



celebrating divine worship at  
prince of peace

## Introduction

You may be new here at Prince of Peace, or a long-time parishioner. One of the things about our parish that it does not take too long to figure out, is that this is an *extraordinary parish for ordinary people*. There is something different about it, and the way we celebrate the Sacred Liturgy here is very different than the way Mass is celebrated in many places in the United States. It is extraordinary because of the beauty and devotion with which we come to the Mystery of Faith. This little booklet will help you to understand better why Prince of Peace is different, and prepare you to actively enter into divine worship with us. Welcome!

## The Sacred Liturgy

Christians have gathered on the LORD's Day ever since that first Eucharist when Jesus bent over bread and wine and said, *This is My Body. This is My Blood. Do this in memory of Me*. In the early Church, Christians always gathered around the Bishop. We know very little about how they worshipped, but ancient texts like the *Didache* and the *Apostolic Constitutions* have given us a glimpse into their prayer life.<sup>1</sup> At a very early

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<sup>1</sup> read these at <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/didache.html> and <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0715.htm>

stage, prayers composed for worship were written down and handed down from one generation to the next. Collections of these began to appear, and were taken all over the Christian world. Soon, they were made into Sacramentaries and Missals. Even though there was a lot of diversity in the way that Christians worshipped from place to place, a pattern emerged that would become common to all Christian communities.

As the way Christians worshipped solidified, they came to be known as rites. There are 23 families of rites in the Catholic Church. The vast majority of Catholics worship according to the Roman, or Latin, Rite. The Roman Rite has its origins in the liturgy as celebrated in Rome by the Pope in the Basilicas. This Rite was carried all over Western Europe, and had already achieved its substantial unity by the time of St Gregory the Great (r. 590-604). This classical Roman Rite, as it was called, had variants in different places, but there were also many places who modeled their liturgy after the Pope's.

When the Protestant Reform struck at the heart of the unity of the Church, it was considered desirable to unify Catholic worship even more, to ensure that, wherever the Mass was celebrated, it would reflect the mind of the Church. In 1570, Pope St Pius V took the liturgy as celebrated in Rome and

extended it to the Universal Church.<sup>2</sup> This Missal was carried by European missionaries to the Americas, Africa, Asia and Oceania. There had always been organic development of the liturgy, as new feasts were added and ceremonies modified. Venerable Fulton Sheen is quoted to have once said, “Whenever the Church incorporates something into her liturgy it never entirely drops out.”

As Catholics, we believe that the law of prayer is the law of belief. The way we pray influences what we believe and how we live. The liturgy is a sacred action, and we believe that it is principally the action of Christ Himself who offers Himself to the Father. It is an action in which we have the privilege to participate in because of our Baptism. But we also the duty to prepare ourselves to participate in it well and with great devotion.

The liturgy is the public prayer of the Church. It is not a private devotion. As such, no one is permitted to add, subtract, or modify the liturgy because of personal whims or taste.<sup>3</sup> The discipline of the liturgy assures its conformity with the teaching of Christ and His Church. While other forms of prayer are

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<sup>2</sup> read *Quo primum* (1570) at <http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/P5QUOPRI.HTM>

<sup>3</sup> *Sacrosanctum concilium* 22, *General Instruction on the Roman Missal* (2010) 24

praiseworthy, and also a part of Christian life, none of them are like the public prayer of the Church.

That prayer takes many forms. The most important form is the *Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, in which the faithful gather to co-offer with the priest the unbloody representation of the one Sacrifice of Calvary. The *Missal* and the *Lectionary* provide the prayers and readings for the Mass. Next comes the *Liturgy of the Hours* or *Divine Office*. The Divine Office complements the Mass by providing moments of prayer throughout the day, taken from the Psalms, other Scripture readings and readings from the Church Fathers and Theologians. The *Breviary* provides those readings. The Sacraments and Blessings, such as Sacramentals, of the Church, are provided in the *Ritual* or *Book of Blessings*. They fill out those other moments of prayer. There are also other services such as Processions and Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament, which form part of our liturgical tradition.

