

A WALK THROUGH THE MASS

Entrance Chant

*Usually from the Book of Psalms or Scripture
Consists of an Antiphon and a Psalm
Abbreviated from more ancient form
Varies according to the season of the year of the event
First mentioned in 6th or 7th century
Attributed to Pope Celestine I (+432)
From Latin "Introitus" ~to enter in
From an ancient practice of singing the Psalms at liturgies
Often replaced with a hymn or song*

Sign of the Cross

*Apostolic origins - possibly even from Jesus
Text is from Scripture*

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit" Matt 28:19

Action mentioned in 2nd and 4th centuries

"In all our travels and movements in all our coming in and going out, in putting of our shoes, at the bath, at the table, in lighting our candles, in lying down, in sitting down, whatever employment occupies us, we mark our foreheads with the sign of the cross" – Tertullian (2nd c.)

"Let us then not be ashamed to confess the Crucified. Be the cross our seal, made with boldness by our fingers on our brow and in every thing; over the bread we eat and the cups we drink, in our comings and in goings; before our sleep, when we lie down and when we awake; when we are traveling, and when we are at rest" – St. Cyril of Jerusalem (4th c.)

Greeting

*First of four dialogs in the Mass
Salutation between the priest and the people
Used in the Old and New Testament to address the People of God
In the Old Testament, this greeting is often used by Angels to humans
St. Paul uses similar formulae in the greetings in his Letters
Probably a "Hebraism" (i.e. a literal translation of a Jewish greeting)*

Introduction

Brief remarks introducing the Mass of the day.

Penitential Rite

*General confession of sin with a humble and contrite heart
The Didache or Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (late 1st c. / early 2nd c.) states:
"On the day of the Lord assemble together, break bread and celebrate the Eucharist;
but first confess your sins, that your offering may be holy"
Twofold: (1) confession of guilt, (2) prayer for intercession for the individual
"I confess ..." dates from the 10th - 13th centuries from French and Irish liturgies
List of saints varied and was often extensive until reform of the Missal*

Lord Have Mercy

*If used alone in the Penitential Rite, prefixed with acclamations to Christ
Threefold litany form of a simple and humble cry to God for help
Scriptural - often found in the Psalms
Historically was repeated 9 times in Roman liturgy, 12 times in Ambrosian Liturgy
Currently repeated 6 times, alternating between minister and congregation
Historically was in Greek (Kyrie eleison)
Brought in from Eastern liturgies by Pope Gelasius I (+496)
Addition of "Christe eleison" by Pope Gregory I (+604)*

May Almighty God Have Mercy on Us

Intercessory prayer for God's forgiveness on all present

Glory to God

*Hymn of the Angels or Greater Doxology (doxo=glory+logy=words)
Originally used at Christmas by order of Pope Telesphorus (+138)
Current text ascribed to St. Hilary of Poitiers (+366)
Extended to all Sundays and Feasts of Martyrs by Pope Symmachus (+514)
By 11th century was used on all Sundays and Feast days.
Currently used on Sundays outside of Advent and Lent, Solemnities, and Feasts
New Missal calls for its use at Weddings (!)
Sublime triumphal chant of redemption
Addresses the three Persons of the Trinity in three sections corresponding to the three
Divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
A joyous response to the pleading of the "Lord have mercy"*

Collect

*Admonition to all present to unite in prayer "Let us pray"
Public prayer by the priest on behalf of everyone
Principal liturgical prayer of the day (used in other liturgical settings i.e. Lauds, Vespers)
A prayer which, though brief embodies the petitions of the entire assembly
Particular to the Roman liturgy (i.e. not found in other liturgies)
First books of "Collects" found in 5th - 6th century texts
Characteristically are petition-prayers expressing the idea of the feast
Structure: Address to God, motive/reason, petition, invocation of Christ
Nearly always brief in style and content*

Reading (OT/NT)

*Daily and Feast day Masses have a two year cycle (and only this first reading)
On Weekdays and Feasts can be from the Old or New Testament
Sunday Masses and Solemnities have a three year cycle (and a second reading)
On Sundays and Solemnities can be from Old Testament, Acts, or Revelation
Preceded by "A reading from ..." and ends with "The Word of the Lord/Thanks be to God"*

Responsorial Psalm

*Antiphon is repeated between verses or strophes of a psalm
Apostolic Constitutions (~57) called for the chanting of Psalms after OT reading
Entire Psalms were sung until the 5th century
Shortened Psalm was called "Gradual" (gradus = steps)*

Reading (NT)

Sunday Masses and Solemnities have a second reading

Always from the New Testament Letters

Preceded by "A reading from ..." and ends with "The Word of the Lord/Thanks be to God"

Sequence

Required on Easter, Pentecost; optional on Corpus Christi, Our Lady of Sorrows

Introduced in the early Middle Ages to as melodies to a sustained final "-ia" of the Alleluia

