
of it and of all things,
particularly of man himself,
for whom
this material thing
is here and now substituted
and for whom
it stands as a symbol.

DISCUSSION II

Three Musts of Divine Worship

DISCUSSION

1. Recall the definition of divine worship. Can each of you here give that definition and explain its meaning?
2. Remember that we are still looking at man simply as man and not as a Hindu, a Presbyterian, or a Catholic. With that thought in mind, how would you answer the question: Is it necessary for a man and for men to worship God?

Let the secretary of this group take down the answers and the reasons given for them. Now continue with the text of the outline.

1. Man Must Worship God

Although there is no set time or specific manner set down by God for the worship of Himself, if we look at man from a merely natural standpoint, there is a very definite moral obligation by which he is bound to worship God somehow, somewhere, sometime.

The reality of such an obligation can be seen and known from a simple consideration of God on the one hand and of man and his nature on the other.

The basis of this first must is man's creaturehood and his rationality.

a. Man a Thinking Creature

Looking first at man, we find that he is a finite being and hence created. He is made up of a fleshly temporal and passing body and an immortal spiritual soul. He has not in himself the power either to put himself into existence or to continue in existence once he is placed there. He hasn't even the power of himself alone so much as to breathe. Rather for all this he requires another. He is completely physically dependent on this other, whom we call God, for his existence and for his every action.

Likewise he is morally dependent on God, for He it was who gave him a mind to know truth wherever he finds it and a will to follow that truth as the good. These gifts mean that he is bound freely to follow God's law once he sees and recognizes it.

Man then is of his very nature and essence shot through and through with an absolute and utter dependence on the God who created him, who sustains him, who acts with him in all he does, and who directs his distinctly human actions by law. By nature then man is God's servant. Every cell in his body, every beat of his pulse, every thought in his mind, every emotion he experiences, every will-choice he makes—all silently shout aloud to himself and to any other thinking person who will use his reason this fact of man's utter dependence.

DISCUSSION

1. Do you believe the facts given above? Have you gone further and worked out for yourself the truth of these facts? Could you prove them beyond the shadow of a doubt to anyone?
2. Is what is said true of every man, Mohammedan as well as Catholic? Is the acceptance of them a matter of faith or of reason?
3. What do you mean by dependence? physical dependence? moral dependence?
4. Recalling your definition of divine worship, do you see thus far how it is at least fitting that a man should worship God? Why?

b. God His Creator

Turning to God, we find that He is the absolutely perfect being. He is possessed of every possible excellence in the highest possible way. Looked at in regard to man, we find Him to be man's creator, the giver of every gift that man has from his nature and being as a whole right down to his last heartbeat. God has fashioned man in such a way that He is not merely his alpha, his first fountain source, but also his omega, his last end, and all the rest of the alphabet in between. Man's mind is fashioned in such a way that he hungers for truth, for all truth, which he will find only in God. His heart hungers for good, not merely for this good sausage and that good reputation but the highest good which alone will make him supremely and utterly happy; in short he hungers for God. God is finally man's supreme master and Lord. His is the universe and everything in it. To Him belong the island universes of the stars, the white sands of the beach, man's thoughts and choices and dreams.

DISCUSSION

Ask yourselves the same questions about this section that you did about the preceding one.

c. The Conclusion

A man then, looking in and down at himself and up and out at God, comes to the conclusion that by his very nature and by God's nature he is simply bound to worship God. If he fails to do that, then he is either insane or a devil. From his double glance he sees the absolute rightness, fitness, and goodness, the duty that is his freely and willingly to acknowledge God's great goodness and power and love and to submit himself voluntarily to God's infinitely superior position. He knows too that to refuse such acknowledgment and submission is to fly in the face of all truth, to perform an act which is not only sinful but stupid and mad as well. Such acknowledgment and such acceptance of God's superiority is nothing more or less than an act of worship—interior at least. The normal, sane, thinking man sees that divine worship is a must for him, and he gives that worship gladly.

DISCUSSION

1. How does this conclusion follow from a and b above?
2. Would you say that the worship of God is an irresistible urge and drive of man's nature?
3. Is the failure to worship God an unnatural sin?
4. Even though a man sees the fitness, the "mustness" of this worship, can he refuse to give it?

2. Man Must Worship God Externally

DISCUSSION

Granted that we have shown conclusively the need of worship, of interior worship at least, worship of some kind, you can discuss the following questions.

1. Why isn't this interior worship enough? Why need it be externalized?
2. Do I not satisfy my obligation to worship God if I make to Him this needed acknowledgment of His supremacy and superiority in the silent chamber of my own soul?

There are many people who are quite willing to admit the "mustness" of interior worship. They refuse however to see the need to externalize it, to show that acknowledgment and submission in body as well as in soul.

That there is need to render to God external worship by bodily as well as soul acts can be arrived at once again from a simple consideration of the way that man is made and the way that he acts.

a. Man, One and Twain

Man is a two-in-one combination, as it were. He has within him two main elements, body and soul; these are so interfused and intertwined as to make up one whole, one person. Although body and soul are distinct (*i.e.*, one is not the other), they are not separated. They do not live side by side under the same roof as might two boarders. Rather are they intertwined, intermeshed in man in such a way that they make up one entity, one unity, one person. Now this one person is *wholly* dependent upon God in both of his main parts and in every bit of each of the parts. Hence body as well as soul depends on Him. Hence the whole person, body as well as soul, should enter into the worship of God.

b. Actions Fitting Nature

Restating the matter briefly, we would say that any act should suit the nature of the agent performing that act. For example it ill befits a man to bark like a dog, while it is quite in keeping with the dog's own nature to emit noises covered by the term bark. Man is not merely spiritual but material as well. Hence his actions ought to be suitable to the dual nature that is his: His acts must partake of both elements within him.

c. Bodily Dependence Acknowledged Bodily

Further since man is dependent on God in body as well as in spirit, he should acknowledge the former as well as the latter—and that in the medium of the body itself. Strange indeed is the worship which would have the soul kneel in silent worship, as it were, the while the body stands coldly by, impatient for the worship to be over so that that same body may get back to the "more important things" of life.

d. Interaction

It is an experienced fact that there are a most intimate interconnection and interaction between man's body and his soul.

An ache in the head creates a resonance in the soul. A crabbed disposition soon draws a portrait of itself in the lines of a person's face.

2. Psychologically Speaking

Again it is natural for a man to want to give exterior expression to his thoughts and feelings. So true is this that experiments show that we instinctively and immediately start to externalize an idea at its mere presence in our minds—and even before we are conscious of our doing it. By what reasoning then can we say that this tendency should be stifled in religious matters?

Finally it is a fact backed by the findings of modern psychology that a man's emotions, feelings, and thoughts are strengthened by the external expression of them. Ordinarily they will die if they are not expressed. Express your love for another in words and acts of endearment, and that love will grow. Deny that love the slightest external expression, and you will wake up and find that you do not love that other after all. What is true of love (and of anger and hate and fear) is likewise true of respect, reverence, and love of the divinity. Exceptional enough to be nonexistent is the man who will continue to give interior worship to God the while he rigidly refuses to fold his hands, bow his head or bend his knee, or give any external expression to that worship.

From all of the above then we conclude that man must worship his God not merely in the spiritual sanctuary of his soul; he must also make a worshipful temple of his body.

DISCUSSION

1. Do you know people who think that exterior worship is quite unnecessary? How could you persuade them that they are wrong?
2. Go through the various ideas given above. Do you understand them? Can you give them convincingly to yourself? to others?
3. Try it right here and now with the group. Which of the ideas appeals to you most forcefully? (A poll on this question will be interesting.)
4. Give instances of the dual, *i.e.*, the body-spirit, nature of man's actions. Give other instances of body-soul interaction.

5. From your own and others' experience prove the truth of the fact that you pray better if your physical surroundings and bodily posture are in tune with you interiorly than you do when this harmony is absent: *v.g.*, prayer in church or at a prize fight; prayer on your knees rather than while you are running to catch a bus. Why is this so? Your soul is unchanged. What constitutes the difference?

3. Man Must Worship God Socially

The musts of man's worship have been drawn so far from the very make-up and nature of man himself. Because he is a rational, thinking creature, he must worship God somehow by prayer and sacrifice. Because he is a body-soul unity, his worship must be not merely internal but external as well. The third must, that of social worship, rises from the same source: man's nature.

DISCUSSION

1. What would you answer if you were asked: "What do you mean when you say that man is a social animal?"
2. What is sociability? Is it something natural to man or something that has grown from convention?
3. How does this sociability point to the need of social worship on man's part?

4. Man a Sociable Fellow

Although men are individuals, persons, and hence dwellers in a sort of "awesome isolation," nevertheless they are social beings. Shut up in themselves so that they can never completely share their thoughts, feelings, experiences, they nevertheless constantly strive toward just that sharing. The hermit, the recluse, the asocial person, is looked upon by his fellow men as queer and abnormal.

Looking at man's composition, at his body, at his God-given powers of sex, at his ability to communicate his thoughts to others, at his dependence on others for love and approval and the very necessities of life, we rightly conclude that he is by nature a social animal.

DISCUSSION

1. Are we using the word social here in a restricted sense of parties, dancing, etc? What then do we mean here by the word social?
2. How can you show that social living is natural to man and not merely an outgrowth of convention?
3. What is the first social unit of man's life?
4. Is civil life an outgrowth of this same natural drive? Is the Sodality such an outgrowth? the CYO? various business concerns? How do these differ from civil and family life?

5. In Religion Too

Since it is man's nature to want to live in company with his fellows (hence family life), to work shoulder to shoulder with and for them (*v.g.*, various business concerns and different professions), to join with them in armies and navies, to play with them (solitaire is not in it with bridge for enjoyment), then by what right do we conclude that religion is a purely private affair? Is it not much more in accord with truth and with man's nature to state that as he must live, work, fight, play with his fellows so he must pray and worship with them too? This is the simple demand of his very nature.

DISCUSSION

Let one of the group be the devil's advocate for purely private worship. Let him advance all the reasons he can against social or public worship. Then let the others see how well they can uphold their stand that human beings, since they are human, must worship socially as well as privately.

N.B. Recall again that all through this discussion we are thinking in terms of merely natural religion, *i.e.*, as though God had never revealed anything to us.

ADDENDUM

From what has been learned so far, it is easy to see that every advance that one makes in the knowledge of man and of God makes for a true appreciation of the glory of worship. Such advance will make a man's worship-life more vital, more meaningful, and more perfect. For a fuller knowledge of man

we suggest readings in psychology, *v.g.*, "The Psychology of Character," by Rudolf Allers (Sheed and Ward); for a deeper appreciation of God we offer "The Architect of the Universe," which is Volume I in Rev. Walter Farrell's splendid book "A Companion to the Summa" (Sheed and Ward).

6. Summary

Looking at human beings quite apart from any special revelation of God, we take divine worship to be: An act or series of acts suitable and fitting (in some way at least) for a man to make acknowledgment of the infinite worth and excellence and absolute Lordship of God. And we see that:

1. It involves a relationship between God and man,
2. a relationship
which *must* be acknowledged *exteriorly*,
which *must* be acknowledged *socially*.
3. The two main ways to make this acknowledgment are *prayer* and *sacrifice*.