Vatican II reminded the Church that the liturgy is the “source and summit of Christian life.”<sup>4</sup> Catholics experience Christ through the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church, which was willed by Christ Himself. He gives power to His Church to

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<sup>4</sup> *Lumen Gentium* II, *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1324

create and modify the Rites through which we celebrate our faith. They are a great gift, which is not ours to dominate or manipulate, but to lovingly receive and hand on to others. There should never be a sense of stinginess or minimalism in our worship of God. Instead, we should maximalize our worship of the Triune God.

## A Feast for the Senses

The liturgy is not just a time for learning, although we can learn much through the liturgy. We use all of our senses: hearing, touch, taste, smell, and sight, when we come to adore God. The arts and music have always had a privileged place in divine worship. We give our best to God, and seek to celebrate the Mass in the most beautiful way possible. In doing so, we give something beautiful to God which is the common patrimony, not only of the Church, but of all humanity. Beautiful churches, ceremonies, vestments and appointments all help raise our minds to God. We should spare no expense or effort in adorning our divine worship, always mindful of our duty to take care of those who need our help.

At Prince of Peace, our worship is a Feast for the Senses. When the pagan Vladimir happened upon the Church of the Holy Wisdom in Constantinople for the first time and saw the

beauty of the Christian Divine Liturgy, he exclaimed, "I did not know whether I was in heaven or on earth." The liturgy is not meant to entertain or inspire in the way a theatrical piece, a concert, or a rousing speech can. The liturgy is a communal action of the whole Church, in which everyone has a role and a place, and entering into that common prayer, we are raised beyond ourselves to transcendence. Every detail of the liturgy, then, from the incense used at the High Mass to the prayers said together at Low Mass is important in bringing us closer to God.

## Vatican II and the Renewal of the Liturgy

From time to time, however, we begin to take the liturgy for granted. We become complacent in our Christian walk and forget the newness, the power, and the promise of Catholic worship. The last ecumenical council, Vatican II (1962-5), was concerned that the liturgy again become a vital element in the renewal, not only of the Church, but also society itself. Pope Benedict XVI once wrote:

We might say that ... the liturgy was rather like a fresco [in the early 20th century]. It had been preserved from damage, but it had been almost completely overlaid with whitewash by later

generations. In the Missal from which the priest celebrated, the form of the liturgy that had grown from its earliest beginnings was still present, but, as far as the faithful were concerned, it was largely concealed beneath instructions for and forms of private prayer. The fresco was laid bare by the Liturgical Movement and, in a definitive way, by the Second Vatican Council. For a moment its colors and figures fascinated us. But since then the fresco has been endangered by climatic conditions as well as by various restorations and reconstructions. In fact, it is threatened with destruction, if the necessary steps are not taken to stop these damaging influences. Of course, there must be no question of its being covered with whitewash again, but what is imperative is a new reverence in the way we treat it, a new understanding of its message and its reality, so that rediscovery does not become the first stage of irreparable loss.”<sup>5</sup>

A new movement called the Liturgical Movement, sought to renew the way that Catholics worshipped. There was much enthusiasm in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century for the Liturgical Movement. Some thought that, if we could go back to the

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<sup>5</sup> *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 7-8.



sources of Christian liturgy, the Church and world would be renewed. But Pope Pius XII in his letter *Mediator Dei* wrote, “It is a wise and most laudable thing to return in spirit and affection to the sources of the sacred liturgy. But it is neither wise nor laudable to reduce everything to antiquity by every possible device.”<sup>6</sup>

At Vatican II, the Council Fathers called for the Roman liturgy to be reviewed, and that changes be made to it to make its riches more accessible to the faithful. Some changes had already been made as far back as the early 1950s. In 1965, a Missal was published which incorporated all of the changes desired by Vatican II. But then, four years later, in 1969, a new Missal was published which came to known as the *Novus Ordo Missae*. This Missal was a dramatic departure from the classical Roman Rite, so much so that Joseph Gélineau, a liturgical expert, exclaimed, “The Mass as we know it as been destroyed.” This 1969 *Novus Ordo* liturgy has become the liturgy most frequently celebrated in the Catholic Church. It is often called the Reformed Liturgy, or the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite.

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<sup>6</sup> *Mediator Dei* 62.

