

O'Loughlin, Frank. *The Eucharist – Doing what Jesus Did*.  
Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications, 1997, pp 150.

\_\_\_\_\_ *Christ Present in the Eucharist*. Strathfield,  
NSW: St Pauls Publications, 2000, pp 220.

Searle, Mark. *Liturgy Made Simple*. Collegeville, Minnesota:  
The Liturgical Press, 1981, pp 95.

[Many books on individual ministries]

## Videos

- The Roman Catholic Mass Today
- A History of the Mass
- The Word of the Lord
- Say 'Amen' to what you are
- This is the Night
- Gather Faithfully Together
  
- One Bread, One Body (Veritas)

Liturgy Training  
Publications

Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn  
The Liturgical Commission

## Forming a Liturgy, Worship and Prayer Committee

### Why have a Liturgy Committee?

Liturgy is the public prayer of the Church and includes the sacraments.

Liturgy expresses and supports the faith of the local community. The purpose of a Liturgy Committee or group is to help the community pray, through enhancing and improving liturgical celebrations. Liturgies should be inclusive (where all can be full, conscious and active participants), and need to relate to daily life and mission.

Each community is different and will have a great variety of needs, which may change over time. It is logical that the Catholic community needs to be represented in the preparation and evaluation of its liturgies. The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (2002) seems to imply the existence of such a committee/group when it says:

All concerned should work in harmony and with diligence in the effective preparation of each liturgical celebration in accord with the Missal and other liturgical books as to its rites, pastoral aspects, and music. They should work under the direction of the rector of the church and also should consult the faithful about things that directly affect them. (111)

The U.S. Bishops (in *Music in Catholic Worship*) spelled out the details more fully.

The [preparation] team or committee is headed by the priest (celebrant and homilist) for no congregation can experience the richness of a unified celebration if that unity is not grasped by the one who presides, as well as by those who have special roles. The [preparation] group should include those with the knowledge and artistic skills needed in celebration: men and women trained in music, poetry, and art, and familiar with current resources in these areas; men and women sensitive also to the present day thirst of so many for the riches of scripture, theology, and prayer. It is always good to include some members of the congregation who have not taken special roles in the celebrations so that honest evaluations can be made. (12)

## **Books:**

Andersen, Frank. *Eucharist - Participating in the Mystery*. Hawthorne, Vic: John Garratt Publishing, 1998, pp 130.

Bernadin, Joseph. *Guide for the Assembly*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1997, pp 60.

Diess, Lucien. *The Mass*. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1992, pp 110.

Huck, Gabe. *Sunday Mass Five Years from Now*. . Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2001, pp 150.

Mahony, Roger. *Guide for Sunday Mass*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1997, pp 60.

Mazar, Peter. *To Crown the Year: Decorating the Church through the Seasons*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1995, pp 297.

Mick, Lawrence E. *Worshipping Well. A Mass Guide for Planners and Participants*. Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1997, pp 112.

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*Forming the Assembly to Celebrate the Mass*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2002, pp 70.

Moore, Gerard. *Why the Mass Matters*. Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications, 2004, pp 80.

- Find a competent chairperson and secretary. Ideally, the chairperson needs to ensure that:
  - everyone on the Committee has the opportunity to be heard and to use his/her talents for the good of the parish
  - time is spend productively
  - the meeting is kept on track. This can often be done by outlining and repeating the issues
  - the expertise and resources the Committee needs are found
  - s/he knows the liturgy documents
  - s/he manages the Committee's level of conflict
  - the topics and issues needing work emerge in a way that suits the group's level of skill and experience.

### Resources

#### Foundational documents on liturgy:

- *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*
- *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*
- *Lectionary for Mass: Introduction*
- *Directory for Masses with Children*
- *Music in Catholic Worship*
- *Liturgical Worship Today*
- *The Importance of Sunday*
- *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship.*

### Decisions from the 2004 Archdiocesan Synod, affecting liturgy.

The Archdiocesan Synod of 2004 showed that it well understood the importance of liturgy, worship and prayer.

The archbishop has mandated that each parish:

- has a Liturgy Committee that meets regularly;
- promotes “full, conscious and active participation” of the faithful in liturgy;
- organises education for liturgical ministries, prior to beginning the ministry and at regular intervals after that;
- uses sensitive language (e.g. not “man” but “men and women”; not “him” but “them”) in General Intercessions and on parish bulletins etc.;
- work to form a team to care pastorally and spiritually for the sick and dying; and
- be educated to conduct, (in the absence of a priest or deacon), the appropriate celebrations of *Order of Christian Funerals*.

### Some organisational principles

- At its best, the Parish Liturgy Committee studies, discusses, prays and finds the expression of the church's liturgy that is appropriate for its community now.

- As far as possible, the Committee should consist of the priest and others drawn from the major liturgical ministries as well as those in the parish with special interest, talents and gifts in liturgy and areas of the arts. Notices of meeting times could invite everyone to come along and participate.
- The Committee is responsible for the overall vision of liturgy – for the big picture issues (e.g. the effectiveness of the worship space, the use of silence, responsibility for the liturgical budget, ensuring the parish liturgies meet the needs of all : those of different ages, ethnic groups, both genders, etc.)
- The Committee will need to network with smaller groups / teams that work on particular projects and issues.
- Overall liturgy preparation is guided by the Committee. Its execution could be undertaken by people who are competent in that field, e.g. in the selection of music, writing the General Intercessions, shaping the environment.
- Evaluation is a vital and ongoing aspect of the Committee’s work. Reflection on responses, by all involved in liturgical ministry, will assist planning for the following year.
- Most Liturgy Committee work should focus on “the basics”: doing the fundamental work of hospitality, the Liturgy of the Word, and Eucharist, extremely well, week after week.

### **Responsibilities of a Liturgy Committee**

- Love the liturgy and appreciate its central position in the life of the Church.
- Know the Rites and their texts (e.g. structure of the Eucharist, contents of Sacramentary, Lectionary, etc.)

- Continue education. Be familiar with the major liturgical documents and helpful websites, e.g. <http://www.vatican.va> and the archdiocesan liturgy website: <http://visionsp.cg.catholic.org.au/archliturgy>
- Understand the basic principles of liturgy and set parish policy on matters of worship.
- Set goals for parish liturgy, both short and long term.
- Appreciate the importance of symbols.
- Know the liturgical year and purpose of the seasons and feasts.
- Know the faith community.
- Appreciate the centrality of Sunday.
- Know the purpose of the various ministries.
- Be clear about the role of music in liturgy.
- Co-ordination: ongoing recruitment of members  
formation for ministry  
organisation  
follow up and evaluation.
- Prepare creatively: Seasons of the Church Year, special Feasts.
- Thank all parish liturgical ministers at the end of the Church year.

### **Some suggestions as to how the Committee could work.**

- Set regular meeting dates well in advance.
- Ensure the agenda goes out early and include any necessary reading material.