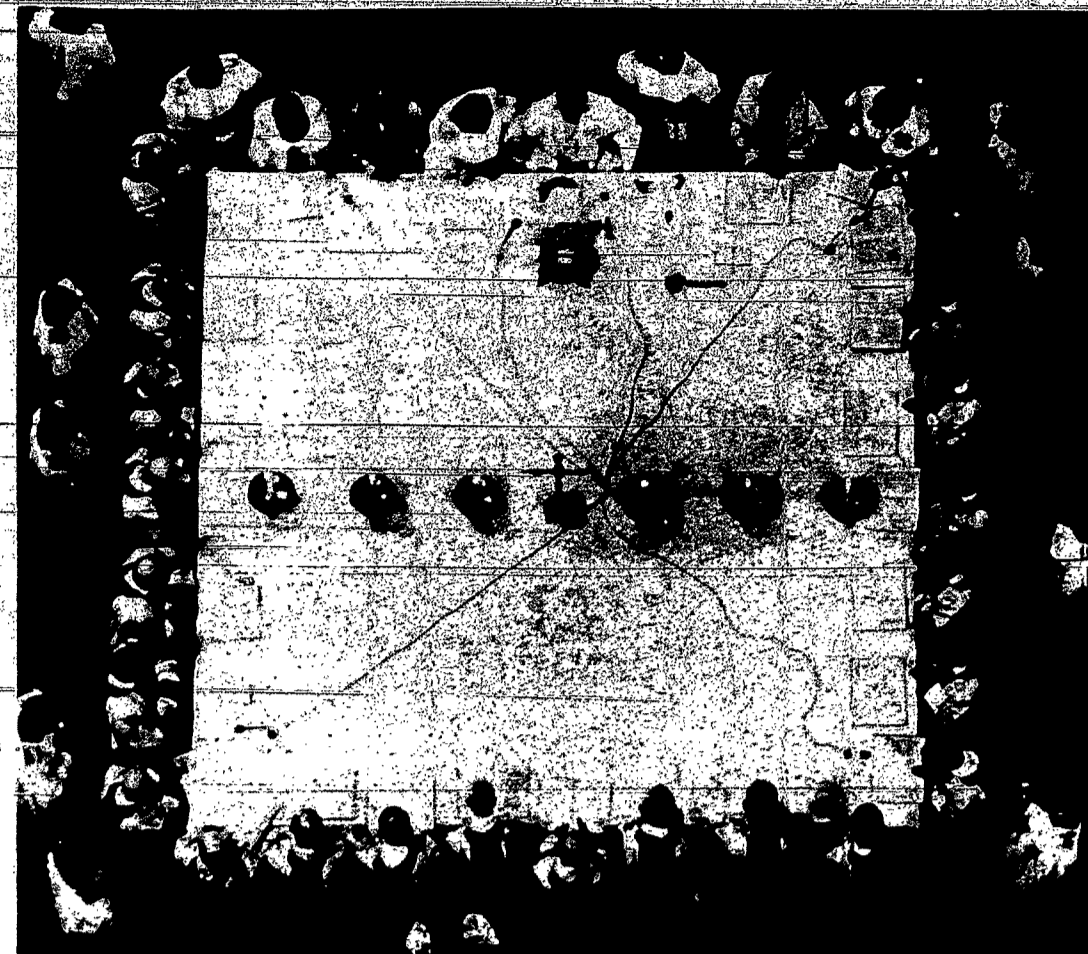


New Rites and Words for Mass - in Rome, Rochester and Around the World



Pope Paul gives blessing to end Mass he said facing people at simple table altar newly erected in front of old ornate against-the-wall altar in All-Saints Church in Rome. He used new rites, Italian language at Mass to give his personal example to Catholic priests around the world to put Church's revised ceremonies into practice.



Angel's eye view of Mass at St. Peter's in Rome — Pope Paul and 26 new Cardinals celebrate Mass around huge square altar. The Pontiff and Cardinals used a new rite for clergy to say Mass together rather than separately as in past.

'Why' and 'Wherefore' of Changes at Mass

By REV. GERALD APPELBY

"It is necessary first that all be persuaded of the intention of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council: not just to change liturgical forms and texts, but rather to stir up that formation of the faithful and pastoral activity that has the Sacred Liturgy as summit and fount."



Father Appelby, an assistant pastor at Sacred Heart Cathedral, explained the "why" and "wherefore" of changes being made in the Catholic ways of worship in this special article written according to instructions given by Bishop Casey, Cathedral rector. It was printed in the Cathedral's parish bulletin and distributed there on the first Sunday of Lent, March 7, the date the changes went into effect around the world.

—Instruction for the Proper Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.

The Mass of the Apostles

The form of the Mass offered by Peter and his immediate successors differed considerably from our own. The three main parts of the Mass—Offertory, Consecration, and Communion—were of course always present. But the additional prayers were subject to much change from day to day, and even from Mass to Mass.

In the earliest days, Mass probably took place in two different places—the Apostles going to the local synagogue for a prayer service, and afterwards gathering in a private home for the celebration of the Eucharist.