## The Reform of the Reform

The publication of the 1969 Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite was welcomed enthusiastically by many of the faithful. It was a time of great experimentation in the life of the Church, and nowhere more so than in the liturgy. All over the world, people began to celebrate the liturgy in a way different than ever before. Some of these experiments, however, were not envisioned by the Church at any point in her history, at Vatican II, or even by the committee which presided over the reform of the liturgy. Meanwhile, some people continued to celebrate the liturgical books that were in force before Vatican II, and some of them found themselves out of full communion with the Church as they held to the pre-Vatican II rites.

In some places, the liturgy became a battle ground. From parish to parish and priest to priest, there was always something new and different. The unity which marked Catholic worship for so many centuries was in danger of being eclipsed by innovation and a thirst for novelty. In some places there came about a loss of the sense of the sacred. Before he was elected as Pope Benedict XVI, Cardinal Ratzinger suggested that maybe it was time for a “reform of the reform.”<sup>7</sup> He wrote much about

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org/2009/08/tornielli-reform-of-reform-proposals.html>

the liturgy, that we needed to return to what the liturgy is all about, and rediscover its true meaning, within the tradition of the Church. His call for a Reform of the Reform has inspired many young people to recover a sense of the sacred, to return to traditional practices that had been forgotten, and to renew the Church's life by fidelity to the liturgical norms of the Church read in continuity with the Church's tradition.

Some people may ask, "But isn't this going backwards? Why a restoration rather than further reform?" Pope Benedict XVI explains that this is not the case at all:

If by 'restoration' is meant a turning back, no restoration of such kind is possible. The Church moves forward toward the consummation of history, she looks ahead to the Lord who is coming ... But if by 'restoration' we understand the search for a new balance after all the exaggerations of indiscriminate opening to the world ... well, then a restoration ... is altogether desirable..." [If restoration means] "a recovery of lost values, within a new totality, then I would like to say that this is precisely the task that imposes itself today in the second phase of the post-

conciliar period.... In reality it [restoration] literally means the same as the word 'reform'.<sup>8</sup>

## The Traditional Latin Mass Today

For many years after Vatican II, Catholics who preferred to worship according to the pre-conciliar liturgical books were treated like second-class citizens and accused of being separatists. Some of them did indeed leave the visible full communion of the Church, and Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI have labored to bring them back into the fold. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI issued a document called *Summorum pontificum*.<sup>9</sup> In this document, he recalled the fact that what had come to be called the Traditional Latin Mass could still be celebrated and was never abrogated. He also urged pastors to celebrate the Mass according to these books, which he termed the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, wherever there was a stable group of the faithful to request them.

Today many young people have to come to love the celebration of the Mass according to the Extraordinary Form.

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<sup>8</sup> Vittorio Messori, *The Ratzinger Report*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985, 38-9

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.ewtn.com/library/papaldoc/b16summorumpontificum.htm>

## The Liturgy at Prince of Peace

At Prince of Peace, we celebrate the liturgy in all its richness and fullness. There are two forms of the Roman Rite, Ordinary and Extraordinary, and we celebrate both. Pope Benedict XVI expressed his hope that the co-existence of the two forms of the one rite side-by-side in the Church would be the opportunity for a “mutual enrichment.”<sup>10</sup> The faithful at Prince of Peace are privileged to be a part of a unique parish community in which the two forms of the Roman Rite mutually enrich each other and the entire Church.

We recognize that there are many places, particularly in the United States, where the Extraordinary Form is still suspect and marginalized, and where the Ordinary Form is still subject to creative interpretation and a celebration outside of the continuity with tradition that is the mind of the Church. Here at Prince of Peace, we have made a conscious choice to follow the liturgy of the Church as celebrated in the Roman basilicas. While there are many ways to celebrate the liturgy, legitimate and illegitimate, here we try to stay as close as possible to the Holy Father and the Roman way of doing things, even though we do also incorporate certain aspects which have become

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<sup>10</sup> [http://www.chantcafe.com/2011/01/mutual-enrichment-and-reform-of-reform\\_10.html](http://www.chantcafe.com/2011/01/mutual-enrichment-and-reform-of-reform_10.html)

customary in American parishes, such as hymn singing at some of the Masses.

