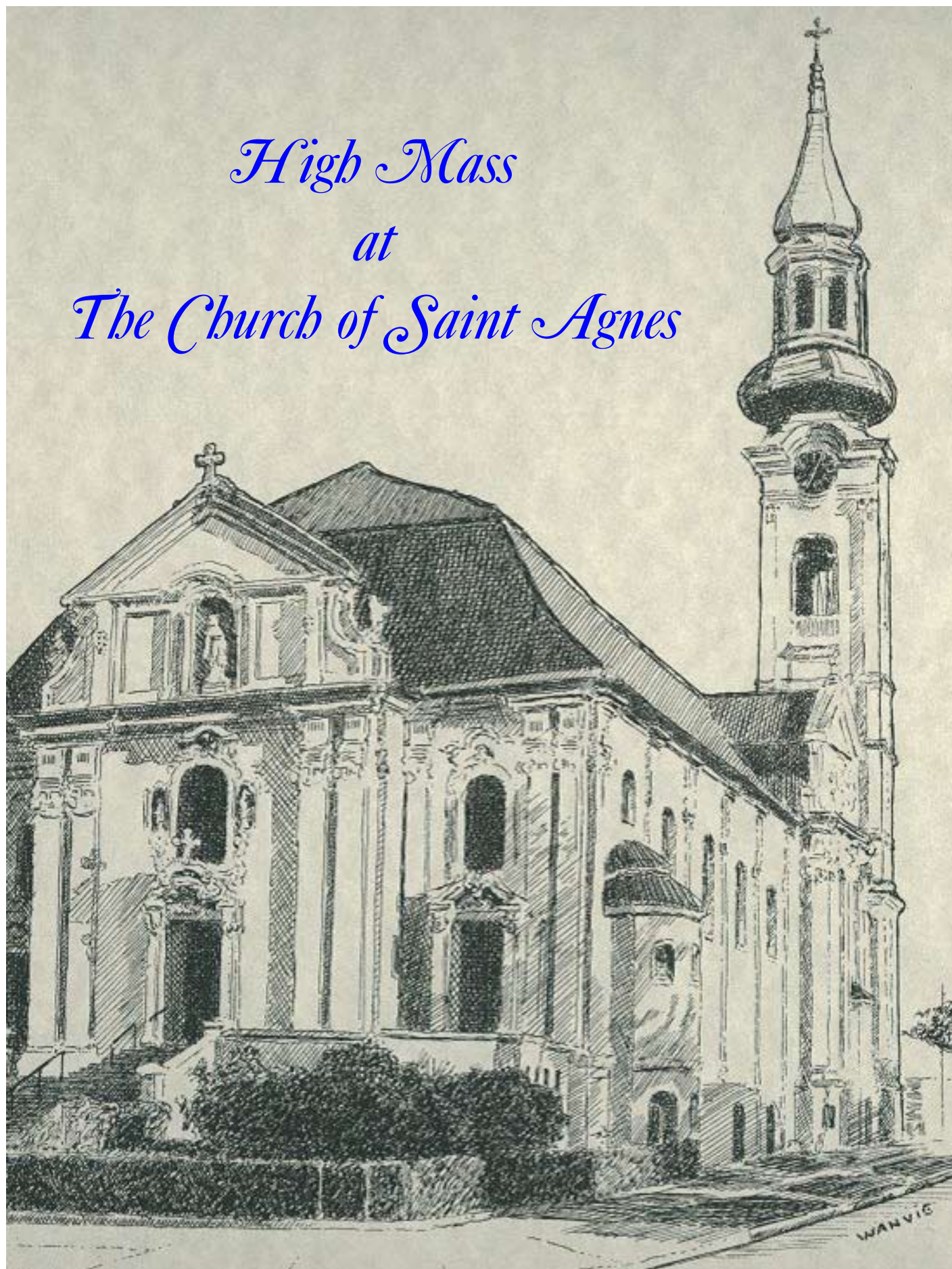


High Mass
at
The Church of Saint Agnes





Preface

Why Write a Commentary?

I love the Mass and appreciate the way it is celebrated at The Church of Saint Agnes.

Twenty-plus years ago an Archbishop was celebrating the Feast of Corpus Christi at The Church of Saint Agnes. During the procession to an outside altar and impressed by the church-full of people who all joined the procession he marveled to Deacon Harold Hughesdon that Saint Agnes was an "island." "No Your Excellency" was the reply, "not an island – an island is desert surrounded by water; Saint Agnes is an oasis – water surrounded by desert."

On November 1st, 2009 a Las Vegas businessman was in the Twin Cities and heard from a colleague that Mozart's Requiem was being sung at The Church of Saint Agnes. He attended and was so impressed that he came to choir practice the next night to express his delight. He said "I came to Saint Agnes expecting a concert – and a Mass broke out; and it was the most beautiful Mass I have ever attended."

The Church of Saint Agnes has many visitors, many of whom are non-Catholic, and I wanted to write something that would welcome them and explain what we do at Mass. I sat down to write and after thinking "It all started with the Old Testament, then Christ's Birth, Ministry, Passion, Death, and Resurrection. And on the night before He died, at His Last Supper, He said '*Do this in memory of me*'" It occurred to me that I needed to know a lot more than that or this would be a very short commentary.