Putting the thing tersely:

God . . . infinitely perfect in Himself, is man's creator, hence his superior, and is therefore worshiped by:

Man . . . His *creaturehood* is the first *basis* of worship.

His *rationality* is the second basis and determines his way of worshiping—by prayer and sacrifice.

The *oneness* of his *person* plus his duality and his *animality* call for the *externalizing* of this worship.

His *sociability* is the basis of exterior *social* worship.

DISCUSSION III

MEN SOMEHOW ONE—FROM ADAM

1. Known From Reason

We have arrived at all that has gone before from the combined use of our powers of observation and of reason. A further use of these same powers will bring us to yet another truth. We will find that men are not merely social but are in a way one. In other words we arrive at the conclusion that there exists among men a certain solidarity, a coherence and a oneness of nature, relations, interests.

DISCUSSION

1. How do we arrive at man's sociability? solidarity?
2. What is meant by the word solidarity?
3. When we talk about men here, are we talking about a man, every man, or all men—the human race?
4. Why would you say that there should be a greater solidarity existing within a family circle than in a crowd at a ball game?
5. List certain signs of solidarity evident in a family, a neighborhood, a city, a nation, a religious body.

a. Variety

A look about the earth shows us men of various nations, cultures, backgrounds, colors, creeds, ideas, ideals, pursuits, and environments.

b. Unity

Despite these superficial differences however there is in all men an underlying sameness, a consistency and agreement—at least in most of the major relationships. (*V.g.*, though they may differ in their idea of Him, all sane men admit the existence of a God or of a supreme power.) More than that there is a oneness, an identity of human nature in all men. Different, individual, separate, and personal as they are, we still call men men whether we are talking about the midget Tom Thumb or about the rest of us scaling up to the Norwegian giant. The Mongolian idiot and the supergenius have this in common: They are both men—each in greater or lesser degree a rational animal, possessor of a body and a soul, having the ability at least to think, make judgments, form abstract ideas, react to suprasensible motives. All men have the urge to live in company with their fellows. All men are seeking happiness under one guise or another.

This being true then, we can say that men satisfy the notion of solidarity.

PROJECT

From your observation of the other members of this group list their differences; their identities. Give at least three factors which point to solidarity among these people because of the identities and despite the

differences. Can you with reason alone arrive at even further conclusions along this line?

2. In the Light of Revelation

Although this oneness of nature and community and coherence of interests might give solid ground for reason to conclude that somehow, somewhere, sometime the human race—which means all men—had a common ancestor and that hence all men possess the solidarity of one vast family, it remains for revelation to state that fact and to put it beyond the shadow of doubt.

PROJECT

Where do we find the proof for the physical or family solidarity of man? Before going on to the discussion of this point on this text, can you draw up a list of truths which God has revealed and which point to this fact? Compare your ideas with the following.

God Himself has testified that:

1. He created Adam (and Eve) (*cf. Gen. 2, vii ff.; 2, xxii*).
2. Adam was the physical father of the human race.
3. Adam was custodian and guardian of certain gifts which God had intended to be passed on to that race
 - a. supernatural—grace-life, a sharing in His own divine life.
 - b. preternatural—infused knowledge:
 - strength of will,
 - freedom from unlawful desires,
 - freedom from sickness,
 - immortality of the body.

PROJECT

Appoint someone at this time to give at the next meeting a clear explanation of the difference between these sets of gifts and an explanation of each of them.

4. Adam sinned grievously.
5. And as a result he
 - a. lost both sets of gifts for himself
 - b. and for his children, the human race, who now share in his sin as they would once have shared in his happiness had he remained faithful to God.
 - c. Sin jarred his and our whole being into disharmony. It introduced the seeds of discord, suffering, feud, war, labor, and death into the human family.

6. He promised to Adam and his children a redeemer.

We see from revelation then a greater solidarity among *all* men than reason could ever make known to us, a solidarity not merely of nature, relations, interests, etc., but one which results from:

1. A common ancestry and parentage. All men can trace to Adam as to a fountainhead their physical ancestry. (The common progenitor of their souls is God Himself.)
2. A common betrayal in their first father.
3. A common misery resulting from this and a common loss of great gifts.
4. A common destiny (face-to-face vision of God), which is beyond any one of them without . . .
5. a common redeemer, who was promised and who would buy back for father and children the common way of working out their destiny.

3. The Solidarity of Oneness

All of this brings us back to the fundamentally Christian idea that, as Karl Adam says, "mankind must not be regarded as a mass of homogeneous beings successively emerging and passing away, nor merely as a sum of men bound together by unity of generation, as being descendants of one original parent . . . but as one single man. . . . This one man is not the individual man, but the whole man, the totality of the innumerable expressions of that humanity which is reproduced in countless individuals. This one man includes all men who were thousands of years ago and all who shall be thousands of years hence. And the guilt and destiny of every single man are not merely his own guilt and his own destiny; they concern the whole of humanity in proportion to the importance which providence has assigned him in the organism of humanity."

DISCUSSION

1. State from memory the six truths mentioned above as revealed by God.
2. What do you mean by creation? What is the difference between direct and indirect creation?
3. How was Adam created, directly or indirectly? How was Eve created? How are we created in body? in soul?

4. What was the nature of Adam's sin?
5. If only Eve had sinned, what would have been the result to our first parents? to us?
6. What was the result of Adam's sin to him? to us?
7. What new ideas does revelation add to those notions of man's solidarity that we know from reason alone?
8. From this notion of solidarity what practical conclusions can you draw with regard to your own lives at home? at work? at worship? socially?
9. What light does this notion cast on such subjects as war? racism? international law? the poor? the colored? the Jew?
10. Why is the need for social worship strengthened by the addition of this realization of our solidarity?

DISCUSSION IV

MEN SOMEHOW ONE—IN CHRIST

PROJECT

Recall the definition and notions of solidarity given in the last discussion. Recall briefly the high lights of our solidarity in Adam. Show how Adam's sin struck at this solidarity; use as illustrations the glaring instances of disruption among men (*v.g.*, murders) and nations (*v.g.*, anti-Semitism, exaggerated nationalism).

1. The Promised Redeemer

Great as is the solidarity, the oneness, of men by reason of a common physical nature sprung originally from the loins of Adam and from the womb of Eve, God has revealed however an even stricter and higher oneness. It is effected by Jesus Christ, the Word of God become man, the fulfillment of God's promise of a redeemer.

By His redemptive life and death Our Lord and Savior:

1. Paid the debt of Adam's sin, wiping it out in the whole race.
2. Gave to all men a common way of arriving again at our supernatural destiny, making possible for us contact with God through His own sacred humanity.

3. Won for us all grace, by which we can bring back unity and harmony within ourselves.
4. Gave us all further grace and instruction by which we can live, each of us, with other men, all of them, in peace and concord.
5. Gave us finally a common way of salvation, common means to achieve it, a common bread of union (His own body and blood) in order to make us more and more one with Him and with each other.

DISCUSSION

1. What five points show our solidarity in Christ?
2. How is it true that we now have a greater solidarity than we have by nature alone? than we would have had had Adam not sinned?

2. One in Him

But this was not enough. Christ would carry through to perfection the idea of all men's being but one "person." The Word would become not merely a man Himself; He would become man. He would not merely redeem men as one man might buy back another out of slavery. He would not merely teach men the way to heaven. Rather, Christ would *be* that way. He would redeem men by uniting them with Himself and with each other by sharing with them His vitality as the vine shares its life-giving juices with the branches, as the soul gives life and vigor to the individual cells of the body it animates. He would sweep all men up into a oneness with Himself that would make of Him and them one "person," divine of head, divinized of members. Redemption and contact with God was to be achieved for all men by the vitalizing union of each of them with the saving and sanctifying humanity of the man-God Christ Jesus.

Through sanctifying grace there is effected with Jesus Christ a oneing which leaves each individual just as he is, a very human person, and yet elevates him to such a share in Christ's life through this grace that he is now "another Christ." Now things at one with a common third thing are also oned with each other. Hence by reason of men's oneness with Christ they are also united to all others who are at one with Him. Our natural solidarity is now lifted to a supernatural plane.

DISCUSSION

1. How did Christ go about redeeming men?
2. How is He the way to the Father?
3. How can we say that out of many persons one "person" is made? How is this oneness effected?
4. What does this union with Christ do to man's natural solidarity?

3. No Longer Sight, but Vision

As a result of all that has gone before, the following vision breaks on our faith-lighted view. We now see all human beings, all the children of Adam and Eve, making up in a greater or lesser degree one vast person. That person is "the whole Christ." He is made up of:

1. Jesus Christ (the head) the man-God, who took flesh from Mary, which flesh He gave up on the cross of Calvary nearly twenty centuries ago; the same Jesus who lives today in heaven and on our altars and comes to us physically in Holy Communion;

and

2. We (the members), each John, Jane, and Joseph of us, who have been united with Him and with each other through baptism, faith, and grace.

The whole Christ then is that "person" made up of the union of these two, that person and we persons who make up His "body," as St. Paul puts it.

For our present discussions (despite the differences among theologians on the matter) this "body," of which Christ is the head and we the members, is the Catholic Church. And the Catholic Church is, the projection of Jesus Christ out of Palestine and into the whole wide world, the prolongation of Him unto the end of time, still incarnate in her and in her members, as it were, as truly—though in a quite different manner—as was the Word in those hands and feet and head and heart which Our Lady gave Him.

Why all this here?

Simply because it is essential to an understanding of what follows. Just as Christ Himself worshiped God externally and internally by prayer and sacrifice, so He wishes to prolong this one worship, this same prayer and sacrifice, in and through us as members of that social unity which is His body upon earth.

DISCUSSION

1. To whom do we refer when we speak of Christ? of the whole Christ?
2. What is the Mystical Body of Christ? Who is its head? Who are its members?
3. Why do we speak of this matter here?
4. What effect does all this have on our idea of Christian worship?

4. The Whole Christ and Worship

From what immediately precedes we find that there is a new "person" on earth. This new "person" is composed of Christ, the head, and all those human beings who are united to Him by grace, baptism, and faith, who are His members. It is the work of this body, these members, aided by Christ's grace, to carry on the mission that He came on earth to do and which He did not finish alone while He was here.

PROJECT

- Pause here and determine: 1) what that work was; 2) what part of it is done and cannot be redone; 3) what part of it—if any—we can still carry on.

Leaving aside other phases of Our Lord's life, we come to this conclusion: that we are to let Him carry on in us His work of worship, His prayer and sacrifice.

PROJECT

Recall the definitions of prayer and sacrifice. Delegate someone to go through the New Testament and find there examples of Christ's prayer and sacrifice to the Father.

Since the nature of the whole Christ is such that it is made up of members, cells, who are individual human persons, then it is obvious that this prolongation of Christ's worship should be the work of His body as a whole (thus the requisite of social worship, which must be external since it is social, is met) and of each individual in that body as an individual (thus private prayer is kept in the Mystical Body).