But how do we know how we are supposed to celebrate the Mass? Doesn't each parish kind of develop its own style of worship? In the front of the Roman Missal of the Ordinary Form is a document called the *General Introduction to the Roman Missal*.<sup>11</sup> This contains general principles and specific instructions, which help a parish celebrate the Mass in accord with the mind of the Church. Here in our parish we observe the *rubrics*, the little red directions that are printed in the Missal, but always with a view to a certain *ars celebrandi*, an artful way of celebrating the common prayer of the Church which reads those rubrics as much as possible in the light of the Roman tradition.

### *Ad Orientem*

The early Christians celebrated Mass facing East, facing the rising Sun, which was a powerful symbol of the coming back of the LORD at the end of time. This symbolism was so powerful that churches were designed so that priest and people could face together towards the LORD who would come back from

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/roman-missal/general-instruction-of-the-roman-missal/>

the East. In some cases, most notably in Rome, the altar had a large *confessio*, a crypt, in front of it, which meant that the priest had to stand behind the altar instead of in front of it in order to face East. The people would turn their backs to the altar at the Consecration, to face East with the priest. Soon, the idea of praying towards *physical* East was replaced with the idea of praying towards *liturgical* East. So, prayer was directed towards the Cross on the Altar as a focal point of attention. In most places, that meant the priest and people were on the same side of the altar.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, scholars posited that the early Christians celebrated Mass facing the people. This has been since proved to be a misreading of the evidence, but the idea was so powerful that, around Vatican II, it was adopted spontaneously all over the world. The *rubrics* of the Roman Missal, however, still presume that the Mass is celebrated facing *liturgical* East, as it directs the priest to turn towards the people at certain times during the Mass.<sup>12</sup> Such a direction would be meaningless if the Missal assumed that the priest was always facing the people.

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<sup>12</sup> please see <http://wdtprs.com/blog/2011/11/girm-299-and-the-old-uncorrected-translation/> for a discussion of a faulty translation of GIRM 299 in the 2010 English GIRM. The GIRM tells the celebrant to face the people at certain times in the Mass, which are at paragraphs 78, 124, 138, 146, 154, 157, 165, 181, 185, 243.

Pope Benedict XVI has reminded us that the physical orientation of the altar, the celebrant and the people is not as important as the liturgical and spiritual orientation of the altar, celebrant and people.<sup>13</sup> The celebrant is not the focal center of the Mass, and neither are the people. It is Christ. In many places where the Ordinary Form is celebrated towards the people, a situation called *versus populum*, a large Crucifix and candles are placed on the altar to impress upon the faithful this principle. While some people associate Mass in the other direction, called *ad orientem*, with the pre-Vatican II Extraordinary Form, it is the normative position for the Roman Rite. Some people feel uncomfortable with *ad orientem* worship, because they feel that “the priest’s back is to the people” and they “can’t see.” But once they understand that the priest and people stand together towards the LORD, and that the liturgy is the celebration of a Mystery, as well as the fact that there really is not all that much to see on the altar anyway, then they often begin to experience *ad orientem* worship more positively.

Here at Prince of Peace, we celebrate Mass in both directions. Most of our Masses are *ad orientem*. But we also have some Masses, like the Anticipated Mass on Saturday night for

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org/2010/01/clergy-conference-in-rome-address-of.html>



example or on special occasions like the Bishop's visit, *versus populum*.

## The Communion Rail

For many centuries in the West, Holy Communion was received under one species, the form of bread alone, at a communion rail, where they knelt and received directly on their tongue. There have been other methods for receiving Holy Communion in the history of the Church.

While the liturgical reform after Vatican II gave permission for Communion under both species (the Sacred Body in the Host and the Precious Blood from the Chalice),<sup>14</sup> in certain circumstances, most places in the world continue to receive under one species. Here at Prince of Peace, we usually receive under one species, in conformity with the practice of the Roman basilicas and almost universal custom. There may be certain occasions, however, when the Precious Blood will also be offered to the faithful. It is imperative to remember, however, that as Catholics, we believe that we receive Christ *whole and entire* under either species. To argue that we are “missing something” if we only receive under one species is a

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<sup>14</sup> *Sacramentali Communionem* (1970):