Sources and Acknowledgements

My research led to a set of single-page documents collectively entitled "*This is My Body*" written by Jeff Walker of Lincoln, Nebraska. Each document in the set explains a separate part of the Mass. One of his sources was a book entitled "*Understanding the Mass*" written by Father Charles Belmonte. Father Belmonte is a priest of the Opus Dei Prelature. I took much of the historic information in the commentary, relevant to many of the individual parts of the Mass, from this wonderful book.

Father John Ubel wrote a series of articles on the history of the four authorized Eucharistic Prayers and published them in the "*Church of Saint Agnes Church Bulletin*" (July 10, 2011 -- August 21, 2011). I took some of the history of the Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer I) from these articles.

Next I went to articles entitled "*Liturgy of the Mass*" and "*Liturgy*" in the "*Catholic Encyclopedia*" for information on the origin of the name "Mass" and the history of the early liturgy between the Last Supper and the writings of Saint Justin Martyr. In fact, the **Catholic Encyclopedia** became a favorite source for many tidbits of information. The problem is, finding what you

Preface (Continued)

want is difficult. A good search engine, the proper key words, luck and patience are all necessary. Then, I took bits and pieces from The Church of Saint Agnes web site. Last, if I couldn't find it elsewhere I was forced to write it myself.

All translations in this commentary are based upon *Roman Missal Formational Materials* provided by the Secretariat for the Liturgy of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2002.

Thanks to Father John Ubel and Father John Paul Erickson for their reviews. Also, special thanks to Virginia Schubert who reviewed many of the early drafts and used up all her red pencils.

I hope you enjoy reading this commentary as much as I enjoyed its writing.

Neil Dexter
(A member of the Bass section in the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale)

Front Cover: Artist unknown.

Back Cover: The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale logo is courtesy of Christopher Foote, the logo designer, and the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale. The logo features a stained glass window located in the choir loft of the Church of Saint Agnes.

Photo on page 47 is courtesy of photographer Christine Grabow. All remaining photography, design and layout were by the author.

What You Will Experience

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What You Will Experience

Thank you for coming to The Church of Saint Agnes!

While all Roman Catholic Masses have the same elements and prayers, the High and Solemn High Masses at The Church of Saint Agnes provide the most splendid and solemn liturgical experience we can produce. All the liturgical elements (the ceremonies, the music, the sermon, the vestments, even the church building itself) combine in a balanced way to create a beautiful, worthy, and solemn atmosphere of the sacred. These Masses are usually at 10:00AM Sunday morning. Saint Agnes also provides a High or Solemn High Mass at midnight on Christmas and in the evening on All Souls day in November. Refer to the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale schedule for details.

This commentary focuses explicitly on these High and Solemn High Masses. The Mass you will see is either :

A High Mass of the Extraordinary form (Pre Second Vatican Council).
First, third, and (when applicable) fifth Sundays of each month.

Or a Solemn High Mass of the Ordinary form (Post Second Vatican Council).
Second and fourth Sundays of each month.

Historically, the terms “High” and “Solemn High” both referred to sung Masses where some or all the prayers of the celebrant were sung (chanted). A major difference between the two is a High Mass has one Sacred Minister, the priest, who celebrates the Mass. In a Solemn High Mass there are usually three Sacred Ministers; the priest who celebrates the Mass with a Deacon and Sub Deacon who assist him.

What You Will Experience (Continued)

Both the Ordinary and Extraordinary forms are in Latin. The differences between the two are most apparent in the Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word. This commentary follows the Ordinary form more directly and covers differences between the two forms with notes where appropriate.

This commentary is not a verbatim description of everything the priest says and does. It contains some parts of the liturgical prayers in English to give you the basic understanding of the liturgy.

Read this commentary to the heading “Organ Prelude and Entrance Song (Introit)” for an introduction to the venue and an outline of the Mass. Then, when the Organ Prelude starts, read and follow along through the remainder of the commentary.

Supplementary Information

Prayers that are specific to a particular day in the Church’s liturgical year are called Proper Prayers. These prayers and the scripture readings for the day are referenced in the course of this commentary.

English translations for these prayers and scripture readings may be found in a “*Leaflet Missal*” (Ordinary form Mass) or a supplement to the Sunday Bulletin entitled “*Proper Prayers for the Mass*” (Extraordinary form Mass). You may find them in the back of the church and near the elevator (left front of the church).

Introduction

The Church of Saint Agnes

The Church of Saint Agnes was built during the years 1909 to 1912. It is the third church built on this site since 1887. Archbishop John Ireland founded the parish for German-speaking immigrants who settled in this part of Saint Paul, chiefly because they found employment in the shops of the newly organized Great Northern Railway.

The baroque style chosen for the church was familiar to people who came from the old Austro-Hungarian Empire and southern Germany. The architect, George Ries, and the pastor, Father John Solnce, with the board of trustees chose as a model the abbey church of Kloster Schlägl, a Praemonstratensian monastery in Upper Austria near the town of Aigen in Mühlviertel.