1. To conclude this meeting, recall
 - a. What worship is . . .

- b. Its kinds . . . social and private.
 - c. Its types . . . prayer and sacrifice.
2. From what you know of the Church, how are all these phases of worship given expression in the Mystical Body?

DISCUSSION V

AND NOW THE LITURGY

All that has preceded gives us a background for a better understanding of the meaning of the term and of the nature of the liturgy.

PROJECT

Before going on to what follows, let each member of the group give his idea of the significance of the word liturgy. What does the liturgy comprise? Of what elements is it made up? If the secretary would jot these ideas down, they might make interesting reading when this present discussion is over.

1. The Meaning of Liturgy

The word liturgy is of foreign and ancient origin. It is used chiefly by Catholics—and not too widely even among them. Among those who do use it, it has various connotations in varied circumstances. At first sight and sound of it then you are liable to shy away from it.

This should not be however. Quite simply Father Ellard gives its meaning as "Christ and all Christians at prayer." Liturgy is nothing more or less than the word which best describes the prayer of that "person" about whom you learned and talked in the preceding discussion.

The liturgy then is the Mystical Body at prayer (we are using the word prayer in its widest sense). It is Christ continuing on earth in His Mystical Body—precisely as a body—the worship He once gave to His Father in and through His own physical, Mary-given body.

It is the public official worship of God by the Mystical Body as a *body*, the worship by which is carried out the Christ-given mission to glorify the Triune God and to save and sanctify souls.

DISCUSSION

1. Why does the word liturgy frighten people?
2. What do we mean by worship?
3. Are there two kinds of worship in general? If so, would you expect to find them in this new "person" on earth, which is the Mystical Body?
4. What do we mean when we say, "of the Mystical Body *as such*"?
5. Does liturgical prayer differ from private devotion? How?
6. When a member of the Mystical Body prays at home or alone in Church, is Christ praying in him? Is his prayer liturgical? Why or why not?
7. If he assists at Mass, is his prayer liturgical? Why or why not?

2. Origins of the Liturgy

A look at the ancestry of the word liturgy will cast further light on it. Originally it comes from the Greek *leitourgia*, a word used to describe a public work, *i.e.*, public service performed by a citizen acting in behalf of the state and for the good of the state.

In the Old Testament it was used to describe the Temple services conducted by the priests for and in the name of the people, whose ministers the priests were.

Characteristics of a liturgical act today then are the following:

1. It must be a *public* act.
2. It must be performed *in the name* and *on behalf* of the *whole Christian people*.
3. It must be performed *by a minister duly authorized by the Church* to carry out the divine worship which she as a visible society, as a supernatural "person" pays to Almighty God.

3. Elements of the Liturgy

Although in the early Christian centuries the term was confined to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the liturgy of the Church now embraces the following.

1. *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, which is its core, its

heart, the sun whence all the other parts draw their life and light.

2. *The Divine Office*, which flows from the Mass, centers about it, and by its prayers, chants, and ceremonies carries the Mass into all the other hours of the day.
3. *The Sacraments*, which are channels, conduits, high-tension wires through which the grace won on the cross and prolonged into our day and country comes in contact with our own individual souls.
4. *The Sacramentals*, which acquire their value from their being linked with the prayer of the Church and especially with the Mass.
5. *The Liturgical Year*, in the celebration of which we have the year-round setting proper for the sacrifice.
6. *Various processions, blessings, etc.*

DISCUSSION

1. Review the definition of the liturgy.
2. What elements go into that liturgy? Name them from memory.
3. Discuss—contributing as much as you know right up to this point—each of those various elements.
4. Can you in all honesty see how they are all connected with the Mass?
5. Where would you go to learn about the rites and ceremonies used in the administering of the sacraments?
6. Name six sacramentals. What do they do? How do they differ from sacraments?

DISCUSSION VI

OUR ONE SACRIFICE

Although the liturgy takes in the whole beautiful field of the Mystical Body at worship, we will limit the term for the time being to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. With that great action we will be concerned in the following discussions.

In order to understand it aright we must:

1. Clarify our notions with regard to sacrifice in general.
2. View the unique sacrifice of Christ on the cross.

3. See the connection between that action and that of the Mass—how they are one and the same sacrifice.

1. The Notion of Sacrifice

PROJECT

Without looking back at the definition given in Discussion I, work out together your idea of the elements which constitute a sacrifice. When you have done this, compare the results with what follows.

It will help much for the clarification of this idea if we recall: 1) the notion of worship in general, namely that it is an act or series of acts by which men acknowledge God's superiority and supreme Lordship over themselves, their being, their lives, and over everything else in the world; 2) that this recognition must be externalized by them individually and socially as a dictate of their own nature.

The highest and best form of this externalization is sacrifice. Basically it is an act of worship by which man makes open and public acknowledgment of God's superiority and of his own dependence on Him—especially for his life—by giving Him himself under the form of some visible gift. Any visible and sensible gift will do; but since the element of thanksgiving for life is a major part of sacrifice, the usual objects offered are foodstuffs, which serve to sustain life: grain, flour, wine, grapes, etc.

Sacrifice may be defined then, as it is by Father Ellard, as "the public rendering to God through the hands of a priest of some visible gift that symbolizes a giving of one's self to Him."

DISCUSSION

1. What is the basic notion of sacrifice in general?
2. Why have men ordinarily offered in sacrifice such things as sustain life?
3. Memorize Father Ellard's definition. Having memorized it, tear it apart, showing what is meant by the words public, priest, visible gift, symbolizes.
4. Does the notion of reparation for sin enter into the idea of sacrifice as such? Give reasons for your answer.

Enter Reparation

Not only does sacrifice give God adoration, thanksgiving for gifts received, earnest petitions for further favors; it is also an act of reparation for sin where consciousness of sin is present.

From that hour when sin first entered into the world through Adam, men have known themselves to be sinners, offenders against the good God, who made them and provides for their wants.

Looking at God's awful sanctity and holiness and seeing their own sinfulness, they have cried out in agony of heart for mercy. They have recognized His superiority and supremacy and have known their own rebellion and proud littleness. In their saner moments they have turned to God and have acknowledged their offense of Him and have asked Him for forgiveness.

This they have done in their two ways of worshiping Him: by prayer but above all by sacrifice.

Sacrifice is essentially a gift of love, a giving of oneself—under one sort of symbol or other—to God in rivalry of His love and in search of His pardon. It is above all a love-gift of apology or atonement.

From time immemorial the following elements have entered into the notion of sacrifice.

1. a man acting for himself or for a group of his fellow men who have appointed him to act as their minister and go-between with God,
2. offering some material object or other—a lamb . . . a cow . . . doves . . . grain . . . etc.—to God
3. at an altar,
4. and by destroying or altering that thing, acknowledging God's supremacy, His supreme ownership of that thing and of all things, of man himself especially.
5. This material object stands as a symbol or substitute for the one for whom it is offered.

DISCUSSION

1. Why did sacrifice take on the nature of an atonement?
2. Why is sacrifice better than prayer to express this idea?

3. Which is more important in sacrifice, the pain, loss, sorrow at the thing given up or the love behind the gift?
4. What five elements enter into sacrifice for sin?

2. This Notion Verified on Calvary

a. Sin in Adam

God did not want men to be merely men. He wanted them to share in His own divine life: to know Him as He knew Himself, to love Him as He loved Himself—both of which acts are above man's nature as man and are proper only to the divinity. To take away man's powerlessness, He lifted him by sanctifying or godlike-making grace—a gift by which man, though a creature, was enabled to perform these acts which are essentially divine. This gift was given to Adam, entrusted to him for the whole race. He was to hand it on to his children, even as he was to give them physical and natural life.

But Adam sinned, sinned mortally, sinned not merely for himself but for man, for all men in him. Thus he lost this grace-gift both for himself and for all other men. He lost it in such a complete way that no mere human being could ever get it back, no matter how wondrous his atonement might be.

b. Life in Christ

Yet God wanted man to have that gift again, that grace-life, that share in His own divine life. With divine ingenuity then He bridged the abyss between humanity and divinity. In the person of the Word, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, He stepped down and, taking on Himself human nature, lifted man and all men back to the level from which they had fallen.

As all men because of their solidarity in Him sinned in Adam, so all men by solidarity with Him were to be saved in Christ.

DISCUSSION

1. What was God's original plan for men?
2. How did He work out His design at first?
3. Who received God's grace-gift? For whom?
4. How did Adam's sin affect God's plan?
5. What did He do to alter it?
6. Why was Christ needed to redeem men?

7. What happened because of men's solidarity in Adam? in Christ?
8. Before going on with the text, from what you know: 1) of the notion of sacrifice, and 2) of Christ's death on the cross, show how Christ's death had the five elements of sacrifice given above.

c. Christ Sacrifice

This salvation, this revelation, this restoration of divine life, this redemption, this rebuying of grace-life were effected by Christ on Calvary.

There on that Good Friday afternoon He offered to the Father the perfect, in fact the unique sacrifice.

He was a priest—a man set aside, ordained by God to offer propiation to God for men.

He was also a victim—His sacred humanity it was in which were contained all men, in whose place He stood when He offered Himself to God.

At the altar—of the cross—

that divine victim was altered, no—slain . . . for He willingly let His life be taken from Him, offering Himself to the fulfillment of the eternal decrees of the Godhead.

to acknowledge God's superiority and supremacy over men, to wipe out the debt of sin owed to God. "He has borne the iniquity of us all."

DISCUSSION

1. How did Christ's death on the cross have in it all the requisites of a sacrifice?
2. How do you think those same requisites are met by the Mass?

3. This Notion Verified in the Mass

Had He so desired, Christ might have offered that one only and unique sacrifice on Calvary and have done nothing more. It would have been a single solitary act unrepeated in any way.

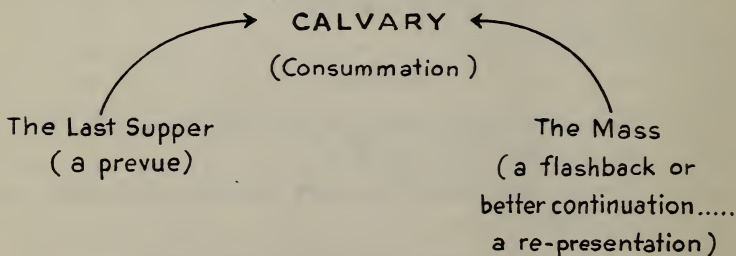
But He didn't do that. He wanted that sacrifice, unique as it was, to be renewed until the end of time. Therefore on the night before He died, He ordained other priests who were to carry on His priesthood and offer the same sacrifice in a dif-

ferent manner down to the last curtain of the world's history. In other words He instituted the liturgy of the Mass.

In the Mass the true notion of sacrifice is again verified.

1. There is the priest Christ, present but acting now through His human instrument, the ordained priest, minister of Christ, head and Christ members.
2. There is the same victim Christ Himself, the victim of Calvary. The same Jesus who was victim on the cross is rendered present on the altar.
3. There is the same essential offering of adoration, love, reparation, the same total gift of self to the Father's pleasure and will. Now however Christ is offered symbolically under the species of bread and wine, which are changed into Him and under whose appearance He is put to death mystically, not physically as on Calvary.
4. The cross-altar has now become a table.
5. God's supremacy is again acknowledged and His pardon again sought . . . and the blood shed on Calvary is brought in contact with human souls, inserted life-givingly into them.