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/CDWBOTH.HTM>

heresy condemned by the Church, and a lack of faith in the Eucharistic teaching of the Church.<sup>15</sup>

In paragraph 22 of the USCCB's 2001 *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds* we read "In practice, the need to avoid obscuring the role of the priest and the deacon as the ordinary ministers of Holy Communion by an excessive use of extraordinary ministers might in some circumstances constitute a reason either for limiting the distribution of Holy Communion under both species or for using intinction instead of distributing the Precious Blood from the chalice." Most parishes in the United States do not have enough ordinary ministers of Holy Communion, priests and deacons, to distribute Holy Communion. This particular law for the United States demonstrates that it is better to limit distribution of Holy Communion under both species if it entails multiplying Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, which can easily create confusion between the ordinary role of priests and deacons in administering the sacrament and the extraordinary nature of non-clerics distributing Holy Communion.

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<sup>15</sup> US Conference of Catholic Bishops *Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion under Both Kinds* (2001) 8. cf. Council of Trent, Session xiii (October 11, 1551), *Decretum de ss. Eucharistiae sacramento*, cap. III, *De excellentia ss. Eucharistiae super reliqua sacramenta* (DS 1640; TCT 721).

At Prince of Peace, Holy Communion is ordinarily distributed at a railing near the Altar. There are many reasons for this. The rail denotes a special place within the Church, the *sanctuary*, where much of the sacred rites takes place. It is not a barrier, but a threshold. Coming to that threshold reminds us of the tension implicit in the Eucharist: we are already in some sense participating in the Heavenly Banquet, which is yet to be realized in its fullness.

The *General Introduction to the Roman Missal* does not prescribe one form of posture for the reception of Holy Communion. In the United States, the Conference of Catholic Bishops have judged that the norm is standing.<sup>16</sup> Yet, the document *Redemptionis sacramentum* reminds us that no one can be denied Holy Communion for choosing to kneel.<sup>17</sup>

In 1977, the United States received a special permission called an *indult*, according to which the faithful could choose to receive Holy Communion in the hand instead of directly on the tongue.<sup>18</sup> The universal norm for the Church as well as a custom hallowed for many centuries is to receive the Sacred Host directly in the mouth. In this way, we see how the person

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<sup>16</sup> *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (2011) 160

<sup>17</sup> *Redemptionis sacramentum* (2009) 91

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/communion\\_in\\_hand.htm](http://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/communion_in_hand.htm)

is fed directly by the LORD to a person in humility and devotion, like a mother bird feeds her chicks. There is not the tendency to see oneself as a proud adult who can feed himself, which is always a danger in the spiritual life!

In 2009, the Vatican published a book by Bishop Athanasius Schneider, entitled, *Dominus est! It is the LORD!* In this book, he argues for a return to the practice of kneeling and receiving Communion on the tongue. Since then, Pope Benedict XVI at his Papal Masses distributes under one species to the faithful, who kneel and receive directly on the tongue.<sup>19</sup>

Here at Prince of Peace, we encourage the faithful to receive Holy Communion in this manner, as the Holy Father himself distributes. But we also recognize that the faithful are allowed by current liturgical law to receive standing as well as kneeling, in the hand as well as on the tongue. During Ordinary Form celebrations here in the parish, you are welcome to exercise whichever option you prefer. During Extraordinary Form celebrations, however, Communion can only be distributed on the tongue, and ordinarily, to those who kneel. Of course, if someone is physically impaired and cannot kneel, Holy Communion will not be denied.

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<sup>19</sup>[http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pope\\_prefers\\_communion\\_on\\_the\\_tongue\\_message\\_marini\\_says/](http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pope_prefers_communion_on_the_tongue_message_marini_says/)

## Sacred Music: Sung Liturgy

St Augustine once said, “*He who sings prays twice.*” In the Christian East today, in many other religions, and in the West for most of Christian history, religious rites were moments of song. There are sung dialogues between priest and people, parts of the Mass that the people sing, and prayers that the priest sings. In the late Middle Ages, the multiplication of Masses meant that sung liturgy came to be accompanied by a form of celebration called Low Mass, where the priest read everything from the altar, and where there was no singing at all. The development of Low Mass led to a greater disconnect between what the priest was doing at the Altar and what the faithful were doing. In some places, Low Mass became the norm.