For more information about The Church of Saint Agnes, visit our Web Site: <http://www.stagnes.net>

The Sacred Ministers, Altar Servers, and Vestments

The Sacred Ministers

The priest, by his ordination, is invested with powers to celebrate Mass, remit sins, preach, administer the sacraments, and direct and minister to the Christian people. While performing these duties he is the instrument of Christ. When he celebrates a High Mass he is assisted by Altar Servers. In a Solemn High Mass he is assisted by a Deacon, a Sub Deacon, and Altar Servers. While the celebrant of a Mass must be a priest, the roles of Deacon and Sub Deacon may be performed by priests or deacons.

Altar Servers

The corps of Altar Servers are very well trained young men at least 10 years old or in the fifth grade.

Vestments

Ecclesiastical vestments and vessels of great beauty are in the baroque style matching the architecture of the church building and have long been a tradition at The Church of Saint Agnes.

Liturgical vestments developed from the secular dress of the Greco-Roman world. For the first several hundred years the dress of daily life was worn at the celebration of the Mass. Normally, better, reserved garments, were probably used. Saint Jerome (340 - 420) said "*The Divine religion has one dress in the service of sacred things, another in ordinary intercourse and life*". Pope Benedict XIV (*De Sacro Sacrificio Missæ I, VIII, n. 16*) says that up to the fourth century white was the only liturgical color in use.

Introduction (Continued)

Many of the vestments we know today were defined between the fourth and the ninth centuries from the normal dress of that period. This commentary deals with the outermost garments worn by the priest and deacons. The priest's outermost vestment is called a Chasuble. It originally was a traveling garment almost circular in shape like a poncho with a hole in the center to go over the head. Its' name in Latin is "casula" or "little house," The outermost garment worn by the deacons is called a Dalmatic and is similar to the Chasuble except it has sleeves.

One of the earliest references to the Chasuble is curiously illustrated in the prophetic utterance of Druidical origin preserved in Muirchu's "Life of St. Patrick" (378 - 493). Before St. Patrick's coming to Ireland the Druids were supposed to have circulated this oracle:

*"Adze-head [this is an allusion to the peculiar Irish form of tonsure] will come with a crook- head staff;
in his **house head-holed** [in suâ domu capiti perforatâ, i.e. **chasuble**]
he will chant impiety from his table [i.e. the altar];
from the front of his house all his household [attendant clerics] will respond, 'So be it! So be it!'"*

The fact that the Celtic language adopted the word *casal* at an early date, and that St. Patrick's *casal* in particular became famous, makes the allusion of the "house head-holed" almost certain.

While the original Chasuble protected the body against the weather, it inhibited the use of the arms. Consequently, clerical assistants would roll up the priest's Chasuble on the sides and hold it at the shoulder while he performed tasks like venerating the altar with incense and performing parts of the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Over time, the Chasuble was pared away at its sides, sometimes up to the shoulders, thus freeing the priest's arms and alleviating the physical need for assistance. The symbolic nature of holding up the Chasuble still remains however. During the veneration of the altar you will see the deacons or altar servers hold the Chasuble at the shoulders. Also, at the Elevation of the Body and Blood of Christ during the Liturgy of the Eucharist they will elevate the hem of the Chasuble. It is as though the gathered people are assisting the priest in these sacred rituals. Refer to the photographs on pages 36 and 37.

After the fourth century other colors were introduced and Pope Innocent III (d. 1216) mentions four principal colors, white, red, green, black (De Sac. Alt. Mys., I, lxxv) as in general use, and one, viz (violet), as occasionally employed. This latter was regularly used from the thirteenth century. An "Ordo Romanus" of

Introduction (Continued)

the fourteenth century enumerates the five colors most commonly used today. Between the twelfth and sixteenth centuries blue and yellow were common but they may not be used without very special authorization (*Cong. of Rites*, Sept., 1837).

In the time since the thirteenth century, the history of the liturgical vestments is almost entirely the history of their rubric (rule) evolution, their adornment with embroidery and ornamental trimmings, and the nature of the material from which they are made.

In the Roman Rite, since Pius V (1566 - 1572), rose color came into use and is employed only on Laetare Sunday (fourth Sunday of Lent) and Gaudete Sunday (third Sunday of Advent), and blue is prescribed in some dioceses of Spain for the Mass of the Immaculate Conception.

Chasuble and Dalmatic Colors

The rubrics are far too complex for this commentary therefore the following is an overview of vestment colors and their use at Sunday Masses:

White, the symbol of light, signifies innocence and purity, joy and glory. White is the color proper to Trinity Sunday, the feasts of Our Lord (except those of His Passion), the feasts of the Blessed Virgin, angels, confessors, virgins and women (who are not martyrs), the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist, the chief feasts of Saint John the Evangelist, All Saints, the burial of children, and matrimony-- just to name a few.

Red, the language of fire and blood, indicates burning charity and the Martyrs' generous sacrifice. In general, red is used the week of Pentecost, on the feasts of Christ's Passion and His Precious Blood, the feasts of Apostles and martyrs and the feast of the Holy Innocents.

Green, (the most common color during the Church's liturgical year), is the hue of plants and trees. It speaks of the hope of life eternal. In general, green is employed in Ordinary Time (that time between the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter).

