

Order of Mass: Liturgy Notes for Schools Introductory Rites



Introduction

The purpose of these notes is to:

- suggest strategies and ways of implementing and introducing the new translation
- make links between the liturgical celebration and the catechesis
- indicate good practice
- review the adaptations permitted for Masses with Children

Key changes in the text

- Greeting — And with your spirit
- Penitential Act
 - Only 1 Introduction given
 - 1. I confess — new translation
 - 2. New translation
 - 3. further invocations in an Appendix
- [Blessing and Sprinkling with Water — text in an Appendix]
- Gloria — new translation
- [Collect — 1 text (no alternatives) new translation will be used from Advent]

Introductory Period

From September until Advent the following texts will be used:

From the current Missal

- Entrance Antiphon
- Opening Prayer (Collect)

From the new translation

- Sign of the Cross
- Greeting
- Penitential Act
- Gloria

Directory for Masses with Children

The status and importance of this document is not changed by the publication of the new edition of the Roman Missal, indeed it still referenced in the *General Instruction*.

It is worth recalling that the various adaptations proposed in the Directory are not ends in themselves but serve to engage children in the celebration and ultimately to prepare them for full, conscious and active participation in the Sunday Eucharist.

Key points for catechesis

Introductory Rites

Purpose of Introductory Rites

The rites that precede the Liturgy of the Word, namely, the Entrance, the Greeting, the Penitential Act, the Kyrie, the Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest) and Collect, have the character of a beginning, an introduction, and a preparation.

Their purpose is to ensure that the faithful, who come together as one, establish communion and dispose themselves properly to listen to the Word of God and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily. [GIRM 46]

In the Introductory Rites, Christ joins the Church to himself and gathers her children to join their voices to his perfect hymn of praise. Thus, the liturgical assembly, “where two or three come together in Christ’s name, and where he is found in their midst (cf. Mt 18:20), is the ‘first image that the Church gives of herself’”. Indeed the assembly itself is also the first instance of Christ’s presence in the liturgy [CTM 139]

All the elements of the Introductory Rites assist to:

- form people into communion.
- prepare people to participate in the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Introductory Rites & Directory for Masses with Children

- The Directory reaffirms the purpose of the Introductory Rites: to form a community and prepare for the Liturgy of the Word and of the Eucharist
- To create this the Introductory Rites should not be overloaded.
- Sometimes it is possible to omit an element from Introductory Rites or even to expand one — this principally refers to the Entrance Song, Penitential Act and the Gloria.
- Each of the elements should be included from time to time and care should be taken that none be entirely neglected.
- The Collect (Opening Prayer) given for the day may be replaced by another suitable prayer from the Missal. The Directory does permit that the prayer may be adapted with care. [DCM 51]
- There should always be the Sign of the Cross, Greeting and Collect.
- Given that many schools will not be celebrating Mass on weekly basis with the same group of children the planning of how the various texts are introduced may need to be done over a longer period than the initial 3 months of September – Advent, even over the school year.
- To begin with it may be best to begin with:
 - Entrance Song
 - Sign of the Cross
 - Greeting
 - Penitential Act 3
 - Collect
- This allows formation to concentrate on the Greeting.
- The following notes should be referred to in particular those concerning the Greeting and Penitential Act 3.

Introducing changes

Greeting — And with your spirit

By means of the Greeting the priest signifies the presence of the Lord to the assembled community. By this greeting and the people's response, the mystery of the Church gathered together is made manifest. [GIRM 50]

As the first dialogue between priest and people, the greeting and response should be both warm and

reverent. Casual and personalised greetings that emphasise a merely human exchange and obscure the mystery of Christ's presence and action are inappropriate. [CTM 142]

- Emphasize dialogue as happening at 5 key points in Mass (Greeting, Gospel, Eucharistic Prayer, Peace, Dismissal) — they help to articulate structure of the Mass
- Though the presider's text (The Lord be with you) may not have changed how it is prayed will assist people respond. The attentiveness of the presider will help other people.
- There is a choice of 3 greetings
- Consider singing the dialogue; it can help people respond.

After the greeting of the people, the Priest, or the Deacon, or a lay minister may very briefly introduce the faithful to the Mass of the day. [GIRM 50]

Penitential Act

The Priest calls upon the whole community to take part in the Penitential Act, which, after a brief pause for silence, it does by means of a formula of general confession. The rite concludes with the Priest's absolution, which, however, lacks the efficacy of the Sacrament of Penance. [GIRM 51]

The Roman Missal provides several forms of the Penitential Act. The choice between them should be made on the basis of the liturgical season, the feast, the particular occasion, for example, a particular ritual Mass, or on the basis of the circumstances of the assembly that gathers for the celebration. Each of the forms of the Penitential Act begins with an invitation by the priest.

In the Penitential Act the assembly, gathered in God's presence, recognises its sinfulness and confesses the mystery of Christ's love. This may take one of three forms, each of which conclude with a prayer of absolution. [CTM 144–5]

Options

- There is only one introduction in the revised translation
- There are 3 forms of Penitential Act:
 1. I confess
 2. Have mercy on us, O Lord
 3. You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:

Introducing

- *Celebrating the Mass* [145] suggests that the different forms of the Penitential Act could be used in different liturgical seasons: *I confess* in the Season of Lent,

Have mercy on us, O Lord on the Sundays and weekdays of Ordinary Time, *You were sent to heal the contrite of heart* in the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Easter and Ordinary Time.

- Penitential Act 3 is the least changed form.
- Plan how you will introduce each of the three forms.
- Consider consistent use of one form, at least over a series of Masses.