Yet the Roman Rite presumes that the normative form of the liturgy is an entirely sung liturgy celebrated by the Bishop. Every other form is a reduction of that form. The Ordinary Form gives the celebrant more flexibility in choosing what parts to sing. Here at Prince of Peace, our daily Masses and our early Sunday Mass are Low Masses with no music, a nod to the fact that Low Mass has become part of our tradition. But we privilege the celebration of Sung Masses in both the Ordinary and Extraordinary Form on most Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. And our central liturgical action of the week is the

Solemn Mass on Sunday morning, which is an entirely sung liturgy.

It is easy, however, to forget that the Mass is not a spectator sport. Each member of the faithful has a role, and that role is first of all interior, as a co-offerer of the Sacrifice with the priest. There is an interior participation, which is the key to any fruitful spiritual life. But we also let that flow into *active, conscious, external participation* in the sacred rites. Everyone sings their proper responses and joins in the said and sung parts of the Mass.

### Sacred Music: Chant and Polyphony

The Church has always prized the efforts of Catholic musicians to adorn her worship. But the Church has produced her own music for the Mass, which is contained in the *Graduale Romanum*. This music is often referred to as *Gregorian Chant*. In chant, one line of melody is sung, either by a cantor, a small schola, or the people. It is the music proper to the Church, even if she also admits other music as well. It is a beautiful music, oriented towards prayer and devotion. At Vatican II, the Council Fathers wrote, “The Church acknowledges

Gregorian chant to be especially suited to the Roman liturgy . . . it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.”<sup>20</sup>

The Mass includes two categories of prayers which are sung in chant: the *Ordinary*, which includes those parts of the Mass that do not change, like the responses and the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus and Agnus Dei; and the *Proper*, which includes the prayers the priest sings as well as the Introit, Gradual, Alleluia or Tract, Offertory and Communion Antiphons. Often the Ordinary is sung according to a chant melody, and often the Propers are as well.

The faithful are encouraged to join in the singing especially of the Ordinary. Again Vatican II: “Steps should be taken so that the faithful may also be able to say or sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them.”<sup>21</sup> Those parts of the patrimony of Gregorian chant in the Mass are part of our Catholic tradition. We encourage our people to learn the Church’s own music, and participate in it. You can even go on our website to [http://www.princeofpeacetaylors.net/?page\\_id=195](http://www.princeofpeacetaylors.net/?page_id=195) and learn to sing the Ordinary of the Mass in Latin chant that we use at the parish.

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<sup>20</sup> *Sacrosanctum concilium* 116.

<sup>21</sup> *Sacrosanctum concilium* 54.

We also recognize that the Church has always been a great patron of music. Part-singing, particularly by choirs, has always been a part of our tradition, and it is here at Prince of Peace as well. We have several choirs for adults and young people, and they study and sing at Mass polyphonic anthems and motets, particularly at Offertory and Communion at Sung Masses. We encourage you to join one of our choirs and to make a special contribution to the musical expenses of the parish, so that we can continue to offer high caliber sacred music at Mass.

### **Sacred Music: Propers and Hymns**

The development of Low Mass meant that the Propers of the Mass, mentioned above, were often only recited in a soft voice by the priest at the Altar and rarely heard by the people. But those texts set the tone for a particular celebration of the Sacrifice of Redemption. Most of the Propers are taken directly from Scripture, but some are from ancient texts the Church composed specifically for the liturgy of the day. In some places, people began to sing hymns at the same time as the priest was reading the Propers from the Altar. This is a sad development, because it means that for most people, those beautiful texts, from Scripture and ancient texts, were replaced



by texts written by men and women far removed from the world in which the Liturgy has its source.

Hymns properly belong to the Divine Office, and not to Mass. In the United States, even before Vatican II, many places had English hymns at Mass. Some of these hymns are beautiful texts with beautiful music. They were written with a view to encouraging congregational singing and teaching the truths of the faith. It is also true, however, that some hymns are banal, trite, of questionable musical value and hard to sing. After Vatican II, the solemn sung liturgy was almost universally replaced by a Low Mass recited by a priest in the language of the people over which were imposed hymn texts and tunes, many of which are close to secular 1960s and 1970s pop music and which has been rightly criticized as sacropop.