Violet, the gloomy cast of the mortified, denotes affliction and melancholy. In general, violet is used during the seasons of Advent and Lent. Violet is also used for Masses of the Passion and of penitential character.

Black, the universal emblem of mourning, signifies the sorrow of death and the somberness of the tomb. Black is used in offices for the dead, and on Good Friday.

Introduction (Continued)

The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale and Orchestra

The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale was founded by Monsignor Richard J. Schuler, and has sung at Saint Agnes since 1974. The mission of the Chorale is to sing the great Masses of the 18th and 19th centuries with orchestra in the context of the sacred liturgy of the Mass for which they were written. The music sung by the Chorale is an integral part of the Mass. The Church of Saint Agnes has a strong Austrian heritage, and the Chorale's core repertory includes about thirty of the greatest Viennese classical Masses of all time. The Chorale is thus able to carry on the faith, culture, and heritage of the parish and its people. The Church of Saint Agnes welcomes the Chorale to sing as part of the liturgy and provides rehearsal and library space for the Chorale.

The Chorale is a sixty-voice volunteer choir accompanied by four professional soloists and a core group of about thirty professional musicians. The complement of musicians at a given Mass depends on the composer of the Mass. The number of musicians varies from a dozen or so for some Mozart Masses to upwards of thirty for Masses by Gounod or Herzogenberg.

The music of the Chorale is supported financially by the Friends of the Chorale. All contributions to the Chorale are tax deductible. Envelopes are available in the back of church. For more information, please see Donate to the Chorale on the web site. If you would like to be on the Chorale mailing list, please sign up online or leave your name and address by calling The Church of Saint Agnes at 651- 925-8800.

For more information about the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale and Orchestra, visit our Web Site:

<http://chorale.churchofsaintagnes.org>

or visit us at Twin Cities Catholic Chorale on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Twin-Cities-Catholic-Chorale/263794401632>

Introduction (Continued)

The Schola Cantorum

The chant used in the Mass today descends from the chant that Christ would have heard in the Temple and synagogues. The early Christians brought the prayers and chant of the Jewish liturgy to the Christian liturgy. Over time, different forms and styles of chant began to develop by region. In the sixth century Pope St. Gregory the Great (540-604), gathered together these different forms of chant and had them transcribed into an Antiphony. He not only organized the chant but also founded a school of chant. The Schola Cantorum at Saint Agnes carries on that tradition. Today the schola has up to twenty members, and is considered a "Gregorian Chant" training ground for many of the seminarians with whom the Parish of Saint Agnes is blessed.

The chants of the Mass are largely anonymous. Most Proper chants; those intended for a specific Sunday or feast day (Introit, Gradual, Alleluia, Offertorio and Communio) were composed between the 5th and 8th centuries.

The Pipe Organ

The pipe organ was built by the Wicks Organ Company of Highland, Illinois as a display model with clear glass panels. It was installed at The Church of Saint Agnes in 1957 and renovated in 1995. The organ operates with Wicks DIRECT-ELECTRIC® action; that is, the connections between the keys and the pipe valves are completely electric. The organ now has 38 stops, 42 ranks, and 2,262 pipes.

Introduction (Continued)

The Mass

A Mass in the Roman Catholic Church is a ritual Eucharistic celebration. It celebrates God and His interaction with His creation and culminates with a Eucharistic liturgical sacrifice (a recreation of what Christ, at His Last Supper, told us to do in His memory). Paragraph 1410 in the "*Catechism of the Catholic Church*" says: "*It is Christ himself, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant who, acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. And it is the same Christ, really present under the species of bread and wine, who is the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice.*" Thus the more formal name for this celebration is "*The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.*"

The Mass resembles a banquet at a King's house. At a banquet, you would expect a diverse group of people gathering together for a common purpose to celebrate the occasion and the host and share a meal. In this case the King is God and the meal is the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ Himself.

In the time of the Apostles, even though the Eucharistic celebration was not written down, its fundamental outline was given by the account of the Last Supper. It would not be a Eucharist at all if the celebrant had not at least done as our Lord did the night before He died and told His followers to do this in memory of Him (Lk 22:17-20). So we have everywhere from the very beginning at least this uniform nucleus of a Liturgy: bread and wine are brought to the celebrant in vessels (a plate and a cup); he puts them on a table — the altar; standing before it in the natural attitude of prayer he takes them in his hands, gives thanks, as our Lord had done, says again the words of institution (the Consecration), breaks the Bread and gives the consecrated Bread and Wine to the people in communion.

But we find much more than this essential nucleus in use in every Church from the first century. The Eucharist was always celebrated at the end of a service of lessons, psalms, prayers, and preaching. This was itself merely a continuation of the service of the synagogue. So we have everywhere this double function; first a synagogue service Christianized, in which the holy books were read, psalms were sung, prayers said by the bishop in the name of all (the people answering "Amen" in Hebrew, as had their Jewish forefathers), and homilies, explanations of what had been read, were made by the bishop or priests, just as they had been made in the synagogues by the learned men and elders (e.g., Luke 4:16-27). This is what was known afterwards as the Liturgy of the Catechumens. Then followed the Eucharist, at which only the baptized were present.

