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Volume XLVII

August 2011

Using the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children

Last month it was announced that the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments approved the reprinting of the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children so that they could be used in conformity with the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*. At that time it was also suggested that some clarification and instruction on the nature and use of these prayers should follow. Work has begun to prepare a supplemental text of the adapted Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children, which will be available later this year.

Three Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children (along with the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses of Reconciliation) were approved for use *ad experimentum* (for a period of three years) in the Dioceses of the United States in 1975. That permission was extended at the end of 1977 for another three years, and in 1980 the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments extended the faculty for the use of these prayers indefinitely. When the *Missale Romanum, editio typica tertia* was published in 2002, the three Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children were included. The 2008 reprint of the *Missale Romanum* did not include those prayers, but the Congregation stated that those prayers would be treated separately at a later time.

The Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children were introduced following a provision in the 1973 *Directory for Masses with Children*. Because the Directory indicated that the texts of the Eucharistic Prayers could never be adapted to particular circumstances when celebrating Mass with a large number of children, new prayers were created to meet the needs of those circumstances. The foreword to the prayers indicated the intended usage:

The use of the eucharistic prayers for Masses with children is restricted to Masses which are celebrated for children only or at Masses at which the majority of the participants are children. The Congregation for Divine Worship further stated that an assembly of children is to be understood in accordance with the *Directory for Masses with Children*, that is, one consisting of children who have not yet reached the age of preadolescence.

The introduction to the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children, which will be reprinted in the new supplemental text, emphasizes the importance of catechesis before using the prayers, which are meant, above all, to foster “internal participation” on the part of children. The use of short, repeated acclamations is intended to engage children not just externally, but to lead them to understand and appreciate the mysteries being celebrated. Such is clearly the case in with the acclamation “Jesus has given his life for us” after the words of the Lord in the Institution Narrative of

Eucharistic Prayer for Masses with Children II. These words are meant to be sung “as a common meditation on the Eucharistic mystery” (see Introduction, no. 24) which would help children understand the Eucharist as Jesus’ real presence as a gift given for us. While these acclamations may be initially unfamiliar, especially in light of the structure of the Eucharistic Prayers of the *Roman Missal*, their use may help young children to appreciate the nature of the Eucharistic Prayer as something in which they share and participate rather than something they observe.

It is worth noting in regard to Masses with children that the *Lectionary for Masses with Children*, approved by the Bishops of the United States in 1991 and confirmed by the Congregation in 1992, is still approved for liturgical use. The body of Bishops approved a new translation of the *Lectionary for Masses with Children* in 2005, and that text is still awaiting confirmation by the Holy See.

Exploring the Biblical Allusions in the Order of Mass: Gloria

The Gloria is an ancient hymn dating back to at least the 4th Century. It was first used in the Liturgy of the Hours during Morning Prayer as a hymn of praise for the glory and peace given through Christ’s resurrection (symbolized by the rising sun in the morning). It began to be used at Mass in the early 6th Century, at first only at Mass with a bishop on Christmas, then at any Sunday Mass with a bishop (priests were allowed to use it only at the Easter Vigil), but eventually its use was allowed at Sunday Masses with a priest as well. It has always marked more festive occasions in the Church.

A jubilant hymn of pure praise, the Gloria fittingly follows the Penitential Act, allowing God’s people to burst into praise for the mercy received in response to our admission of sinfulness. It is a poetic text of numerous scriptural quotes:

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests” (Lk 2:14).

“All earth’s kings shall thank you, O LORD, when they hear the words of your mouth. They shall sing of the ways of the LORD, ‘How great is the glory of the LORD!’” (Ps 138:5)

“The next day John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world’” (Jn 1:29).

“It is Christ who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us” (Rom 8:34; see also Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3).

“Who will not fear you, Lord, or glorify your name? For you alone are holy” (Rev 15:4). “Let them know that you alone, you whose name is the LORD, are the Most High over all the earth” (Ps 83:19).

The Gloria slightly alters the opening biblical phrase to say “peace to people of good will.” The Church loves to stress the importance of the will, both human and divine. When a human will is ordered to the divine will, then it is a “good will,” and then, we will experience true peace. Peace does not come without real conversion or justice. When Jesus appeared in the flesh, he taught us what it looks like when a human will is in perfect communion with the divine will: “Not my will but yours be done” (Lk 22:42).

Five verbs then follow, flowing from this good and peaceful will. All five reveal a different response to this appearance of God's glory in our midst, and the last one holds allusions to Psalm 138 where "all earth's kings" (such as the Magi, for example) respond to God's words (the Word) with thanksgiving for his "great glory."