N.B. Not only are the Sacrifice of Calvary and of the Mass both verifications of the notion of sacrifice; they are in truth one and the same sacrifice offered in different manners.



The Last Supper, the sacrifice of Calvary, the Sacrifice of the Mass are the one unique, perfect sacrifice of Christ . . . with the same priest and victim, the manner of offering alone being different in all three.

DISCUSSION

1. What might Christ have done had He so desired?
What did He do?
2. How does He prolong His sacrifice?

3. How is the true notion of sacrifice verified in the Mass?
4. Is the sacrifice of Calvary the same as the Sacrifice of the Mass? How does one differ from the other?
5. How are the Last Supper, Calvary, the Mass all one yet different?
6. How can we talk in terms of "our one sacrifice"?

DISCUSSION VII

THE WHOLE CHRIST—PRIEST AND VICTIM

1. The Priest of Priests

Jesus Christ, the God of creation and the man of Galilee, is the great high priest of mankind. Humanly divine and divinely human, He bridges the abyss between God and men caused by Adam's sin. Called of God, He was appointed and anointed for this high priestly office. He fulfilled that office on the day that His body was given for us and His blood was shed for us on the altar of Calvary's cross. Thereupon He climaxed His life of adoration, praise, thanksgiving, and reparation to the Father.

On Calvary then the Son of God become man fulfilled His Father's will and offered Himself in our stead to God. That terrific drama was over in a few hours. When Christ's sacred head finally sank in death on His breast, mankind was redeemed. As far as He, the head, was concerned, mankind was saved. But that was not enough. This redemption was not to be as it were an automatic thing. Although the price had been paid for men, that price had to be applied to individual souls. His redemptive act had to be carried on to the end of time. Christ would continue to save and sanctify souls. He would carry on His worship of the Father right down to the world's final curtain.

DISCUSSION

1. When the word priest is mentioned, what do you think of?
2. What is the chief function of a priest, be he a druid of old or a priest celebrating Mass in a cathedral?
3. When Protestantism dropped sacrifice (the first time in the history of man's religious activity),

why were Protestants forced to drop priests as well?

4. How would you define the office of the priest? How would you apply that definition to Christ?

PROJECT

To get an idea of Christ's fullness of priesthood, either stop here and as a group read and discuss: 1) St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, and 2) Pope Pius XI's Encyclical on the Priesthood, or if this is not practicable for the group, assign these two documents to a couple of couplets of members and have them give a digest of them at the beginnings of future meetings.

2. Shares His Priesthood

a. With Priests

Christ Our Lord might have carried on His priestly work directly and alone. Always though it has been God's way to save and sanctify men through men. So here again on the night before He died, the generous Jesus appointed, anointed, and ordained certain of His members to be priests who would share in His priesthood, to be men who would be His ministers, His substitutes, His stand-ins, if you will. They and their successors—for they were to have successors, "Do this for a commemoration of me"—are the visible human instruments which He, the great and sole high priest, Christ Jesus, uses to carry on the unseen, invisible work He would effect always in men's souls. They would work with Him to continue His offering of Himself to God.

DISCUSSION

1. When did Christ ordain His first priests?
2. How do we know He wanted them to ordain successors?
3. What relationship do these priests have to Christ? to the laity?
4. Did Christ's sharing of His priesthood extend only to those officially so ordained? Can we say that in a certain sense He shared it also with the lay folk?

5. Is there an essential difference between the way that duly and officially ordained priests share and lay Christians share? In what does this difference consist?

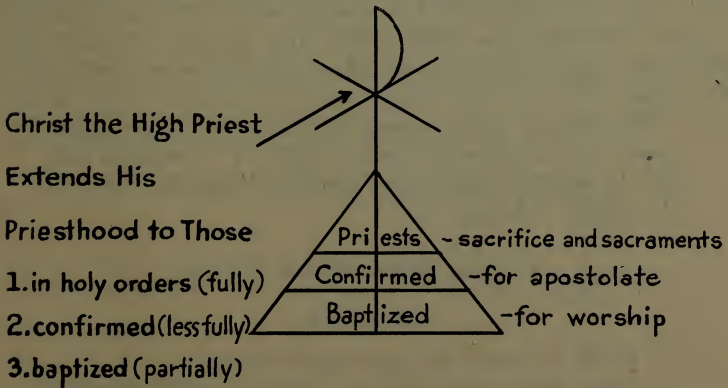
b. With the Laity

Our Lord did not stop the sharing of His priesthood at those men whom we call priests officially. He extended it further, to the whole Christian race, to all men engrafted in Him, incorporated in His body. In them *all* Christ lives again. He acts through and with them, and they through and in and with Him. His being in them and His acting in them is true of Him as priest. St. Peter taught: "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood." St. Chrysostom stated flatly: "You were made a priest at baptism."

This sharing in Christ's priesthood is given initially at baptism, widened in confirmation, and bestowed in its fullness—that is in its power to consecrate and dispense the sacraments—with holy orders. By reason of the soul-sealing and -signing effected by these sacraments, Christ can use us all—in varying degrees obviously—as outlets, human instruments of His priestly office and functions.

Hence we can say that at Mass it is the whole Christ who is offering that Holy Sacrifice.

Picture of Whole Christ Priest



DISCUSSION

1. How do you know that Christ shares His priesthood with the laity? Does every baptized Christian share in it? To what extent?

2. Can a person who is merely baptized say Mass? forgive sins? officially preach the word of God?
3. Which of the priestly powers of Christ does confirmation add to baptism? does holy orders add?
4. Since *all* Christians share in Christ's priesthood, what should be their attitude at Mass—active or passive? Why? What is the attitude of the majority of this group? Why?

3. A Warning

Because of the fact that many have pushed and are pushing this teaching of the share in the priesthood of Christ by the laity to too great limits, let it be clearly known by this present group that the lay sharing in that same priesthood is something quite different from that of the official priest. The priest ordained, signed and sealed with holy orders, he *alone* shares in Christ's priesthood *effectively*, *i.e.*, he alone can consecrate the body and blood of Christ, forgive sins, dispense the sacraments (as ordinary minister), preach the word of God as a completely official teacher. It is not necessary for him to have a congregation behind him when he offers Mass. Alone in the silence and solitude of a house chapel he can offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass perfectly and completely. He offers it even there however as an official minister of the Mystical Body. The laity's offering of the Mass in an *effective* thing: They offer it on the altar of their own hearts, uniting themselves in spirit with the priest at the altar; and together with him they are at one with Christ, priest of priests, the sole priest of the New Law.

For further study along this line, if you are interested, you can consult Father Ellard's "Christian Life and Worship," pp. 50, *ff.*, and his "Men at Work at Worship," Chapter V.

4. The Whole Christ Victim

DISCUSSION

1. What is meant by the word victim?
2. Must there always be a victim where there is sacrifice?
3. What part does the victim play in sacrifice?
4. In ordinary sacrifice what is the relationship of the priest to the victim?

5. What was unique about the sacrifice on Calvary? Who was the priest? the victim?
6. Who is the *one* priest in the Mass? Who is the victim of the Mass? Are we, the members, in any way victims too? If so, why?

Just as there is but one real priest in the world, the man Christ Jesus, in whose priesthood—by His divine generosity and ingenuity—we share, so too there is but one victim. Just as the whole Christ, head and members, Jesus of Nazareth and John of New York and Sally of San Francisco, are priest and “priests,” so too the whole Christ, Jesus of Nazareth and Bobby of Boston and Mark of Minneapolis, is the whole victim.

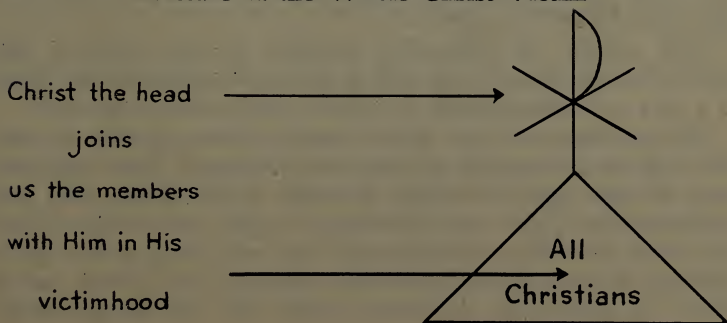
On Calvary’s top Jesus the head offered Himself for all mankind in the world’s perfect act of adoration, thanksgiving, reparation, and petition. He would have that sacrifice continued unto time’s end, and He asks us to effect it in ourselves, making us covictims with Him as well as copriests.

Strange indeed is the priest who never offers sacrifice. Stranger still is the Christian who does not offer himself as a victim with Christ of Calvary and the Mass. He is no real Christian at all who will not bear about in his body the mortification of Jesus, who will not crucify his “flesh, with the vices and concupiscences,” who will not make up what is wanting to the passion of Christ, who will not bear the cross of everyday living and mount thereon to be crucified with Christ to the world.

5. Our Gift

Sacrifice is essentially a matter of gift-giving. At Mass, Christ gives Himself to the Father. He gives His *whole* self, us along with Himself. We have value only in so far as we

Picture of the Whole Christ Victim

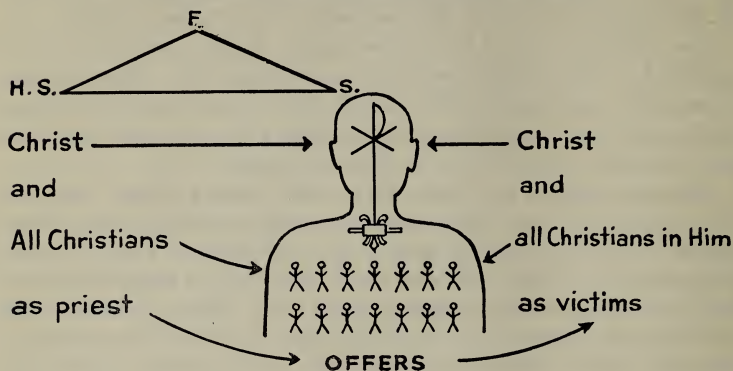


are at one with Him. At Mass we give the Father the perfect gift too, His Incarnate Son. Since He is our unique victim, the only one really acceptable to the Father, we give ourselves in and with and through Him.

PROJECT

Work out ways and means by which you can keep the Mass alive in your daily lives so that you are truly perpetual victims.

Picture of the Whole Christ at Mass



6. In Transit

From all that has been said so far, one clear strong conviction should be in the mind of each one in this group. It is simply this: Each of us as a cell in the Mystical Body of Christ, as a sharer in His priesthood and victimhood, can no longer be merely passive at Mass. We have the privilege and duty to take part *actively* in the Mass and to exercise the wondrous gifts that Christ has given us.

One reason, as experience teaches, for the lack of this activity on the part of lay folk in the participation in the Mass is a lack of understanding of it as a whole and in its parts.