From this eventually grew the two main divisions of the Holy Sacrifice: the Service of the Word of God and the Service of the Eucharist.

The Presence of the Lord

Always the uppermost in the minds of the first priests and

bishops was the abiding presence of The Lord, most especially at Mass. When the Scriptures were read for the instruction of the assembly, Christ was present, teaching through His inspired Word. When the presiding priest or bishop preached the homily, Christ was preaching the good news of salvation and resurrection to His family. And when the priest consecrated the bread and wine, the same Christ came to His people in reality—Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity.

The Celebrant Presides

Since the early Christians maintained always a consciousness of the abiding presence of the Lord, they were equally aware of the fact that they had a specific task to perform at their sacred assembly.

At the Service of the Word of God, the priest offering Mass was present merely to preside over the reading of the Scriptures, Christ was instructing His people Himself. The priest would select the sections of

Scripture to be read, and lead the people in common prayer.

The people were thoroughly conscious that they were doing the praying, and the celebrant was merely directing the prayers. (Have you noticed that the priest pauses before reading the Collect of the Mass? This is to allow all the faithful to pray privately for a moment, before he "collects" all their prayers together in the one common prayer he reads.)

At the Offertory of the Mass, the celebrant would begin to lead them in offering the gifts to the Father. And in the Canon of the Mass, he would pray alone, because he was performing the act proper to him alone—the act of consecration.

Each of Us Has a Part

The new Liturgy, attempting to develop the ideals of the primitive Church in all of us, has instituted changes geared toward this goal:

• Unessential parts of the Mass

—parts which were not in use until the Middle Ages—are being suppressed. Thus the prayers at the foot of the altar are shortened and the last Gospel is omitted.

• Needless repetitions are eliminated. If the offering of Mass is truly a community affair, and each has his own part in it, priest should not "steal" from people, nor people from priest.

The priest must consecrate, because only he can do that.

And the people must pray and listen together, because all the priests in the world cannot do it for them. Thus, if the people sing together the Introit, the Kyrie, the Gloria and Creed, and the other sung parts of a High Mass, it is needless for the celebrant to repeat them. And so he will not.

• The two sections of the Mass are to be clearly delineated. The people must understand that the Christ who comes to us in the Blessed Sacrament has first come to us in the Sacred Word of God. Thus, the celebrant leaves the altar to "collect" our prayers, sits at his chair facing the people, presiding as another priest reads the Epistle and proclaims the Gospel. The celebrant listens with the assembly as another priest preaches, explaining the lessons of the Gospel, and he leads the people in the act of faith, the Creed.

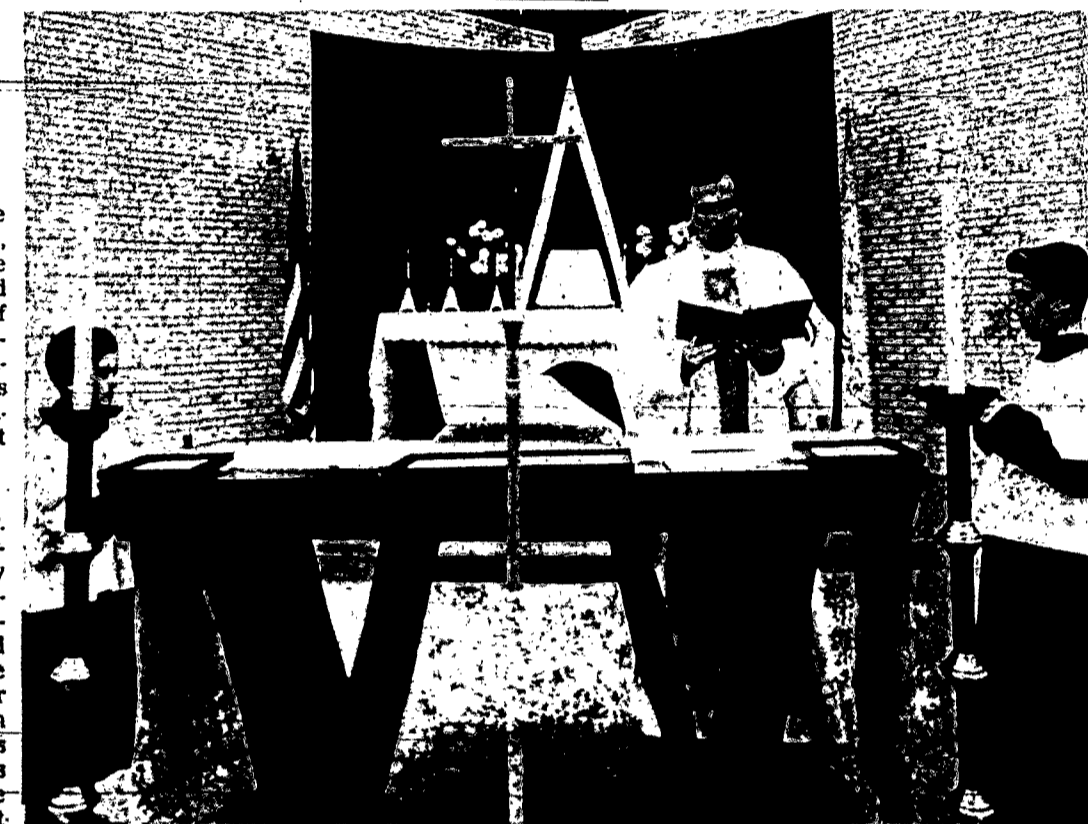
At the completion of the Creed, he returns to the altar, for then he must begin the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and for this he needs the altar of sacrifice. Here he will now remain until the Sacrifice is completed, and the assembly has been nourished with Holy Communion at the Lord's banquet table.