John the Baptist gives the theological punch for the whole piece: Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (Jn 1:29). In the scriptures, the Baptist points to the central figure of the whole Gospel, and in the Gloria he fulfills the same function of pointing out the central theme of the whole hymn. This theme is further explained with the biblical quote of Jesus ascending to the Father and being seated at his right hand. The quote from Romans brings out part of the meaning behind this seating: to plead God's mercy upon us. This, too, is an important theme as evidenced by the numerous scripture verses that relate to it.

The hymn ends with a flourish of titles for Christ: Holy One, Lord, and Most High. These emphasize his divinity and are placed in the context of a Trinitarian finish with the naming of both the Holy Spirit and God the Father. This is not a hymn only for the baby born on Christmas night. It takes us through the full sweep of the Paschal Mystery.

Prayer Intentions for Meeting of "New Evangelizers" in Rome

The Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization will be holding a meeting in Rome on October 15-16, 2011, entitled "New Evangelizers for the New Evangelization." To support this meeting with the prayers of the Church, Archbishop Salvatore Fisichella, the Council's President, has requested parishes around the world to add the following two intentions to the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass on Sunday, October 16:

- Let us pray for the Church throughout the world, that she may be animated by a renewed missionary spirit which will help her to advance on the way of the New Evangelization.
- Let us pray also for the "New Evangelizers" who are meeting in Rome today with the Holy Father, that, strengthened by this experience, they may be faithful witnesses to Christ and the Gospel in the world of today.

Archbishop Fisichella has also recommended that, during the two-day meeting, "it would be highly significant if occasions for Eucharistic adoration could be organized... in some of the churches of the individual dioceses."

USCCB Reorganizes Website; Liturgical Materials Now Offered Throughout Site

On August 8, 2011, the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, www.USCCB.org, was reorganized to better integrate the resources of each Secretariat and office into a more dynamic and searchable format. Content is now organized by topic rather than office, and visitors can also use the "Contact Us" feature to send a message to the various offices. It is hoped that the new website will become a comprehensive information portal covering all aspects of the Catholic Church in the United States.

This reorganization impacts the liturgical materials previously offered on the Committee on Divine Worship's website. While the Committee will continue to have an individual page on the new USCCB website, much of its content intended for the general public will now be scattered throughout the website, most prominently in the "Prayer and Worship" section. Please visit www.USCCB.org to browse the new site and explore all its new features.

New Back Issues Policy for the Newsletter

With the forthcoming publication of *Ten Years of the Newsletter, 2001-2010* and the ongoing availability of *Thirty-Five Years of the BCL Newsletter*, the Secretariat of Divine Worship has decided to change its policy regarding the ordering of back issues of the *Newsletter*. Effective January 1, 2012, back issues of the *Newsletter* in paper format will only be available for the previous five years. The price for each back issue remains \$1.00.

The *Newsletter* is posted online in PDF format approximately three months after its release to subscribers. We encourage our readers to view back issues online at www.USCCB.org/about/divine-worship/newsletter.

Time Running Out to Order *Ten Years of the Newsletter, 2001-2010*

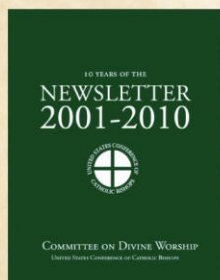
Final preparations are underway for the printing of *Ten Years of the Newsletter, 2001-2010*, scheduled for release in mid- to late-October 2011. This volume of the past ten years of the *Newsletter* is a handy companion to *Thirty-Five Years of the BCL Newsletter, 1965-2000*, a comprehensive tool for scholarly liturgical research, and an overall valuable resource, particularly with regard to news and background on the translation and approval of the *Roman Missal, Third Edition*. The book will have approximately 560 pages, with an introduction by Archbishop Gregory Aymond, Committee Chairman, and a cross-referenced index.

With many publications, the quantity of books printed – the print run – is based on a variety of factors, including the genre of the book, target audiences, and the number of estimated orders. *Ten Years* is a more specialized book, with the greatest interest among liturgy scholars, some libraries, and subscribers to the *Newsletter*. USCCB Communications has made the determination to use the number of early orders it receives as the primary factor for the print run. It is essential that a reasonable number of books are printed at this time, since reprinting *Ten Years* in the future may not be feasible due to the associated costs.

Persons who wish to order *Ten Years* from USCCB Communications should do so as soon as possible to ensure they receive a copy; the book has a current “early bird” price of \$23.95. In addition, copies of *Thirty-Five Years of the BCL Newsletter, 1965-2000* are also available, now at a much-reduced price of \$29.95. Owning these twin volumes will complete the library for any liturgical scholar.

New Volume with the history and development of the *Roman Missal, Third Edition* plus more...

Ten Years of the *Newsletter*, 2001-2010 from the Committee on Divine Worship



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