At Prince of Peace, the Choir sings the Propers at the Extraordinary Form and at Solemn Masses in the Ordinary Form. This is so that the faithful can be exposed to these texts. Even though we privilege the singing of the actual propers, we recognize that many people have become accustomed to hymns at Mass. Our Sung Masses often feature English or Latin hymns, taken from the most beautiful pieces in the repertoire of Catholic and Protestant church hymnody. We do, however, avoid all sacropop. Our music sheets at Sung Masses include

everything you need to pray the Propers of the day as well as to sing the Ordinary of the Mass and the hymns appointed for Entrance, Offertory and Post-Communion. We encourage you to sing!

## Latin

The liturgy was originally celebrated in Greek. In the West, however, the liturgy began to be celebrated in Latin. Some parts, like the Kyrie, remained in Greek, and others, like the Alleluia and Amen, were still sung in Hebrew. Although Latin was the language of the Roman Empire, the language used in the liturgy had a very different character than street language or even that of rhetoric, politics or scholarship. As missionaries brought Christianity and the Mass outside of the confines of the Roman Empire, they still brought the Latin language with them. Latin became a powerful unifying force in the Church and culture. Although there is nothing intrinsically holy about Latin, it came to be considered sacred because of its association with the liturgy, increasingly being set apart from the language of the people for the use of worship.

Many religions employ a sacred language. Muslims read the Qu'ran only in Arabic. Jews perform their liturgy in Hebrew, and are taught from childhood to speak it as a principal

language. Hindus study their sacred texts in Sanskrit or Pali, and so on. So it is not odd that Latin is a significant part of the Roman Catholic experience. Around the time of the Protestant Reform, a proposal was made to translate the Mass into the language of the people, to facilitate the understanding of people who did not know Latin. Certain places like Hungary, China and the Iroquois Nation had been given permission to do this. The Church decided that it might be counterproductive to do so at the time.

But at Vatican II, the question came up again. The Council Fathers reiterated that “the Latin language is to be preserved.” But, “since the use of the mother tongue, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or other parts of the liturgy, frequently may be of great advantage to the people, the limits of its employment may be extended. This will apply in the first place to the readings and directives, and to some of the prayers and chants . . . In Masses which are celebrated with the people, a suitable place may be allotted to their mother tongue . . . Nevertheless steps should be taken so that the faithful may also be able to say or to sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them.”<sup>22</sup>

Therefore, both Latin and English belong in the liturgy. We

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<sup>22</sup> *Sacrosanctum concilium* 36, 54.

encourage our people to learn the parts of the Mass in English as well as in their Catholic language, Latin. The Extraordinary Form of the Mass is celebrated in Latin. The Ordinary Form is usually celebrated in English, although we also have some Latin music and prayers from time to time. That way we keep connected with a powerful part of our Catholic heritage.

## Service at the Altar

Each person has a specific role in the sacred liturgy. Those roles are determined by the nature of the liturgy itself, and often have their own powerful symbolism. In the ancient Church, those who helped around the altar were always clerics, in Minor or Major Orders. As the Church expanded, there were not always enough clerics to fulfill these roles. Boys and young men were recruited to fulfill some of these roles in an extraordinary fashion. It was also a way of introducing those young men to the ministry of the Church in Holy Orders. Many of them went on to become priests because of that experience. If a boy was not available as an altar server, a female could do the responses from a distance.

The liturgy has its own symbolic language which does not admit of politically correct manipulation. The exclusion of females

from service at the altar and Holy Orders has nothing to do with sexism, but of how that complex liturgical symbolic language is interpreted in the Church. Since Vatican II, certain liturgical roles have been opened to the laity, who perform them only in an extraordinary way, such as Readers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. As they are open to the laity, they are also open to women. In 1980, Pope John Paul II in *Inaestimabile donum* reiterated the Church's traditional discipline excluding females from the role known as altar server.<sup>23</sup> In 1994, the Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legal Texts noted that the 1983 Code of Canon Law did not carry the prohibition of female altar servers that the previous 1917 Code held.<sup>24</sup> Both John Paul II and Benedict XVI, however, have reiterated that groups of altar boys should be encouraged, especially as breeding grounds for potential vocations to the priesthood, in which John Paul II in *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* called to mind the teaching of the Church that the ministerial priesthood is open to males alone.<sup>25</sup>