In about the year 155 AD Saint Justin Martyr, in a letter to emperor Antoninus Pius explained what the Church did in its Eucharistic celebration (St. Justin, Apol. 1, 65-67). St. Justin's description still fits to this day (Antoninus had Justin killed).

Introduction (Continued)

As described by St. Justin, the Mass consists of three major parts; The Gathering, The Liturgy of the Word, and The Liturgy of the Eucharist. These three parts and their sub parts are outlined below.

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Note 1: Sung by the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale.

Note 2: Sung by the Schola Cantorum. On Sundays when an Ordinary form Mass is celebrated, you may follow an English translation in a Missalette available in the back of the church. On Sundays with an Extraordinary form Mass use the supplement available with the Church Bulletin.

Introductory Rites



Introductory Rites (Continued)

The Gathering

In the Introductory Rites of the Mass the congregation comes together as a community to express sorrow for any transgressions against our host (God) and each other and to express our joy in being there in God's presence.

If you had been at a wedding banquet at the king's house in Jesus' day the King would have provided a wedding garment for each guest. This garment was probably like a shawl that was worn over whatever else you were wearing. It served the purpose of giving a uniform festive appearance to the otherwise diversely dressed guests. It also covered the "clan" colors to minimize friction in the group. Putting on the garment meant an acceptance of the king's hospitality and a willingness to join the celebration.

In today's Mass, the prayers said during the first part of the Mass are like putting on the wedding garment and the garment is Sanctifying Grace that God freely gives if we ask.

Organ Prelude and Entrance Song (Introit)

Immediately before Mass there is a prelude usually played by our organist.

All stand as the priest and altar servers process into church.

The Schola Cantorum sings the Introit in Gregorian Chant.

The Introit (Introitus) of the Mass is a fragment of a psalm with its antiphon sung while the Sacred Ministers and servers enter the church and approach the altar. In all Western rites the Mass began with such a processional psalm since the earliest times of which we have any record.

Over the centuries, people gave nicknames to Masses based on the first words of the Introit by which each particular Mass begins. Thus the first words of the Introit for the first Sunday after Easter are "*Quasi modo geniti infantes...*" ("As newborn babies..." from 1 Peter 2:2) hence it is known as Quasi modo Sunday (Sound familiar? The Bell-Ringer of Notre Dame in the Victor Hugo novel was found as a foundling on the first Sunday after Easter); the Mass for the fourth Sunday of Lent is called Laetare Sunday; a Mass for the dead is spoken of as a Requiem, and so on.

Veneration of the Altar

Note: In a Mass of the Ordinary form the Veneration of the Altar takes place at this point. In a Mass of the Extraordinary form it takes place during the Penitential Rite (see the next and following pages) while the Kyrie is being sung.

Introductory Rites (Continued)

The altar symbolizes Christ as the heart of the church. The Lord's Table is the center of the Eucharistic celebration.

When the Sacred Ministers and servers reach the altar they genuflect to the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. Then, as a sign of veneration, they kiss and incense the altar.

Greeting

Note: In a Mass of the Ordinary form the Greeting and Penitential Rite take place in the right side of the sanctuary. In a Mass of the Extraordinary form they take place at the foot of the altar and the altar servers make all the responses on behalf of the people.

All the gathered make the sign of the cross. The sign of the cross reminds us of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and how He died for us on the cross.

The spirit of the priest, as a celebrant of a Mass, is Christ. When the priest greets the gathered people with the words:

"Dominus vobiscum."
The Lord be with you.

Our response is to the spirit of the priest:
"Et cum spiritu tuo."
And with your spirit.

The priest uses this greeting to begin several of the sections of the Mass.

Penitential Rite "Lord, Have Mercy" (Kyrie)

In the Penitential rite we express our sorrow for any offences against our host (God) and each other. The priest says: "*Brethren, let us acknowledge our sins that we may prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.*" After a pause the priest says:

"*Miserere nostri, Domine.*"
Have mercy on us, O Lord.

The people respond:
"*Quia peccavimus tibi.*"
For we have sinned against you.

Introductory Rites (Continued)

The priest says:

“Ostende nobis, Domine, misericordiam tuam.”

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.

The people respond:

“Et salutare tuum da nobis.”

And grant us your salvation.

The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale sings the Kyrie:

Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy.

Note: In a Mass of the Extraordinary form the altar is venerated at this point. In a Mass of the Ordinary form it was venerated when the Sacred Ministers and servers first reached the altar.

The Sacred Ministers and servers sit while the choir sings the Kyrie. The people wait until they are seated, then all sit.

"Kyrie Eleison" is Greek for *“Lord Have Mercy”*. Supplications of this type have their roots in the Psalms such as Isaiah 33:2 (O Lord be gracious to us...). The first certain example of its use in the liturgy is mentioned in the eighth book of the *“Apostolic Constitutions”*¹. The Apostolic Constitutions is a document that survives from 400 A.D. Here it is the answer of the people to the various litanies chanted by the deacon (pp. 4 and 5; cf. *“Ap. Const.”*, VIII, VI, 4). That is still its normal use in the Eastern rites. The deacon sings various clauses of a litany, to each of which the people answer, Kyrie eleison.