The remainder of this outline, both of this part and the part that follows, is intended to dispel this darkness. Once light has been thrown upon the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, you will understand it. Once you understand it, you will love it. When you love the Mass intelligently, you will pray, make active offering, receive Holy Communion during it and live it out in daily life afterward. In other words you will at last really

fulfill the command of Christ: "Do this for a commemoration of me."

PROJECT

1. For the succeeding discussions bring along your missal and also—for the first few discussions—your Bible.
2. Delegate one member to be ready to start off the next discussion with some clear and interesting notions on the vestments that the priest wears and on the Christian altar. Father Ellard's "Christian Life and Worship," Chapter IX, p. 109, is excellent for this.

DISCUSSION VIII

FROM ALTAR FOOT TO OFFERTORY—I

Prospect

Having studied and discussed the notions of worship, liturgy, sacrifice, priesthood and victimhood, the whole Christ, you are now in a position to turn to a discussion of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in greater detail.

Before going into this however, the following ideas should be set clearly before you and kept there always as you proceed.

The Mass is made up of words and actions. We, Christ and His Christians, speak to God; God speaks to us. We act; God acts.

From the prayers at the foot of the altar to the offertory prayer we have the speech-part of the Mass. From the offertory itself to the end of the Mass we have the great action. So the Mass falls naturally into two main parts, the action-part being of much greater importance than the prayer part.

Each of these chief divisions falls in turn into two subdivisions. From the prayers at the foot of the altar to the collects, we speak to God. From the epistle through the sermon, God speaks to us. Again at the offertory we go into action, we give to God up to the "little elevation." From the "Our Father" down to the blessing, God acts, giving to us. We speak and are spoken to. We act, we give and are given to.

DISCUSSION

Stop here and make sure that everyone in the group has these ideas clearly in mind. To ascertain this, let each one answer aloud the following questions.

1. Of what two main elements is the Mass made up?
2. Who speaks and who is spoken to? Who acts?
3. What are the two main divisions of the Mass? Where does each start and end?
4. What are the two main subdivisions of each of these divisions? Where does each of these begin and end?

(Note: The Catholic Guild for the Blind has put out a puzzle project named "Arches to Heaven"—Build the Mass—which exemplifies these ideas very graphically. It can be obtained from the guild office at 49 Franklin Street, Boston, Mass. Your use of the puzzle will be profitable, enlightening, and enjoyable.)

Speech-Part of the Mass

For the sake of the clarity of what follows, it would be well for each member to imagine himself in his own parish church. He is kneeling there, ready to pray and to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The altar is ready for the Mass, but the priest has not yet entered the sanctuary.

PROJECT

At this point the one given the assignment about the vestments and the altar might give one report on the results of his findings.

Ancestry

As you await the priest's coming, you might recall certain facts about this part of the Mass (*i.e.*, from the prayers at the foot of the altar to the offertory prayer).

It has its roots in the Old Testament. Therein worship was made up of two main elements. There was the sacrificial action, which took place only at Jerusalem. Many of the faithful Jews could not be present there. Lest their religion slip away from them, this action was supplemented with the nonsacrificial prayer-service which took place in the synagogues, which were scattered throughout Palestine and the then-known world. The

principal parts of this latter service, in which Our Lord Himself many times took part, were two lessons: a Psalm chanted as an interlude and an address or instruction and prayer by the people.

The primitive Christians carried on the main distinction between sacrificial and nonsacrificial worship. Though the Holy Sacrifice could be offered everywhere, it was limited as to time (*i.e.*, at first it was offered only on certain days) and as to attendance (*i.e.*, only Christians were allowed to be present at it).

As did the Jews however, so the Christians gathered together more frequently for prayer and instruction. To these gatherings the nonbaptized were invited, especially those who wanted to become Christians, that they might learn to pray and that they might be instructed in revealed truth.

Gradually it became customary to have the sacrificial action (the giving-and-receiving part) follow right after the nonsacrificial or prayer-service rites (the speaking-and-being-spoken-to part). It was at the end of these rites that those who were under instruction for baptism but were not as yet Christians were dismissed. (The English word Mass comes from the usage which grew out of the people's referring to the Holy Sacrifice in terms of the two dismissals—Latin: *missa, missio*—one of which came just before the offertory and the other at the end of the Mass, even as we have it there today.)

DISCUSSION

1. What is the nature of the opening part of the Mass? Whence did it get its form?
2. What were the two main types of Jewish worship? Where were they offered?
3. What were the types of primitive Christian worship? Were they originally together?
4. In the Holy Sacrifice today do we have both types still extant? At which of them are we looking now? Whence comes the word Mass?

(For a full paralleling of our present Mass-beginning and the synagogue service, consult Father Ellard's book mentioned above, pp. 156, 157.)

WE TALK TO GOD

1. Prayers at the Altar Foot

During your musings the priest who is to celebrate the sacred mysteries has come to the altar, arranged the chalice and the missal, and is now at the foot of the altar stairs.

At this point two things are to be noted:

1. Recall once again the purpose of this outline. It aims to cast such light on the liturgy as will enable those who have used it to come to a fuller, more intelligent, more hearty active participation in the liturgy—of the Mass especially. It looks to practice and not theory, to action and not mere speculation. Its information is, not to appease a hungry curiosity, but to fill the mind and heart with such thoughts and feelings as will enable its users to unite more intensely with Christ, the priest, and other Christians actively to pray, offer, and live the great action.
2. Before analyzing these points in detail, you would do well to recall regarding these prayers at the foot of the altar that:

- a. They are one of the most recent additions to the Mass, having become a definitely fixed part of it only as late as the sixteenth century.
- b. They are private and not social in character, for they are the immediate preparation of the clergy for the Mass; they are recited at first by the celebrant on his way to the altar and later on at the foot of the altar.

The privateness of their nature can be seen in the way that they are recited by the celebrant, the deacon, and the subdeacon at the solemn high Mass, the real start of which is the introit, which is chanted by the choir, who pay no attention to the ministers.

Further when the altar boy answers these prayers at the low Mass, he does not speak for the congregation—as he does thereafter—but for the deacon and the subdeacon. (Since this is true, these prayers are hardly to be recited by the congregation in a dialogue Mass.)

- c. Although all this is true, these same prayers make an excellent proximate preparation for the assistance of us, the laity, at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, since they excite in us the right dispositions for the Mass

and remove by contrition the one obstacle to the offering of the Mass, since to offer it having had contrition

DISCUSSION

1. What are the aim and purpose of the present outline?
2. Why do we desire an active participation in the liturgy?
3. How old are the prayers at the foot of the altar?
4. Why do we stress the privateness of their character?
5. Why should the laity read them from their missals or recite them with the priest?

The priest begins the Mass with a *genuflection*, expressing by this outward gesture his inner feelings of humility and reverence. We who have been standing since he entered the sanctuary now kneel, having the same sentiments in our hearts.

Together with the priest we make *the sign of the cross*. Since this sign is made so frequently during the Mass, it may be well to pause for a moment here to consider the significance of that act. It probably had its origin with Christ Our Lord when, ascending into heaven, He blessed those who were with Him on Olivet. All the ancient fathers and ecclesiastical writers testify to the antiquity of that act. In the beginning of the third century Tertullian wrote: "At every step, in coming in and going out, when putting on our garments and our shoes, when walking, washing, when at table, when lighting a candle, on going to bed, when sitting down, at every work we perform we Christians mark the forehead with the sign of the cross" (*De Corona Militis*, c., 3). By making this sign, we show ourselves to be blood brothers with all Christians who have gone before us and who will follow us. It is the great sign of our fraternity in Christ.

Having its place throughout the Christian's life—from the time it is taught to the still wordless baby, through all private and public devotions, right down to the last sign of it over the coffin lowered into the grave—it has special import at the beginning of the Mass. This is so because: 1) our Mass is a prolongation, a re-presentation of the great sacrifice offered on the cross; 2) it is the perfect act of worship of the Son and of us sons, enspirited by the Holy Spirit and offered to the Father; 3) to pray and offer it aright, we need to do it "In the name,"

that is, by the commission, of the Triune God and with His grace and power. The sign of the cross is a divine shorthand symbol summing up the principal mysteries of our faith.

It is essentially a sign of God's love; and coming as it does at the beginning of and throughout Mass, it reminds us of that love and strikes the keynote of our own sacrifice, the joyousness and love that ought to ensoul this giving of perfect service to God through oneness with His Son. By it finally we are taught another important truth about the liturgy: that in it the words and actions always harmonize and mutually complement each other.

DISCUSSION

1. How is the sign of the cross made?
2. How do the words and actions harmonize?
3. Why is its use particularly appropriate for the Mass, for the beginning of the Mass?
4. What Catholic doctrines are summarized in this sign?
5. What is the meaning of a genuflection?

The priest then recites the *Forty-Second Psalm*, which we recite with him.

It is to be remembered as another principle that the liturgy does not necessarily mean to apply every verse of a Psalm which it adopts but will often include it in its entirety because of one appropriate verse.

This principle is seen worked out here in the use of the "Judge me, O God," which is chosen above all for its fourth verse, a verse also used as the antiphon which prefaces and keynotes it, "I will go in unto the altar of God, unto God who giveth joy to my youth."

It is not known definitely when this Psalm entered the Mass. In the liturgy of Milan in the fourth century this Psalm with its antiphon (a verse or words of Scripture prefacing a Psalm used in the liturgy) was sung as the processional hymn by the newly baptized as they went on Easter morn from the baptistery to their first assistance at Mass and to receive their first Holy Communion. Whatever their ages, they were all young, fresh-born in Christ. Each time we recite it here, we can remember that this Mass is a renewal of that same newness and youth of life which we too received at baptism, a renewal of our spiritual youth and vitality in Him.

Looked at in its original setting, the Forty-Second Psalm is the plaintive chant of a people in exile far from God's Holy Mountain and its Tabernacle. The Psalmist admits his own unworthiness and humbly seeks God's mercy. He gives vent to the ardent longing in his heart: to be allowed to go back to Jerusalem and there to pray and offer sacrifice. He longs to be freed of his enemies' oppressing attacks and asks for light and truth and strength.

In its setting in the Mass the Psalm with its antiphon acts as a ferry transporting us from the business and busyness of this world of exile, from the attacks of our triple enemy, the world, the flesh, and the devil, into the sanctuary of sacrifice where we too shall receive truth and light and strength, a renewal of the vigor of our spiritual youth, a foretaste of the joy that will be ours when we are arrived at our true homeland, heaven. By its birth is given to the dispositions which will enable us to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass worthily, strong in God's strength.

DISCUSSION

1. What is another principle of liturgical usage of Psalms which you have just learned?
2. Why is the Forty-Second Psalm chosen for the beginning of Mass?
3. When did it enter the Mass?
4. What is the picture that it gives when it is looked at as something sung by the Psalmist who composed it?
5. What significance does it have when it is used by us?

Comes now the *confiteor* or confession. This is the oldest and most important part of the altar-foot prayers. It grew through the centuries, from an act of recollection and adoration said by the early bishops at the foot of the altar to an act of contrition. In its present form it dates from the thirteenth century. It is a sacramental which like the sign of the cross and holy water arouses holy dispositions and gains a remission of venial sin.