Because of the ancient discipline of the Church, the insistence of the Popes that groups of altar boys be fostered, and the experience of serving in discerning priesthood, at Prince of

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<sup>23</sup> *Inaestimabile donum* (1980) 18

<sup>24</sup> <http://catholicexchange.com/canon-law-and-altar-girls/>

<sup>25</sup> *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* (1994)

Peace we have maintained male-only service at the altar for some time.<sup>26</sup> We do, however, seek to involve girls and young women in the liturgy in other ways, in the choir and in planning and execution of special events and Processions.

## The Liturgy of the Hours

The Liturgy of the Hours is celebrated privately in its entirety by the clergy of Prince of Peace every day, in the name of the Church. Many of our parishioners have learned to love the Divine Office, and pray it privately.<sup>27</sup> Of course, it is really public prayer, and we do celebrate certain Offices publicly. Night Prayer during the week in English is a common occurrence, as is Sunday Vespers in Latin. We provide opportunities to learn how to say the Office, as well as to pray the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms in English and Latin.

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<sup>26</sup> “It will always be very appropriate to follow the noble tradition of having boys serve at the altar. As is well known, this has led to a reassuring development of priestly vocations. Thus the obligation to support such groups of altar boys will always continue.” Circular Letter from the Congregation for Divine Worship 15 March 1994. Cf. *Notitiae* (421-422) 37 (2001/8-9) pp. 397-399.

<sup>27</sup> check out [www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com) and search for the IBreviary and Brevmeum apps for smartphones at [www.itunes.apple.com](http://www.itunes.apple.com)

## **Devotional Life**

We have a rich devotional life here at Prince of Peace. But that devotional life is oriented towards the public prayer of the Liturgy. We regularly pray together the Holy Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Divine Mercy Chaplet, the Miraculous Medal Novena, the Devotion to Saint Monica and a Holy Hour. Litanies, Processions, Blessing and the Celebration of Sacramentals are a regular happening at the parish. We also encourage private prayer and devotion as well.

As a parish, we also have a particular devotion to Our Lady under the title Queen of Peace. Her Feast is celebrated with great solemnity on 22 August. We also celebrate all Marian Feasts with great solemnity.

## **Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament**

Our liturgical celebration of the Eucharist extends into Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament. Here at Prince of Peace, we are blessed to have a Chapel of Perpetual Adoration. Parishioners and non-parishioners enroll in the Guild of St Thomas Aquinas and take an hour each week of private prayer in front of the Blessed Sacrament. The celebration of the

Liturgy of the Hours and Devotions often takes place there. You are most welcome to join us in the Guild!

### Further Study

We hope that this has been a good introduction to the unique liturgical and spiritual life of Prince of Peace. We often have continuing religious education classes about the liturgy, so please join us to learn more. If you have specific questions about anything you have read here or experienced in our parish, please contact one of the parish priests to talk about it. We aspire to be a warm and welcoming parish where the Sacred Liturgy is celebrated with reverence and devotion.



Here are some good things to read to learn more.

Vatican II, *Sacrosanctum concilium*

*Musicam sacram*

Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*

Benedict XVI, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*

Jonathan Robinson, *The Mass and Modernity*

Alcuin Reid, *The Organic Development of the Liturgy*

Michael Uwe Lang, *Turning Towards the Lord*

Michael Uwe Lang, *The Voice of the Church at Prayer*

Athanasius Schneider, *Dominus est! It is the Lord!*

Martin Mosebach, *The Heresy of Formlessness*

Romano Guardini, *Preparing for Mass*

Nicola Bux, *Benedict XVI and the Liturgical Reform*

Marc Aillet, *The Old Mass and the New*

Denis Crouan, *The Liturgy After Vatican II*

William Mahrt, *The Musical Shape of the Liturgy*

And some websites:

[www.newliturgicalmovement.org](http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org)

[www.chantcafe.com](http://www.chantcafe.com)

[www.wdtprs.com](http://www.wdtprs.com)