Soon after the Apostolic Constitutions were written the Greek Kyrie Eleison was adopted by the West and at Rome with the alternative form Christi Eleison. This was then sung, not as in the East only by the people, but alternately by cantors and the people. It displaced the older Latin litanies at this place in the Mass and eventually remained alone as the only remnant of the old litany.

Note 1: The *“Apostolic Constitutions”* are not *“Apostolic”* in origin but they are a very reliable historical document, revealing the moral and religious conditions and the **liturgical observances** of the third and fourth centuries.

At the end of the Kyrie the Sacred Ministers and servers stand, then **all stand**.

Introductory Rites (Continued)



Gloria in excelsis Deo

Solemn High Mass: Ordinary Form

Introductory Rites (Continued)



Gloria in excelsis Deo
High Mass: Extraordinary Form

Introductory Rites (Continued)

“Glory to God in the Highest” (Gloria)

The Gloria is intoned by the priest and sung by the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale:

Gloria in excelsis Deo

The Sacred Ministers and servers sit while the choir sings the Gloria. The people wait until they are seated, then **all sit**.

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.

The Apostolic Constitutions records the Gloria as a morning prayer in use already at that time. In this prayer, we give praise to God by recalling how great He is and worthy of all our worship and devotion. There is no phrase in the prayer which does not also appear either in the epistles of St. Paul or in the writings of St. John.

The first Christians used to sing it in their meetings, usually early in the morning. They saw in the rising sun a symbol of Christ, a great light which comes to dispel darkness. Soon it was introduced in the Mass, but only on Christmas day. In the sixth century, Pope St. Symmachus extended its use to the main solemnities, Sundays, and feasts of martyrs, but only for the Mass celebrated by the bishop. Toward the tenth century, it began to be used more or less as it is now.

The Gloria is omitted during Advent because we are “awaiting” the coming of the Lord. The omission of the Gloria, a song that recalls the Lord’s First Coming, gives us pause during this season to think of what is missing. The Gloria is also omitted during Lent. We are called to meditate on what our lives would be like if Christ did not come to save us. It helps, then, to again encounter the absence of the Gloria.

At the end of the Gloria the Sacred Ministers and servers stand, then **all stand**.

Introductory Rites (Continued)

Opening Prayer (Collecta)

The Latin name for this prayer is *Collecta*, meaning “the collect.” In the English translations it is called the “opening prayer.” This prayer takes all of the prayers that we have offered and formally presents them before God the Father, although there are occasions when the prayer is addressed to Jesus.

The Opening Prayer, said by the priest, is also called the Collect because it sums up and gathers together all the intentions of the day’s sacrifice. Historically, this title recalls the old custom of Rome, where, about the fourth century, it was the practice for the whole community to gather in one church so that they might proceed with solemnity to the temple chosen for the celebration of the day’s Mass. In this second sense, the Collect is the prayer of the *plebs collecta*, the prayer of the assembled people.

There are four parts to this prayer. There is the calling upon God (either the Father or the Son), the recalling of some deed God has done, a request, and finally the prayer is made through the mediation of the Son.

Liturgy of the Word



Gospel Reading

Solemn High Mass: Ordinary Form

Liturgy of the Word (Continued)



Gospel Reading
High Mass: Extraordinary Form

Liturgy of the Word (Continued)

Scripture Readings, Gradual, and Alleluia

All sit.

Notes:

1. Ordinary Form

In a Mass of the Ordinary form there are a total of three scripture readings. All Scripture readings are read in English from the lectern in the left side of the sanctuary. Between the first two readings is a chant called the Gradual. The second reading is followed by the Tract or Alleluia chant. Then follows a reading from one of the Gospels.

The first reading is from the Old Testament (except during the Easter Season when it is taken from the Acts of the Apostles) and usually relates to the Gospel. The second reading is taken from the Acts of the Apostles.

2. Extraordinary Form

In a Mass of the Extraordinary form there are two Scripture readings. Both are chanted in Latin. The first reading, called the Epistle, is from the Old Testament or the Acts of the Apostles. It is usually sung by the Deacon from the foot of the right side of the altar. If the Priest sings the Epistle he sings it from the right side of the altar. Then follows a chant, sung by the Schola, called the Gradual with its supplement the Tract or Alleluia. The second reading is the Gospel and is sung from the left side of the altar by the Priest.

If you wish to follow the Epistle and Gospel readings in English, you will find them printed in a supplement to the Sunday Bulletin (on Sundays when there is an Extraordinary form Mass). These are available at the back of the church and at the church entrance near the elevator.

All the readings, both the Old and the New Testaments, are oriented toward Christ. In His wisdom, God has so brought it about that the New Testament should be hidden in the Old Testament, and that the Old Testament should be made manifest in the New. Hence, the New Testament sheds light on and explains what was earlier announced and signified with different figures in the Old Testament.

The Gradual (with its supplement, the Tract or Alleluia) represents the singing of psalms alternating with readings from the Bible, a custom that is as old as these readings themselves. This is an inheritance from the service of the Synagogue.