Originally written as prose, became poetry, and then hymns during the 12th century

Moved before the Alleluia in the Third Edition Roman Missal

Gospel Acclamation

Outside of Lent, always "Alleluia"

Alleluia = Hebrew for "Let Us Praise the Lord" (literally: praise + us + the Lord)

During Lent a short antiphon of praise to Jesus Christ the Word of God

Gospel Verse

Enclosed by the Gospel Acclamation

Unique to each day's Mass

Gospel Dialog

Second of four dialogs in the Mass

Gospel Reading

Always from one of the four Gospels

Proclaimed by someone in Holy Orders

Jesus Christ still speaks through the words of His Gospel

Preceded by "A reading from the Holy Gospel ..." and ends with "The Gospel of the Lord"

Sign of cross made by minister on the book, and then by all present on forehead, lips, and over the heart ("May the Lord be in my mind, on my lips, and in my heart")

Homily

Should be proclaimed by someone in Holy Orders

Should have a message in union with the Scriptures, the day, or the season

Can be Catechetical in nature at times

Creed

Can be either the Niceno-Constantopolitan Creed or the Apostle's Creed

Niceno-Constantopolitan Creed is from two councils

Council of Nicea (325) and Council of Constantinople (381)

Roman liturgy includes "God from God" and "and the Son" not in original

Apostle's Creed traditionally has 12 points ascribed to the Apostles

First referenced in the year 390 (!)

Recited on all Sundays and Solemnities

Universal Prayer

A litany of invocations to pray for the a) for the needs of the Church; b) for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world; c) for those burdened by any kind of difficulty;

d) for the local community.

Offertory Chant

*Usually from the Book of Psalms or Scripture
Consists of an Antiphon and a Psalm
Varies according to the season of the year of the event
Accompanies the Offertory procession (and collection!)
Procession died out ~12th century, but was restored after Vatican II
Meaning of the procession is our self-surrender and self-gift to God
From Latin "Offertorium" ~an offering
From an ancient practice of singing the Psalms at liturgies
Often replaced with a hymn, song, motet, or instrumental music*

Offertory Prayers

*Current prayers are modeled on Jewish table prayers
Simplification from previous complex formulae
Bread offered first, followed by wine (co-mingled with a little water)
Unleavened bread has been used in the West since the 9th century
Co-mingling of water and wine has two meanings:
(i) our nature (water) being immersed in God's nature (wine)
(ii) the water and blood that flowed from Christ's side on the Cross
Priest prays a silent prayer of self-offering at the end of all the prayers
Prayers may be said aloud with a response; or silently by priest*

Washing of the Hands

*From ancient practice of receiving offerings from people
In current liturgy follows the use of incense
Has a practical purpose (cleaning hands)
Symbolizes interior purification
Prayer said silently
Verse from Psalm 51*

Pray Brethren

*Calls all present to unite in common prayer
Probably was originally a simple call to prayer ("Let us pray")
Addresses the assembly as "brethren" ("brothers and sisters")
By Baptism we are children of God and of the Church, the family of God
Priest and people are bound together at the altar
All present unite in presenting their lives as a sacrificial offering to God
Sacrifice belongs to all those present ("my sacrifice and yours")
Calls all those present to participate in the coming sacrifice*

Prayer Over the Offering

*Second of three "Collects"
May be particular to the day or the season
Single petition
Presume offerings (material and spiritual) by the whole assembly
Look forward to the coming sacrifice
Was said silently from the 8th century, ended with "for ever and ever" said aloud*

Preface Dialog

Third of four dialogs in the Mass

Continues with "Lift up your hearts" and "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God"

Dates back to the 3rd century

Found in all ancient Christian liturgies

Preface

The first part echoes the peoples' response: "It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks"

The second part is unique to the particular preface

The third part calls us to unite heaven and earth in the song of the angels

There are prefaces for Sundays, weekdays, liturgical seasons, the Trinity, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Mary, the Angels, John the Baptist, saints of all kinds, various feasts, rituals, commemorations. In all the current Missal has 100 prefaces.

The oldest Missal had 267 prefaces, reduced to 54 in the 5th c., and 10 in the 7th c.