Recalling that words and motions in the liturgy blend and complement each other, note first the priest's posture. He is standing on the bottom step. Prefacing his act with the sign of the cross and the strengthening words, "Our help is in the name

of the Lord," i.e., in His person, he bows profoundly and keeps his eyes downcast to show with every part of his person his misery, shame, sorrow, and penitential spirit. He thrice strikes his breast to express the depth and intensity of the regret which makes him now chastise the heart whence his sins have flowed.

The sentiments which he expresses in words—and we with him—are those of sorrow and supplication.

Unlike any other act of contrition we moderns have ever been taught, the confiteor is really a short playlet in two acts.

Act I. The priest and then we stand shamefacedly before the divine majesty and the whole court of heaven and the other Mystical Body members assembled about us. They all stand as accusers, condemning us for our faithlessness to grace and our sinfulness. Humbly we acknowledge our guilt in the thrice-repeated "Through my fault," which expresses the real heart-break within.

Act II. Here there is a reversal. We now go as beggars to Our Lady and the saints and our present brethren in Him, beseeching them to plead to the Lord Our God in our behalf.

DISCUSSION

1. How old is the confiteor?
2. Why do we call it the most important part of the prayers at the foot of the altar?
3. How do the priest's posture and words harmonize?
4. Why does this act of contrition strike us moderns as something strange?
5. Why is not Christ appealed to in the little drama?

Take note of the following about the confiteor:

1. The priest recites it first and then the ministers, while we accompany them in our hearts. Here we have a mutual confession of sinfulness and a mutual petition unlike the personal ones to which we are used.
2. The liturgy is not bound to time or space but passes from earth to heaven and back again with the ease of one at home in either sphere. In the confession those members of the Mystical Body that are still militant pray together to those in glory for aid for all. We are here taught that grace comes to the individual, not individually, but chiefly through the community, the body, to which it is primarily given.

3. Recall Discussion II above on man's need for social worship. See how it is satisfied this early in the Mass (and in the prayers that immediately follow). Keep your eyes open for its recurrence again and again throughout the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.
4. Maurice Zundel in his excellent "The Splendour of the Liturgy" (Sheed and Ward) gives an idea which is opposite here. He would have us remember when we hear the priest's confiteor that his priesthood does not free him from the weakness and proneness to sin which go with his humanity. He suggests that the confession be an incentive for us to remove by prayer for him any faults which we may deplore in him; he remarks wisely that this is certainly much more efficacious than "necessarily unprofitable criticism." He sums up what he has said, thus: "It is perhaps the most tragic aspect of man's destiny that sinners are called to save sinners, but also without a doubt its most marvelously redemptive aspect."

DISCUSSION

1. Name another characteristic of the liturgy just mentioned.
2. Show how the Mystical-Body-minded person appreciates the words and mutuality of the confiteor more than does one who lacks that mentality.
3. How does grace come to us individuals?
4. Appoint two of the group to be on the lookout in the future to pick out all the aspects of the socialness of the Mass.
5. Can you think of some to whom Zundel's suggestions might be given with profit?

Because Christians are never isolated, separated, alone, both priest and ministers and people pray after our mutual confessions that God may grant mercy, forgiveness of sin, and life everlasting. The priest makes the sign of the cross and in a nonsacramental absolution asks for the pardon, absolution, and remission of our sins. Then follow three short alternate ejaculations for mercy and help which form the conclusion or epilogue of this liturgical act of contrition (consult your missals).

The priest then says to the ministers, "*Dominus vobiscum.*" And they reply, "*Et cum spiritu tuo.*" Opening his hands in a gesture of prayer, he begins to ascend the altar steps.

SUGGESTION

It would be a profitable custom if some one of the Mass prayers was taken as the subject of a mental prayer with which each of the following discussions could begin. It would familiarize each of the group members with the prayer and would also show them how much depth and beauty is contained in them. Finally when they used their missals in the future at Mass, these fuller ideas would cluster round about those prayers and make their own personal part in the Mass that much richer.

DISCUSSION IX

FROM ALTAR FOOT TO OFFERTORY—II

A. Prayers at the Altar

1. Mental Prayer From the Missal Prayers

2. Ascending to the Altar

The prayers at the foot of the altar being completed, the priest ascends the altar steps. As he goes, he says, inaudibly—silence being the language of a soul united with God—a prayer in which we can all join. It is a prayer which we might well make our own and say at other times too, before praying, as we go toward a church or a chapel to make a visit, etc.

“Take away from us, we beseech thee, O Lord, our iniquities, that we may be worthy to enter with pure minds into the holy of holies. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.”

3. Arriving at the Altar

Arrived at the altar, the priest venerates the relics of the saints in it (center), saying there the other prayer, which you can find in the proper place in your missals. Turn to that place now and read the prayer.

4. The Liturgical Kiss

While he says the prayer “We beseech thee, O Lord . . .” before going to the epistle side, the priest kisses the altar, wherein are the relics of the saints and martyrs.

Since this kissing action occurs several times throughout the Mass with a deeper significance than mere reverence for these relics, it is well to learn its meaning here so that you can refer to it as you proceed. Knowing its meaning too will enable you to kiss the altar in spirit.

An understanding of the significance of the liturgical kiss can be had by your realization of these three facts and their interrelationship.

1. Liturgically the most important part of any church is of course the altar. All else in it is of secondary importance, even the tabernacle, for reservation was not customary in a tabernacle until a few centuries ago. The altar is important because by the chrism wherewith it was consecrated it became a representative of Christ. It stands there in His place. In fact the Roman Pontifical says, "The altar is Christ."
2. At that altar is the priest. His is a double role. At one time he takes Christ's place there and almost loses his identity, as it were, being swallowed up in Him (*v.g.*, "This is *my* body. . . . This is . . . *my* blood." At other times, as here, he is the official minister of the Church, acting in her place.
3. The members of that body of which Christ is the head, the branches of which He is the vine, make up the third element. They also, being the Church, are the spouse of Christ, His bride, with whom He would be most closely united.

Looking in at any Mass then and seeing this action of kissing, we really see: the bride of Christ (the people) in the person of the ministering representative (the priest) approach Christ (the altar) and exchange with Him a bridal kiss of love, a love in which the bride receives life from the lips of her divine bridegroom. Parsch sums it up by saying: "Let us remember that the altar kiss is the bridal kiss between the Church and Christ and between the soul and Christ. The espousal of my soul with Christ is renewed in the Mass."

DISCUSSION

1. What is the most important part of a Church? Why?
2. Place in the order of their importance (*i.e.*, first, second, third according to a true Catholic sense)

the communion rail (Holy Communion), the tabernacle (reservation), and the altar (sacrificial action).

3. What double role does the priest play at Mass? Which of these is he enacting when he kisses the altar?
4. What is the significance of that kiss?

PROJECT

At this point assign to a member of your group the interesting task of learning about the incensing of the altar and the idea of the "station" churches; let him be ready to explain it at the beginning of the next meeting. Among other places where he can find this information well explained is "The Liturgy of the Mass," by Pius Parsch (B. Herder Book Co.) pp. 76-82.

5. The Introit

The priest now goes to the missal, which is placed at his right, the epistle side of the altar. Making the sign of the cross, in which way all solemn functions are begun, he reads the introit. (Latin, *introit*, meaning "he goes in"; *introitus*, meaning entrance.) Originally made up of a Psalm and an antiphon, that is, a verse which was chanted and which served as a refrain, which was taken from the Psalm and which hit off its theme, the introit has today been reduced to the following composition: an antiphon which gives the meaning of the whole Psalm; the first verse of the Psalm, which stands for the whole and only accidentally gives its theme; the "*Gloria Patri . . .*" and the antiphon is repeated.

In the high Mass this antiphon is chanted while the ministers are saying the prayers at the foot of the altar. This procedure shows two things: 1) that those prayers are private preparatory prayers; 2) that although it was unknown in the first few centuries of the Church's life, the introit has been from that time the real beginning of the Mass.

As we find the introit today, it is often on the mystifying side. This is due to its shortened form. To understand it aright, we must lengthen it and look behind its present fossilization in order to see its original use.

In the Mass today we have really a double-headed introit: the true one, which is but a ghost of its former self and which varies with different Masses; the other, the prayers which you have just discussed and which are complete, whole, and unchanging. It was this latter introit which came in with the introduction of the private Mass and which has crowded the real introit into second-place importance.

Going back to the Middle Ages, we find that even then the real purpose of the introit which we are considering now was no longer understood. This ignorance resulted from a continual shortening of the introit on the one hand because of the dropping of the station processions and of the solemn entrance into the church and on the other hand from an abuse of the chant introduced by Gregory I, which resulted—like the operatic Church music condemned in our own day by Pope Pius X in his "*Motu Proprio*"—in a greater consumption of time in the singing and hence in an abbreviation of the Psalm sung.

Before these innovations or disappearances however, which began in the fourth or the fifth century, when the Church had come out of the catacombs and the persecutions, and the great basilicas had begun to rise, the following ceremonies were observed.

The Pope or bishop coming to the church where Mass was to be celebrated made a solemn entrance there. With his ministers and the clergy present he marched in solemn procession from the sacristy (the withdrawing place), which used to be near the front door, down through the church, and to the altar. As he proceeded, the choir, standing by the altar and divided into two sections, chanted a processional hymn. One subchoir sang the antiphon, and the other repeated it. Then the first section sang the first verse of the Psalm chosen for its fittingness for the feast, and the second section repeated the antiphon. So they continued, until the Pope or bishop had arrived at the altar and had prostrated himself. There he waited until the Psalm was finished or, if it was too long, until he gave the signal for the conclusion, which consisted in the singing of the "*Gloria Patri . . .*" by the whole choir together. In all probability in earlier times the people joined trained singers in the chanting of the antiphon. Such then is the ancestry of the abbreviated introit which we have today, a shriveled remainder of the chant for the procession to the celebration of Mass.

The introit gives voice today, as in those earlier days it did more fully and more musically, to the religious meaning and

mood of the procession and to the Mass. It serves fittingly to dispose the heart of a man, to put it in tune with the great action to follow.

It is only when we view our modern introit against this colorful and rich background of its original meaning and purpose, unseparated from chant and procession, and with its full Psalm, and as an accompaniment of the celebrant's going to the altar of God that we will fully understand it. Then we see it as it is described by Zundel:

"Thus the introit greets us at the entrance of the Mass. It is like a triumphal arch at the head of a Roman road, a porch through which we approach the mystery, a hand outstretched to a crying child, a beloved companion in the sorrow of exile. The liturgy is not a formula. It is one who comes to meet us."

DISCUSSION

1. Why does the priest sign himself with the sign of the cross when he starts to read the introit?
2. Why does he cross the missal when he is saying a requiem Mass?
3. What does the word introit mean? How is it composed?
4. What is the meaning of the word antiphon? What does it aim to do?
5. Do you find the introit unintelligible?
6. Are we different from our brothers of the Middle Ages in this mystification?
7. Trace the steps in the process of the compressing of the introit.
8. Describe or, better still, act out the original entrance chant of the entrance procession. What part should it play in our own offering of the Mass today?