Liturgy of the Word (Continued)

The Gradual, sung by the Schola Cantorum, is ordinarily composed of words which appropriately referred to the lesson just read; it was begun by a singer standing on the gradus (step) of the lectern. To this verse the congregation replied by taking up a refrain. It soon became a custom for the Gradual verse to be sung by a deacon. In the sixth century some deacons were chosen more for their voices than other more charitable qualities. But toward the end of the sixth century, Pope St. Gregory the Great discontinued this custom, because it led deacons to care for their voices to the detriment of more important duties. The following is a quote from the Roman Council of the year 595 found in F. Mourret *"L'eglise et le monde barbare"*: *"It has long been the custom of the Roman Church to make singers deacons, and to use them in singing instead of in preaching or committing the care of the poor to them. The result of this has been that, in admitting anyone to Holy Orders, a good voice has been held in much higher regard than an irreproachable character. Therefore the deacons shall sing nothing in the church except for the Gospel of the Mass. The other lessons shall be sung by the sub-deacons or one of the minor orders."*

The Alleluia verse, sung by the Schola Cantorum, precedes the Gospel. The word Alleluia is an old Judaic expression of joy; it means "praise the Lord." It was incorporated into the liturgy of the Church at a very early date. The Alleluia was at first sung in Rome only once a year, on Easter Sunday. The historian Sozomen records a proverb current in Rome in the fifth century: *"God grant that I may hear the Alleluia!"* After Easter Sunday, the Alleluia was sung during the fifty days of the Easter season. Today it is sung in every liturgical season outside of Lent. During the Lenten season the Alleluia is not sung or said. But unlike the Gloria, which is omitted altogether during Advent and Lent, the Alleluia is replaced with another verse that gives praise to the Lord: "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!"

The last reading is from the Gospel. Thus, God's own teaching brings the Christian people to a knowledge of the continuity of the work of salvation. The cycle of readings for Sundays and solemnities extends for a period of two years (Extraordinary form) or three years (Ordinary form) then repeats. For weekdays, the cycle is only for two years. The topic of each reading and psalm relates to the particular point in the Church's liturgical season.

All Stand for the Gospel.

The priest or deacon announces which Gospel is the source of today's reading. The people respond:
"Gloria tibi Domini."
Glory to you, O Lord.

In a Mass of the Ordinary form the priest or deacon then reads the Gospel. In a Mass of the Extraordinary form the priest chants the Gospel.

Liturgy of the Word (Continued)

Prayer For Vocations

The Parish of Saint Agnes has been blessed over the years with many vocations. We say the following prayer each Sunday as part of the process to foster vocations:

All kneel.

The deacon says: *“Let us ask God to give worthy Priests, Deacons, Brothers and Sister to His Holy Church.”*

The people respond: *“O God, we earnestly beseech thee to bless this archdiocese with many priests, deacons, brothers and sisters who will love Thee with their whole strength and gladly spend their entire lives to serve thy church and to make Thee known and loved.”*

The deacon continues: *“Bless our families. Bless our children.”*

The people respond: *“Choose from our homes those who are needed for thy work.”*

The deacon continues: *“Mary, Queen of the Clergy.”*

The people respond: *“Pray for us. Pray for our priests and religious. Obtain for us many more.”*

The readings and Prayer For Vocations are followed by the homily, the profession of faith and the General Intercessions.

Homily

All sit.

In the synagogue, the Bible readings were always followed by an explanation of the sacred text. Our Lord took advantage of such instances to announce the kingdom of God (Mk 1:21 and Lk 4:16). This custom was observed also in the early Church. The bishop himself, who normally celebrated the Mass on Sundays, spoke to the congregation. This was one of his main duties. We keep precious texts of homilies from St. John Chrysostom, St. Augustine, and even from popes like St. Leo the Great and St. Gregory the Great. They always took themes from the Scriptures for the instruction of the faithful and made good use of scriptural passages to make points of dogma and morals.

Homily means “explanation” in Greek. Its purpose is to develop, explain, and teach the way of transforming into life what has been proclaimed. Accordingly, the homily is given by the priest or the deacon. No lay person is allowed to preside over this means of catechesis.

Following the homily all stand.

Liturgy of the Word (Continued)



Liturgy of the Word (Continued)

Profession of Faith (Credo)

The Creed is intoned by the priest and sung by the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale:

"Credo in unum Deum,"
I believe in one God,

The Sacred Ministers and servers sit while the choir sings the Credo. The people wait until they are seated, then **all sit**.

Patrem omnipotentem...

*The Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.*

*I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,*

(all kneel)

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

(all sit)

*For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and His kingdom will have no end.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.*

*I believe in one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

Liturgy of the Word (Continued)

Credo is the Latin word for “*I believe.*” The Creed expresses our response and assent to what we have just heard in the readings and in the homily. In the Liturgy of the Word, the Word of God, now Incarnate, has spoken to men. He will come to offer himself upon the altar in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Creed thus becomes a wonderful link between these two parts of the Mass.

From its early usage in the baptismal liturgy, the Creed later became an instrument to curb the heresy that threatened the principles of the faith. There arose the need to state these principles in precise and definite terms. The symbols of the faith contained the concrete propositions of the faith in brief affirmations. However, the familiar statements of the Apostles’ Creed did not measure up to the degree of precision needed. So a more elaborate statement of belief or Creed was drawn up at the Council of Calcedon (451 A.D.). It combined the truths of the faith professed by the two earlier councils, one held in Nicea (325), the other at Constantinople (381). It is this Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, basically, that we find in our Sunday Masses.