Holy, Holy, Holy

Sublime hymn of praise to the Holy Trinity (the "thrice holy")

Scriptural references to Isaiah 6:3, and Isaiah 52:7

Two parts: (1) praise of the Trinity by the angels, (2) praise of Christ our Savior

Hosanna is a Hebrew term - a supplication for help and success

Eucharistic Prayer

Traces its roots to the ancient Anaphora prayers (Anaphora = a carrying back)

Like Passover, the Eucharistic Liturgy is a mystical return to the Upper Room and Calvary

Prayers for leaders, the living, the dead, those present

Prayer for the Holy Spirit to consecrate the bread and wine

Prayer for the Holy Spirit to consecrate those gathered and all people

Central to this prayer are the "Words of Institution" from Jesus at the Last Supper

Scriptural: in the Synoptic Gospels and the Letters of St. Paul

Memorial Acclamation

The priest acclaims: "The Mystery of Faith"

The people respond acknowledging Christ's sacrifice on the Cross

Doxology

Doxology (doxo=glory+logy=words)

Once again praise the Most Holy Trinity (started with the Holy, Holy, Holy)

"Through ... with ... in" reveals our intimate relationship with Jesus Christ

"Through him" Jesus is our mediator with God the Father

"With him" the Church as Christ's mystical body join him in praise of God

"In him" through Baptism we are in Christ and able to praise the Father

Has its roots in the most ancient liturgies

Parallels Jesus' "It is completed" on the Cross

Great Amen

The people acclaim "Amen" (Hebrew "So be it, I believe")

Indicates the participation of all in what has just been done on the altar

Recounted by St. Justin Martyr (+150) in his Apologia (explanations) of the Faith

Our Father

Part of the Mass since Apostolic times

Scriptural found in Matthew 6:9ff, and Luke 11:1ff

Moved to its present position by Pope St. Gregory the Great (+604)

Before then was at the Fraction Rite

Tertullian (2nd c.) says this prayer is brief in words, full of thoughts. He called it "the abbreviated Gospel"

Contains seven petitions directed toward:

A. God's power and majesty

i. His Name

ii. His Kingdom

iii. His Will

B. Our Salvation

iv. Our daily bread (Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament)

C. Our human weaknesses

v. Our Sins

vi. Our Temptations

vii. Our Evil

Embolism

Embolismus = insertion, addition, appendix

This prayer is a plea for deliverance from all evil and a request for peace and mercy

Sometimes called the "Liberate nos" from the Latin for "Deliver us"

Prayer used since the earliest Christian times

Response, "For the kingdom ..." comes from Eastern liturgies; added after Vatican II

Sign of Peace

First part is a prayer for peace

St. Augustine (+430) says: "For so great is the gift of peace, that even in worldly and mortal things nothing more pleasant can be heard, nothing more desirable can be longed for and nothing better can be found."

Peace is both external and internal - interior peace is a gift of the Holy Spirit

Second part is the exchange of a sign of peace

"The peace of the Lord be with you always/And with your spirit."

Romans 16:16, "Greet one another with a holy kiss"

In the Roman Rite has always been before Communion

In other rites, is often before the Consecration

By the 13th century was no longer a kiss, and later was only exchanged by the ministers

Restored after Vatican II

Lamb of God

Pope Sergius I (+701) ordered the singing of the Lamb of God during the fraction rite

The phrase "Lamb of God" only occurs in John's Gospel and in the Book of Revelation

Pope Innocent III (+1216) changed the final repetition to "Grant us peace"

Jesus is our Passover Lamb and Lasting Sacrifice

Behold the Lamb of God

Taken from the words of John the Baptist in John's Gospel (Jn 1:29)

Added admonition from Rev 19:9, "Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb"

Lord I Am Not Worthy

Statement of profound humility

Taken from Matt 8:8, the Centurion's words to Jesus

Also the words of St. Peter in Luke 5:8, "Depart from me, O Lord, for I am a sinful man"

While declaring unworthiness, expressing confidence that Christ can heal us from sin

Communion Chant

Usually from Scripture, sometimes from a Psalm

Consists of an Antiphon and a Psalm

Varies according to the season of the year of the event

Accompanies the Communion procession

From an ancient practice of singing the Psalms at liturgies

Often replaced with a hymn, song, motet, or instrumental music

Communion

"The Body of Christ/Amen" shortened from previous formula which did not have a

response: "May the Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep your soul safe for eternal life."

Prayer After Communion

Admonition to all present to unite in prayer "Let us pray"

Third and last "Collect" in the Mass

Usually refers to our reception of Holy Communion

Petition for a generous outpouring of the graces of the Blessed Sacrament in our lives

Announcements

Brief announcements may be made before the Final Blessing

Final Blessing

Fourth and last dialog of the Mass, precedes the blessing

May be simple or solemn

Simple blessing: "May Almighty God bless you, the Father + and the Son and the Holy Spirit/Amen."

Solemn blessing is preceded by "Bow down for the blessing."

Solemn blessing can either be a short prayer over the people - each day in Lent has its own formula; and there are other formula in the blessings in the Missal; or it may be a three-fold blessing formula which are also found in the blessings in the Missal for various seasons and feasts

Dismissal

"Go forth the Mass is ended/Thanks be to God."

Formerly only used when the liturgy was of a joyful character, now used at all Masses

Alternate formulae in third edition of the Roman Missal

"Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord"

or "Go in peace glorifying the Lord by your life"

or "Go in peace"