PROJECT

In order the better to make use of the present-day introit, why not read the full Psalm in your Bibles before you go to Mass?

6. The Thrice Tripled Kyrie

Having finished the introit, the celebrating priest goes to the middle of the altar and says the Kyrie (in a high Mass he

remains at the book and recites the Kyrie with the deacon and the subdeacon while the choir chants it). Greek in source this prayer came into the Roman Mass around the fourth or the fifth century, the "Christe eleison" having been introduced by Gregory I (c. 600). The precise 3-3 arrangement that we have today is a later addition; originally the Kyries were repeated for as long as the celebrant thought them necessary.

This triple triplet of prayers is a cry for mercy welling up from the depths of the hearts of both priest and people. Short, powerful, terse, and hence adapted for the chanting of large groups, the Kyrie is the cry of souls longing for union with God, a union effected by instruction and knowledge and directed toward those wanting to become Catholics and toward an ever-deepening of grace for those already Catholic. It is the plea—oft-repeated because of its depth—of souls in need, souls realizing that need and also realizing their own powerlessness to remove it by themselves. Dr. Parsch calls it "the Advent time of every day." It is a cry from hearts which are still weighted with the pagan in them and which are surrounded by a pagan world. It is as urgent as the "*Rorate coeli desuper*,"—"Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just."

DISCUSSION

1. What does the priest do at the end of the introit at a low Mass? at a high Mass?
2. When did the Kyrie enter the Roman Mass? When did it become set in its present form? What is its significance?
3. Why was the Greek retained in the Latin rite?
4. What three languages were used in the inscription over Christ on His cross? How are they retained in the Mass today? Give examples of each.
5. Of the four marks of the Church (what are they?), of which is this triple language indicative?

7. "Glory to God in the Highest"

The Kyrie being ended, there is a quick reversal of mood. The plea for mercy is an antiphon, as it were, in which we ask for redemption. Comes now the joyful response, the exultant hymn of people who realize that they are redeemed: the Gloria. This outburst of full hearts (along with the *Te Deum*) is the

Church's grandest song of pure, happy praise and adoration of the Trinity. It is the Church's morning hymn, which opens with the words of the angels' singing over the hills of Bethlehem the glad tidings of the Savior's birth. Onward it sweeps from there in praise of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

In itself of extreme antiquity, the text which we have in the Mass today dates from the twelfth century; but it is in essential agreement with the Greek texts of the fourth and the fifth centuries. When this exultant hymn entered the Mass is not certain. Since the twelfth century however it has been chanted throughout the Church in Masses which are joyful in character.

PROJECT

Using your missals, see what you can do to work out the structure and meaning of the Gloria. See how it fulfills perfectly the four aims of prayer (what are they?), especially the first three. If you care to, you might compare the results of your labors with Parsch, pp. 102, ff, and Bussard's "The Sacrifice," pp. 38, ff.

8. "The Lord Be With You . . . and With Thy Spirit"

The Gloria being ended, the priest bows, kisses the altar (remember, the altar represents Christ our priest, victim, and altar), turns to the people, opens his arms as though to give them gifts and to embrace them, brings his arms together in a gesture of intense prayer, and says, "*Dominus vobiscum.*" "The Lord be with you." Then the people—either through the choir, if it be a high Mass, or through the altar boy, or even directly, if it be a dialogue Mass—reply "*Et cum spiritu tuo,*" "And with thy spirit."

a. "The Lord Be With You"

Borrowed from ancient Old Testament usage, this greeting has been baptized by the Church and is used by her to address her children. By it she not merely wishes and prays but actually states that the Lord Jesus dwells in and with us. It is a statement of fact which carries with it a challenge for us to live up yet more to our Christhood.

It is a sign and testimony written into the Mass itself that the Church desires that priest and people unite and be at one in spirit and in action. Occurring eight times in the Mass and often followed by the exhortation "*Oremus,*" "Let us pray," the "*Dominus vobiscum*" is always related to an action to fol-

low in which the people have a particularly active part. It is as it were an alert, putting them on guard for special activity. This is evident in the present use, for the collect, the prayer of the people, is about to be offered. The people's reply is a sign that would say, "we are ready; we are attentive."

DISCUSSION

1. When does the salutation "*Dominus vobiscum*" come?
2. Is it merely a prayer or a wish?
3. Is it merely a statement of fact or a challenge to what?
4. Do you accept it as such at Mass?
5. What does it indicate about lay participation in the Mass?
6. How many times does it occur in the Mass?
7. What does it usually precede?
8. What is its usual function, *i.e.*, what practical purpose is it supposed to serve?

b. "*And With Thy Spirit*"

The priest member's prayer for the lay members of Christ's Mystical Body is not to go unheeded. The priest has prayed (or stated) that the Lord Jesus may bless, favor, shower graces upon his fellow Mystical Body members; that He may dwell, act, live, reign, operate in them, giving them light and courage and strength. The Christianly courteous thing is then done: The people reply, "*Et cum spiritu tuo*," "And with thy spirit," which means primarily, "And with you also." Liturgically it has a deeper meaning as well, a meaning which is seen from the fact that it is never addressed to anyone save a priest or a deacon. This shows that "thy spirit" here refers to the wondrous spiritual powers given the priest at ordination through the operation of the Holy Spirit.

DISCUSSION

1. What do the people reply to the priest's salutation?
2. Do you always say this in your heart even though not aloud?
3. What does this reply mean on the face of it?

4. What deeper meaning does the liturgy give these simple words?
5. Why may not a person in minor orders use the term "*Dominus vobiscum*" when he is, let us say, reading litanies for a group?

9. The Prayer (s) or Collect (s)

The priest then turns, goes to the book at the epistle side of the altar, and, bowing to the crucifix, extends his arms and says (or chants) "*Oremus*," "Let us pray." (Keep your eye always on the mutuality and union of priest and people in this holy and great sacrifice. At the same time however do not forget that a congregation is not needed for the validity of the Mass. We the people are not coconsecrators.) Follows then the "*Oratio*" (prayer), as it is marked in our missals today, or the collect, as it was formerly called, the principal liturgical prayer of the day. This prayer is said not merely in the Mass but also in the office of the day. Thus it has a double function: to set the tempo, the mood, of the motif of the day and to link the Mass and the breviary, which is really an extension—throughout the rest of the day—of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

It is not necessary to give here an exhaustive treatment of the prayer or collect. Its origin is practical for us at present only in that it shows that this prayer (or these prayers; it is only within comparatively recent centuries that more than one oration has been added to the original single one) has a distinctly social or congregational or communal nature.

Although there are various explanations for the origin of the collect (*v.g.*, that it is the collected prayers of all the people), the best explanation seems to be the following. In ancient days the Christians would assemble at one church (called the *ecclesia collecta* or assembly-church). Thence they would go in procession to the church where Mass was to be offered (the "station" church). Our collect was the prayer said for the gathered assembly at the first church. Then the processions were dropped, and the collect was recited at the beginning of Mass, in the church where Mass was offered. The important thing to note is that from the very beginning the collect was a congregational prayer. As then, so today: As is evidenced by the "*oremus*," the plural form of the prayer itself, and the "*amen*" at its ending, priest and people pray to God together. The priest at the altar says (or chants) the prayer. The people say it in their minds and hearts and ratify it at the end with their "*amen*."

In form most of the collects follow this type. They are made up of four parts: 1) the address, made almost invariably to the Father; 2) the motive for the petition, usually taken from the nature of the feast; 3) the petition itself, which is ordinarily in harmony with the thought of the feast; 4) the closing, which strengthens all that has gone before by the offering of it "Through Our Lord Jesus Christ . . ." the offering of it through His mediatorship and in His name.

DISCUSSION

1. Why does the priest hold his arms extended when he says this prayer?
2. Give three reasons for our saying that this prayer is that of priest and people united.
3. How does the collect: 1) give the motif of the feast? 2) link the Mass with the Divine Office?
4. Give a brief history of the collect.
5. What is the usual form? Consult your missals and see how this form is followed in various prayers.
6. What is the most important point to note about the collect?

PROJECT

1. For the next week try to make a mental prayer on the collect of each day.
2. Delegate one or two of the group members to look up information on the sequence and be ready to report on it at the proper place at the next discussion. A good source for such study would be the Catholic Encyclopedia or Paul Bussard's "The Sacrifice" (The Leaflet Missal, St. Paul, Minn.), pp. 70 and 76-82.

DISCUSSION X

FROM ALTAR STEP TO OFFERTORY—III

God Talks to Us

Prayer has been defined as "conversation with God." Now conversation presupposes at least two people, *both* of whom do the talking. In the parts of the Mass seen so far, we have contributed our share. We have spoken to God. It is for us now to remain silent and to listen to what God speaks to us. It has always struck us as strange that some people, too many

of them "good Catholics," will say that God doesn't answer their prayers or that praying to Him is like carrying on a one-way telephone chat. They have at their hand the holy Scriptures, in which time and again God is revealed as speaking to them, giving them the thoughts and ideas and principles and ideals that are the best possible answers to what they ask.

Before going on, recall that originally this first part of the Mass was separated from the sacrifice action and had as its aim to teach those who needed teaching the truths of our faith and the way to pray according to those truths. The portions of the nonsacrificial part of the Mass which follow serve to give this instruction.

1. The Lesson

The collect being finished, the priest proceeds to the reading of the first lesson.

The reading of the Scriptures was the most important part of the prayer-instruction service of the synagogue, which our speech-part of the Mass parallels. (For such a scene in Our Lord's own life, cf. Luke 4, xvi-xxi.) In taking over this service, the Church placed an equal importance on the word of God. Although formerly the Mass had two, three, five, and even seven lessons, today it ordinarily has but one. This is usually a definite passage from the epistles or letters of the Apostles, usually of Saint Paul (although in some of the Masses the Apocalypse and the Old Testament are the sources). Each passage is chosen carefully to fit the occasion and the phase of the liturgical year in which it is read.

The aim of the lesson (or epistle) is the same today as it was in the beginning. The Church wishes her children to advance not only in the grace of God but in His wisdom as well. To do this, she shows them how to think divine thoughts. Those thoughts are contained in the sacred Scriptures, which were written by God and by the men whom He used as His human pen. The lesson then is to do the work of deepening faith, of instructing, of advising and correcting and inspiring. These lessons plus the Gospels contain ample instruction in such truths as will suffice for the salvation of anyone's soul.

At the end of the lesson the server says, in the name of the congregation, "*Deo gratias.*" "Thanks be to God," which is the people's sincere and heartfelt expression of gratitude to their divine teacher for the teachings He has given them.

DISCUSSION

1. Why is the lesson important in source? in content? in effect?
2. What is the origin of these lessons?
3. Turn to the Masses for the Ember days or for Good Friday and check on the number of lessons given there. Why does this show the antiquity of these Masses?
4. Why are the lessons often called the epistles?
5. Who is the Apostle from whose letters most of the Sunday lessons are drawn?
6. What is the norm of the choice of these epistles?
7. At what effect does the lesson aim?
8. What does the server say at the end of the lesson? For whom? Why?

