

Deepening our Celebration of the Mass

**Diocese of Palmerston North, 28 July 2026
slides available at <https://paulturner.org>**



Outline

- Pope Francis: *Desiderio Desideravi*
- Participating at Mass as a Priestly People
- The Liturgy of the Word
- The Liturgy of the Eucharist
- Participating Well at Mass

Pope Francis
Desiderio Desideravi

**Pope Francis: *Desiderio Desideravi*:
On the Liturgical Formation of the People of God**

- 6. Before our response to his invitation—well before!—there is [Christ's] desire for us. We may not even be aware of it, but every time we go to Mass, the first reason is that we are drawn there by his desire for us. For our part, the possible response—which is also the most demanding asceticism—is, as always, that surrender to this love, that letting ourselves be drawn by him.

- 51. Speaking of [*ars celebrandi*] we are inclined to think of it only in regards to ordained ministers carrying out the service of presiding. But in fact this is an attitude that all the baptized are called to live. I think of all the gestures and words that belong to the assembly: gathering, careful walking in procession, being seated, standing, kneeling, singing, being in silence, acclamations, looking, listening.

Participating at Mass as a Priestly People

First Letter of Peter

Chapter 2, verses 5 and 9

- “Let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”
- “[You are] ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises’ of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.”

The Ministerial Priest

The Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium* 10

“The ministerial priest, by the sacred power he enjoys, teaches and rules the priestly people; acting in the person of Christ, he makes present the Eucharistic sacrifice, and offers it to God in the name of all the people. But the faithful, in virtue of their royal priesthood, join in the offering of the Eucharist. They likewise exercise that priesthood in receiving the sacraments, in prayer and thanksgiving, in the witness of a holy life, and by self-denial and active charity.”

The Priesthood of the Laity

The Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium* 34

“[Christ] also gives [the laity] a sharing in His priestly function of offering spiritual worship for the glory of God and the salvation of [humans].... [All] their works, prayers and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their daily occupations, their physical and mental relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, and even the hardships of life, if patiently borne—all these become ‘spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ’ (1 Peter 2:5). Together with the offering of the Lord's body, they are most fittingly offered in the celebration of the Eucharist.”



The Violence of Love

St. Óscar Romero

“How beautiful will be the day when all the baptized understand that their work, their job, is a priestly work; that just as I celebrate Mass at this altar, so each carpenter celebrates Mass at his workbench, and each metalworker, each professional, each doctor with a scalpel, the market woman at her stand, is performing priestly office! How many cabdrivers, I know, listen to this message there in their cabs; you are a priest at the wheel, my friend, if you work with honesty, consecrating that taxi of yours to God, bearing a message of peace and love to the passengers who ride in your cab.”

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy 14

The Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*

- “Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the nature of the liturgy itself, and to which the Christian people, ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people’ (1 Peter 2:9; cf. 4-5) have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism.”

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy 48

The Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*

- “The Church... desires that Christ's faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators; ...they should take part in the sacred action conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. They should... give thanks to God; by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn also to offer themselves.”

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 95

- They should, moreover, take care to show this by their deep religious sense and their charity toward brothers and sisters who participate with them in the same celebration.



General Instruction of the Roman Missal 95

- They are consequently to avoid any appearance of singularity or division, keeping in mind that they have only one Father in heaven and that hence are all brothers or sisters one to the other.

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 96

The Functions of the People of God

- “Moreover, they are to form one body, whether in hearing the Word of God, or in taking part in the prayers and in the singing, or above all by the common offering of the Sacrifice and by participating together at the Lord’s table. This unity is beautifully apparent from the gestures and bodily postures observed together by the faithful.”

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 97

The Functions of the People of God

- “The faithful, moreover, should not refuse to serve the People of God in gladness whenever they are asked to perform some particular service or function in the celebration.”

The Liturgy of the Word

Genuflections and Bows

- A genuflection, made by bending the right knee to the ground, signifies adoration, and therefore it is reserved for the Most Blessed Sacrament....
- During Mass, three genuflections are made by the Priest Celebrant: namely, after the elevation of the host, after the elevation of the chalice, and before Communion. (GIRM 274)

Genuflections and Bows

- If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is situated in the sanctuary, the Priest, the Deacon, and the other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar and when they depart from it, but not during the celebration of Mass itself.
- Otherwise, all who pass before the Most Blessed Sacrament genuflect, unless they are moving in procession. (GIRM 274, cont.)

Genuflections and Bows

- “A deep bow is made to the altar by all who enter the sanctuary..., leave it, or pass before the altar” (Ceremonial of Bishops 72).



Genuflections and Bows

GIRM 274 and 275

- Ministers carrying the processional cross or candles bow their heads instead of genuflecting.
- A bow signifies reverence and honour shown to the persons themselves or to the signs that represent them. There are two kinds of bow: a bow of the head and a bow of the body.