Penitential Act 1

I confess... The first form, once a private prayer of preparation, is a general confession that invokes the support of the communion of saints and, specifically, of the community gathered for the Eucharist. [CTM 145]

- It may be the case that people will notice rubrics and consider them as new when they have always been there. This will partly happen from the need to read texts which have previously been known by heart. One example may be the invitation to strike breasts in the *I confess*.
- The breast is struck only once.
- The absolution follows — the text is unchanged.

Penitential Act 2

The second form comprises verses of the penitential psalms. [CTM 145]

Penitential Act 3

The third form, although a Penitential Act, takes the form of a litany of praise through which the assembly comes to know afresh its need for the love and mercy of God. In this litany the assembly addresses praise to Christ our Redeemer for his saving acts. [CTM 145]

- This is the least changed form.
- Further model sentences will be found in Appendix VI. These sentences might be used seasonally.
- The sentences are addressed to Christ, they are not pleas for forgiveness (for example, *Lord Jesus, we are sorry...* is not appropriate here). The texts given in the Missal should be taken as models.
- The form may be sung — the sentences can be sung by minister other than the priest.

Kyrie

- It is used where *Lord, have mercy/Kyrie* has not been part of the Penitential Act, after forms 1 & 2

- It can be sung and there is a simple setting in the Missal.
- It can be used in English or Greek

Gloria

The Gloria in excelsis (Glory to God in the highest) is a most ancient and venerable hymn by which the Church, gathered in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb. The text of this hymn may not be replaced by any other. It is intoned by the Priest or, if appropriate, by a cantor or by the choir; but it is sung either by everyone together, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone. If not sung, it is to be recited either by everybody together or by two choirs responding one to the other.

It is sung or said on Sundays outside Advent and Lent, and also on Solemnities and Feasts, and at particular celebrations of a more solemn character. [GIRM 53]

- The new translation follows the Latin more closely and so offers a fuller text.
- The *Gloria* should normally be sung.
- There is a simple setting found in the *Roman Missal*
- The Department for Christian Life and Worship are aware that there may need to be a time of transition as parishes and communities learn new settings but continue to use current settings due to musical resources. However where this is the case they should set themselves a target date by which new settings will be used.

Good Practice

The introduction of the new translation is an opportunity to review current liturgical practice.

Silence

Liturgical silence is not merely an absence of words, a pause, or an interlude. It is a stillness, a quieting of spirits, a making of time and leisure to hear, assimilate, and respond. Any haste that hinders reflectiveness should be avoided. The dialogue between God and the community of faith taking place through the Holy Spirit requires intervals of silence, suited to the assembly, so that all can take to heart the word of God and respond to it in prayer.

Liturgical silence is a corporate activity shared in by all present, by which all support and sustain each other in profound prayerful solidarity. It demands a stillness and prayerful concentration, which the priest celebrant and all ministers can help to bring about.

Structurally, liturgical silence is indispensable to the

rhythm of a balanced celebration. Without periods of prayerful and reflective silence the celebration can become perfunctory in its haste or burdensome in its unrelieved sound and song. [CTM 92]

- Silence in the liturgy needs careful preparation and as noted above the involvement of liturgical ministers. People may need to be invited into silence and at the beginning be given suggestions of how they might use it.
- Silence can be introduced at various points in the Mass and can have a number of different purposes. To begin with it should complement the key points: after the Gospel and following Communion.
- In the Introductory Rites there are the following opportunities:

Before Mass

Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed... so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner. [GIRM 45]

- It may be appropriate in some communities to invite people to spend some moments in silence directly before the beginning of Mass. In schools this may after all have gathered as a time of preparation.

Penitential Act

- Following the Introduction there is a pause for silent recollection:

In the Penitential Act, all pause to remember their sinfulness and the loving-kindness of God in Christ. [CTM 92]

Collect

- There should be a distinct pause for silence following the invitation 'Let us pray.'

At the Collect, all put themselves and their deepest needs and desires before God. [cf. CTM 92]

Entrance Procession

The assembly's worship begins with the opening song and procession, which help to create a sense of identity, a willingness to celebrate, and an awareness of the mystery being unfolded.

The opening song should be such that everyone is able in some degree to join in singing it. The purpose of singing at this time is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have assembled, introduce their

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thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical season or festivity, and accompany the procession of the priest and ministers. The text and the music should be suited to the mystery being celebrated, the part of the Mass, the liturgical season or the day.



A procession of ministers through and from the assembly expresses visibly the relationship of the priest celebrant and the other ministers to the congregation.

The altar is an abiding symbol of Christ and the centre of the eucharistic action.

The priest and deacon, together with concelebrants and other ministers in the procession, bow to the altar on arrival as a sign of reverence. If there is a tabernacle containing the Most Blessed Sacrament on the sanctuary, they genuflect. Ministers who are carrying a liturgical object, (for example, a cross, book, or candle), do not genuflect but bow their heads. Afterward, the priest and deacon, and any concelebrants, make an additional reverence to the altar with a kiss.

After the procession and the reverencing of the altar, the priest and deacon proceed to the chair. It is from the chair that the priest greets the people and continues to preside over the Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word. [cf. CTM 140-1]

- If there are objects or symbols to be presented that represent the community or an aspect of its life it is more appropriate to include them as part of the Entrance Procession than the later Procession with Gifts. [cf. CTM 180]

Blessing & Sprinkling of Water

- The Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Water may still replace the Penitential Act. It is particularly encouraged in Easter Time.
- The text will be found in Appendix II in the Missal

The blessing and sprinkling of water serves as a memorial of Easter and Baptism. When it is used it replaces the Penitential Act. God is thanked for intervening to save us through the medium of water and is asked to continue to give forgiveness and life. [CTM 147]

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