2. The Intervening Chants

The priest now reads certain parts of the Scriptures which like the introit are the source of some mystification to the ordinary layman (and not a few clerics) of today. In order that these parts may have meaning for us, we must dip again into history.

We must recall first of all two facts: 1) Christians in those earlier days were as human as we are. 2) The lessons were more numerous and longer than they are today. Put these two facts together, and you find that these intervening chants which were formerly longer and were sung gave a period of respite and time for reflection. The lesson and the Gospel were meant to be listened to and taken to heart. Now listening and learning are tiresome tasks for poor human nature. To relieve the attention and to give a chance for refreshment, these chanted parts were interposed between Gospel and epistle. They served too to fill in time for the forming of the Gospel procession. Finally there was in the early Christian soul a love for the Psalms which is lacking today. These chants served to satisfy that hunger and thirst.

DISCUSSION

1. Have these verses that you have found in your missal been hitherto a source of some mystery to you?

2. Where do you have to go if you would clarify it?
3. What is the prime purpose of these intervening chants?
4. What secondary reasons for them have been assigned?
5. Why is it that present-day Christians have not the love for the Psalms that earlier Christians had?
6. What could be done about it?

3. The Gradual

The first of these chants is called the gradual, a name dating from the ninth century. It was so called because it was sung by a chanter standing on the *gradus* or steps of the pulpit. It may be considered first of all as an echo of the lesson. Originally an entire Psalm was sung. Then it was gradually shortened, the original simple chant with which the people answered the soloist giving way to the more complicated chant of a trained choir. The people then sat and listened and reflected the while. The chanter on the *gradus* sang the first verse of the Psalm. Then the choir sang it. Then the chanter sang the second verse and was echoed by the choir, who repeated the first verse, which by reason of its repetition was the more important.

DISCUSSION

1. Why is this first chant called the gradual?
2. What was its purpose?
3. Why did it change from the original chanter-people form to that of trained singers' singing it?
4. What was the congregation to do in the meantime?

4. The Alleluia Verse

If the gradual is a backward-looking chant, the Alleluia—meaning "Let us praise the Lord"—is forward-looking, preparing the soul for the Gospel.

Made up of two Alleluias, a verse, and another Alleluia, it was originally sung only at Eastertide (at Eastertide in our day this anthem has an additional verse and alleluia). It was later extended to the whole liturgical year and to all Masses save those of Lent and the requiems. The verse of the Alleluia anthem is varied in content, sometimes being taken from a

Psalm and sometimes from the Gospel, but always giving the theme of the entire Mass.

DISCUSSION

1. Is the Alleluia chant forward- or backward-looking?
2. How is it made up?
3. Was it always placed in all the Masses of the year?
4. What happens to it at Eastertide nowadays? What happens to the gradual at that time (consult your missals for this answer)?

PROJECT

Go through a number of Masses in your missals and examine the graduals and the Alleluia verses. See how they fit into the season and into the Mass itself.

5. The Tract

When the Alleluia anthem is omitted, its place is taken by the tract. This appears in the requiem Masses and in Masses on days of penance. It is called the tract because it is sung continuously without break or interruption. It is generally made up of a number of Scripture verses and sometimes of the entire Psalm. Its contents are in harmony with the motif of the Mass of the day or season. When it is chanted, there is no repetition of verses, as in the gradual, but the entire choir chants it straight through.

DISCUSSION

1. What is meant by the word tract? Why is it called this?
2. When is it used?
3. Of what is it made up?
4. Consult your missals again for examples of the tract, *v.g.*, in the Masses for the dead, the first Sunday of Lent, etc.

PROJECT

At this point let the person or persons who have been appointed give to the group their findings about the sequence.

DISCUSSION XI

FROM ALTAR STEPS TO OFFERTORY—IV

1. The Gospel

The chants intervening between the lesson and the Gospel being recited (or chanted, at a solemn high Mass), the priest goes to the center of the altar. There he bows low and recites the prayer, "Cleanse my heart and my lips, O Almighty God, who didst cleanse the lips of the prophet Isaias with a burning coal. Vouchsafe of thy gracious mercy so to cleanse me that I may worthily proclaim thy holy Gospel. Through Christ our Lord. Amen. Give me thy blessing, O Lord. The Lord be in my heart and on my lips, that I may worthily and in a becoming manner announce His holy Gospel. Amen." (A beautiful prayer, this, and one which each of us should recite in our hearts with the priest. For the reference to the prophet Isaias, cf. *Isa.*, 4.) Then the priest goes to the left side of the altar, where the missal has been placed. In the meantime the people have stood in reverence for this reading. The priest says, "*Dominus vobiscum,*" and they reply, "*Et cum spiritu tuo.*" He signs the book with the sign of the cross; then he makes the sign of the cross on his forehead that his mind be that of Christ; on his lips that he may speak the words of Christ's truth; over his heart that Christ's love may ever dwell there and stream forth to other souls. We the people should once again make the same signing with the same sentiments. The priest then reads the Gospel, the "good tidings," to which the words of St. Paul may be easily applied. "For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and to the Greek. For the justice of God is revealed therein" (*Rom.*, 1, xvi-xvii).

DISCUSSION

1. Go back over the above.
2. Have one of the members present enact these ceremonies.
3. Why should lay folk pray the prayer of the priest before the Gospel?
4. What does the "*Dominus vobiscum,*" etc., signify here?
5. Why is the sign of the cross used?

We are now arrived at the high point of the nonsacrificial part of the Mass. Here in the Gospels we have the most important piece of Christian instruction. Here we have the word of God incarnate captured in the pages of a book—His mind, His words, His thoughts, His silences. If Christianity is Christ, then it is but right that we Christians should look upon the Gospels as of highest moment in all the Scriptures. When the Gospel is read, we are to listen to it, to take it to mind and heart, to remember it, to live by it, for it is Christ speaking directly to us.

The solemnity of this reading and its importance in the eyes of the Church can be seen best in the ceremonies accompanying it at a solemn high Mass. Therein we have the remnants and modifications of what originated in the early Church and what has been done for centuries.

In ancient times the churches had two pulpits. The lesson was read in one pulpit and the Gospel in the other. The greater importance of the "good tidings" can be seen from the fact that the Gospel pulpit was higher and more ornate than that of the lessons.

It was into this higher pulpit that the deacon would ascend to read the Gospel. Going to the altar, he would receive the Gospel book, kneel for the celebrant's blessing, descend to the altar foot, and then go in solemn procession to this second pulpit, preceded by acolytes carrying lighted candles and by a thurifer carrying a smoking censer.

Arrived in the pulpit, the deacon would sign with the sign of the cross the book and then himself, even as we have described above. He would then incense the book, showing yet further reverence for the word of God in the words of the Gospel book. Having read the Gospel of the day, the subdeacon would then carry it to the celebrant, who in turn kissed it reverently.

Today at the conclusion of the Gospel in a low Mass the people say through their server, "Praise be to thee, O Christ." This is a prayer of gratitude for the goodness of the good Jesus, who by His word has brought us health and healing and light and life.

DISCUSSION

1. Why do we say that the Gospel is the high light of the "Mass of the Catechumens"?
2. Why are the Gospels the most important piece of Christian teaching?

3. What are we to do while we are hearing the Gospel read or are reading it ourselves?
4. How do the ceremonies of a solemn high Mass (remember that the low Mass is still looked on by the Church as an exception) show the reverence in which the Church holds the Gospels?
5. If it is at all feasible, why not act out in dumb show the ceremonies connected with the reading of the Gospel as they took place in ancient times.
6. What is the significance of the prayer that we say at the Gospel's ending? Are we in truth grateful for these words of the Word? Do you always say this prayer at the Gospel's ending?

2. The Sermon

It has always been God's way to teach men through men. It is for this reason that the sermon, which is ordinarily an explanation or unfolding or application of the Gospel, is also God speaking to us. The Gospel contains the definite expression of the main thought of the day or the feast. Since it is for such import, it ought to be known thoroughly and should become part of ourselves. The sermon helps to bring this about.

As old as the liturgy itself the place of the sermon is right here after the lessons and the Gospel; the sermon completes the lesson and the Gospel. The main aim of the sermon is of course to explain the word of God (hence the homilies or explanations of the Gospels which were so prominent in earlier days), to prepare the people yet further for a fuller participation in the sacrificial action which is to come. In this part of the Mass we are taught. Later we do.

DISCUSSION

1. How can you call the sermon the word of God too?
2. What does the sermon aim to do?
3. Why should it come here in this part of the Mass?
4. What sort of sermons do you prefer?
5. Do you think that enough homilies are preached today?

DISCUSSION XII

THE CREDO

The ante-Mass, or the nonsacrificial part of it which we have discussed so far, was once the only part of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass which the catechumens (those who were not yet Christians but who were being instructed for entrance into the Church) were allowed to attend. After the sermon and before the sacrificial action they were dismissed; only those united with Christ and together in His Mystical Body were allowed to remain, for they alone were fully instructed in the real meaning and true grandeur of the Mass. They alone could receive Holy Communion, which was the regular practice in the early days for everyone attending and offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Later because of heresies and also as a fitting exercise of faith the Credo or Creed was added to the Mass; thus was put a period to the ante-Mass and as it were a bridgehead between it and the action proper.

Originally connected with baptism, our Creed is an amplified version of the profession of faith (used probably at the Church of Jerusalem). It became a part of the Roman liturgy under Pope Benedict VIII. It appears in the Mass of Sundays, on particularly solemn feasts, and on the feasts of Our Lady, the angels, the Apostles, the doctors, and St. Mary Magdalen.

It is particularly appropriate that this public profession of faith (in the Eastern Church it is recited, a practice much more helpful and meaningful than our having it chanted by a choir in our own churches) should come as a sort of grand amen to the Bible readings and the sermon. When recited by the catechumens, it was a statement on their part that they believed in all that they had been taught in the Mass which preceded it. On the part of the priest and the people today, especially at the Sunday Mass, it testifies to the reason of their way of life during the preceding week and acts as a clarion to a fuller life in accord with its truths in the week ahead. Coming as it does just before the sacrificial action, which is especially the mystery of faith in which the principal truths of our religion are brought in touch with the soul, it acts as a bracer and stimulus for a faith-full participation in that action.

DISCUSSION

1. Who were the catechumens?
2. Why were they allowed to be present at the early part of the Mass?
3. Why were they dismissed at the end of that part?
4. With which sacrament was the Creed originally connected?
5. Why was it brought into the Mass?
6. Give three reasons why it is appropriate that the Creed should come at this place in the Mass.
7. When is the Creed used?

PROJECT

We suggest that for the rest of the period of time which you have been accustomed to give to these instructions you review the high points of the discussion of this Part I of our outline. There may be obscurities, perplexities, difficulties, gaps which need attention. This is the time to give attention to them. Take a poll of the group to see how much these discussions have helped them in the appreciation of the Mass, how much they have made that Mass more vital and effective in their own lives. How many offer Mass more often? How many offer it more intelligently? How many find that all of this first part of the Mass means much more to them now than it ever did before? How many have begun to glimpse at least the meaning of those words of the Council of Trent: "No other work can be performed by the faithful so holy"?

The present format of this book is the result of necessary war conservations of paper and labor.