Genuflections and Bows

GIRM 275

- a) A bow of the head is made when the three Divine Persons are named together and at the names of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Saint in whose honour Mass is being celebrated.

Genuflections and Bows

GIRM 275

- b) A bow of the body, that is to say, a profound bow, is made to the altar; ... [and] in the Creed at the words *et incarnatus est* (*and by the Holy Spirit... and became man*). The same kind of bow is made by the Deacon when he asks for a blessing before the proclamation of the Gospel.

Genuflections and Bows

GIRM 173

- When [the Deacon] reaches the altar, if he is carrying the Book of the Gospels, he omits the sign of reverence and goes up to the altar. It is a praiseworthy practice for him to place the Book of the Gospels on the altar, after which, together with the Priest, he venerates the altar with a kiss.

The Collect

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 54

- “Next the Priest calls upon the people to pray and everybody, together with the Priest, observes a brief silence so that they may become aware of being in God’s presence and may call to mind their intentions. Then the Priest pronounces the prayer usually called the ‘Collect’ and through which the character of the celebration finds expression.”

Draw near to your servants, O Lord,
and answer their prayers with unceasing kindness,
that, for those who glory in you as their Creator and
guide,
you may restore what you have created
and keep safe what you have restored. Through....

18th Sunday in Ordinary Time based on the Verona Sacramentary's prayer for fasting in September, from a sixth century siege of Rome, with themes found in Psalm 104:30 and Romans 8:17

Uses of the Ambo

- From the ambo only the readings, the Responsorial Psalm, and the Easter Proclamation (*Exsultet*) are to be proclaimed; likewise it may be used for giving the Homily and for announcing the intentions of the Universal Prayer. The dignity of the ambo requires that only a minister of the word should stand at it. (GIRM 309)



The Universal Prayer

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 69

- “In the Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful, the people respond in some sense to the Word of God which they have received in faith and, exercising the office of their baptismal Priesthood, offer prayers to God for the salvation of all.”

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Preparation of the Gifts

Order of Mass 26

- With humble spirit and contrite heart
may we be accepted by you, O Lord,
and may our sacrifice in your sight this day
be pleasing to you, Lord God.

The Preparation of the Gifts

Order of Mass 29

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

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

The Eucharistic Prayer

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 78

- The whole congregation of the faithful joins with Christ in confessing the great deeds of God and in the offering of Sacrifice.
- The Priest calls upon the people to lift up their hearts towards the Lord in prayer and thanksgiving; he associates the people with himself in the Prayer that he addresses in the name of the entire community to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

Parts of the Eucharistic Prayer

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 79

- [Dialogue]
- Thanksgiving [Preface]
- Acclamation [Sanctus]
- [Thanksgiving]
- Epiclesis
- Institution narrative and Consecration
- Anamnesis
- Oblation
- Intercessions
- [Holy Spirit]
- Concluding Doxology
- [Amen]

Communion from the Altar

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 85

- “It is most desirable that the faithful, just as the Priest himself is bound to do, receive the Lord’s Body from hosts consecrated at the same Mass and that, in the cases where this is foreseen, they partake of the chalice, so that even by means of the signs Communion may stand out more clearly as a participation in the sacrifice actually being celebrated.”

Communion under Both Kinds

General Instruction of the Roman Missal 281

- “Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it takes place under both kinds. For in this form the sign of the Eucharistic banquet is more clearly evident and clearer expression is given to the divine will by which the new and eternal Covenant is ratified in the Blood of the Lord, as also the connection between the Eucharistic banquet and the eschatological banquet in the Kingdom of the Father.”

Communion

GIRM 160

- In the dioceses of New Zealand standing is the most common posture for receiving Holy Communion, though individual members of the faithful may choose to receive Communion while kneeling. (GIRM 160)

Communion

GIRM 160

- “When we pray standing we remind ourselves of the grace given to us on the day of resurrection, not only because having been raised with Christ we ought to seek the things that are above, but that this day may seem an image in some way of the age to come.” (Basil, *The Holy Spirit* 27).

Communion

GIRM 160 in New Zealand

- When approaching to receive Holy Communion, the faithful bow in reverence of the Sacrament that they are to receive.



Participating Well at Mass

Before going to Mass:

- Pray over the readings at home
- Meditate on the collect



Arrive early:

- Visit with others on your way in
- Genuflect to the tabernacle



At Church:

- Get a front seat
- Pray silently before Mass begins



As Mass Begins:

- Sing and Respond
- Pray the Collect



As Mass Begins:

- Listen to the Readings
- Attend to the Universal Prayer



In the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

- Contribute to the Collection
- Offer yourself



In the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

- Give thanks
- Adore



In the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

- Receive
Communion
- Stay for the end