Your Responsibility

The Mass is common prayer. Each of us has a task to perform if the Mass is to be truly complete. Your answer in responding to the celebrant's invitation to pray together, and your help in the singing of the prayer-hymns is not a matter of choice. Since you perform a section of the Mass that is yours, part of the Mass is properly yours, part of the Mass is missing if you do not participate actively, and you are responsible.

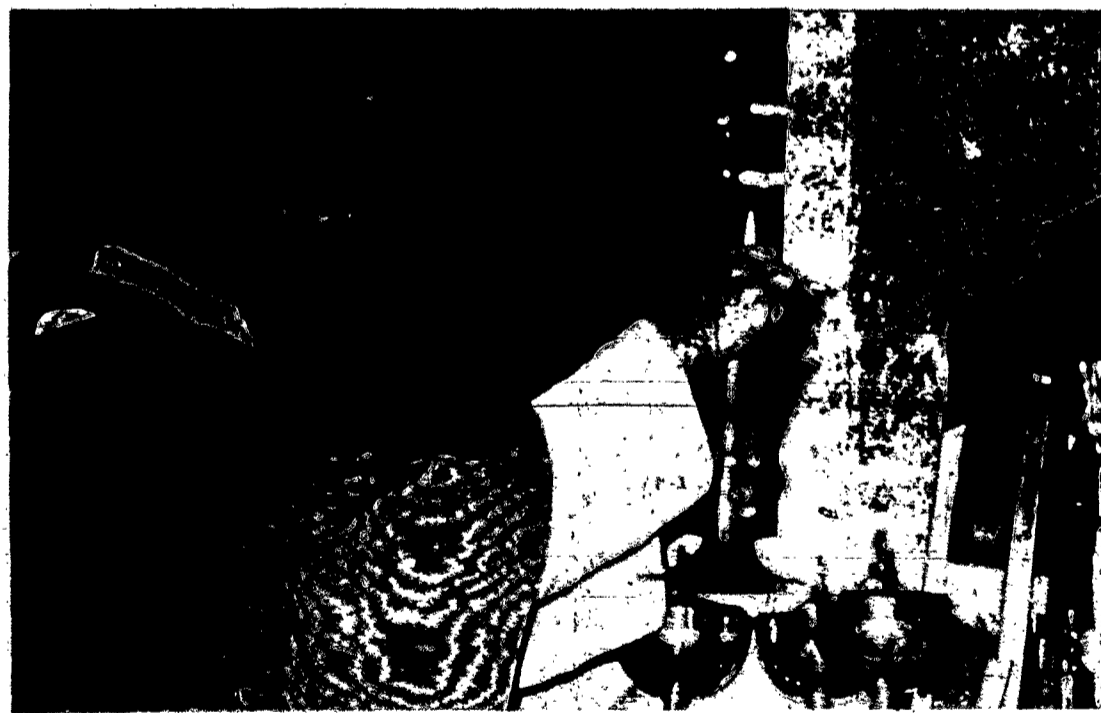
Remember also, the Liturgy of the Word is truly a part of the Mass. The sermon explaining the lessons of the Gospel is also a real part of the Mass—just as truly as the common recitation of the Our Father, or the Preface, or any of the unchanging parts of the Holy Sacrifice.

Please give God the entire Mass, being there on time for the Entrance Hymn, and remaining in your place until the priest has left the sanctuary after giving you his blessing.



One way of letting the people see and hear the Mass better is to set up special altars facing the congregation as at St. Athanasius Church in Reading, Massachusetts. This altar was designed to fit in with church's existing altar in background.

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Hardly visible to most people in pews is revised rite concluding Canon of the Mass. The priest, Father Hohman in this photo, holds Sacred Host above chalice to say prayer giving God "all honor and glory" to which congregation replies "Amen" before the Our Father.



"We understand it much better and it's very interesting," commented Arthur Falzone, shown here with his wife and daughter Stephanie, after Mass at Sacred-Heart Cathedral Sunday morning.



Father James Baker, like priests throughout the Rochester Diocese, conducts first part of Mass at St. Michael's Church, Rochester, close to altar rail so people can see and hear the rites and prayers better.



'Behold the Lamb of God' Father Hohman lifts Sacred Host to invite people to Holy Communion as Bishop Casey and Cathedral curates wait to assist in Communion rite.



Americans in Chile heard Mass in English for the first time when Brig. Gen. Father Edwin R. Chess offered the holy sacrifice as shown in photo at Maryknoll Fathers Centerhouse in Santiago. U.S. Ambassador to Chile, Ralph Dungan, and three of his six children were participants in the Mass.