Usage of the Creed in the liturgy began in Antioch and Constantinople and then spread to Spain where it was adopted in the Council of Toledo (589). The council specified that the Creed should be recited before the Lord’s Prayer. The Creed thus became, together with the Lord’s Prayer, a preparation for Communion. From Spain, it passed to Western Europe, where it was placed after the Gospel. Rome itself did not adopt it in the Mass until the year 1014.

Today, the Profession of Faith by the priest and the people is obligatory on Sundays and solemnities. It may be said also at special, more solemn celebrations.

All stand.

Prayers of the Faithful (General Intercessions)

In the General Intercessions or Prayer of the Faithful, the congregation prays for the needs of the Church and the world. This is a very early Church custom. St. Paul admonishes Timothy, one of his disciples:

“My advice is that, first of all, there should be prayers offered for everyone – petitions, intercessions and thanksgiving – and especially for kings and others in authority, so that we may be able to live religious and reverent lives in peace and quiet.” (1 Tim 2:1-3)

St. Justin, in A.D. 150, bears witness to the existence of this part of the Mass in his time:

“After the homily of the bishop we all stand and raise our prayers...for our own selves, for those who have been just lighted up [baptized], and for all the rest, found elsewhere.” (St. Justin, Apol.,1, 65, 67)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

All sit.

Note: In the early church the end of the Liturgy of the Word was the end of the Mass of the catechumens i.e. the unbaptized. The catechumens were not allowed to stay for the Liturgy of the Eucharist (Mass of the Faithful).

The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the heart and the summit of the celebration. The priest, by the authority of Christ through His Apostles, carries out the very action of Christ at the Last Supper. Our Lord, on the night before He died, took bread and wine and instructed His apostles to do this in commemoration of Him.

In the early Church people would bring the bread and wine from their homes and present it to the priest during the Mass. Now the bread and wine are not brought from home, but we still have the opportunity to “give” of ourselves at Mass.

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

Offertory, Preparation of the Gifts, Offertorio, and the Lavabo

In the preparatory rites of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we prepare to offer ourselves, along with the priest, to God the Father in union with the one sacrifice of Christ.

As the Altar is prepared and venerated with incense for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Schola Cantorum sings a short psalm verse from Scriptures called the Offertorio and the ushers pass a basket around and we are presented with an opportunity to help support the Church. One of the most concrete ways that we offer some part of ourselves in the Mass is by giving in the offertory collection.

The priest, standing at the altar, takes the bread and, holding it slightly raised above the altar, says:

"Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. For through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you; fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life."

After he has offered the bread, the celebrant, standing to one side of the altar, pours wine into the chalice, and adds to it a little water, saying:

"By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity."

The priest goes again to the center of the altar, takes the chalice, and, holding it slightly raised above the altar, says:

"Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you; fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink."

"With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God."

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

In every Mass, a liturgical act is performed which originally was a response to a practical necessity. The celebrant washes his hands, which have touched the sundry offerings, before taking up the bread about to become the body of Christ.

The Church has kept this ceremony of the Lavabo to express the desire of interior purification. This mystical meaning was emphasized by St. Cyril of Jerusalem in the fourth century, when he wrote:

"This action shows that we must be free from all sin. We perform actions with our hands; to wash our hands is the nearest thing to purifying our deeds." (Catechesis Mystagogical, v, 2).

The celebrant, at the side of the altar, expresses his desire to be cleansed within and washes his hands saying a prayer taken from Psalm 51:

"Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin."

Prayer over the Gifts and Secret

The priest then returns to the center of the altar and asks us to unite ourselves with him in the sacrificial act as it draws nearer. He does this by using the words of a medieval prayer:

"Orate, fratres: ut meum ac vestrum sacrificium acceptabile fiat apud Deum Patrem omnipotentem."

Pray, brethren: that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

The priest stresses that the sacrifice is mine (i.e., Christ offers himself: the aspect of ministerial priesthood) and yours (the entire Church offers the sacrifice: the aspect of common priesthood).

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

The people's response expresses with the same simplicity the intentions of the Mass:

*"Suscipiat Dominus sacrificium de manibus tuis
ad laudem et gloriam nominis sui,
ad utilitatem quoque nostrum totius que Ecclesiae suae sanctae."*

May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands
for the praise and glory of his name,
for our good and the good of all his Church.

All stand.

The priest continues with the portion of the Prayer over the Gifts that is unique for each day in the Church's liturgical year. The Secret (Latin *Secreta*) is a prayer said in a low voice by the priest at the end of the Offertory. It is the original, and for a long time, was the only Offertory prayer. In the early Church the priest was silent during the Offertory, and the prayer that followed it was our present Secret. Already in the *"Apostolic Constitutions"*, VIII, XII, 4, the priest receiving the bread and wine, prays this prayer "silently" probably because a psalm was being sung at the same time.

The Leonine Sacramentary, the oldest of the Latin sacramentaries or liturgical books contains a compilation of many Propers, Collects, Prefaces, Secrets, Postcommunions, and orations, together with ordination forms. These prayers were probably compiled from the fourth to the seventh centuries and many are still in use today.

The Secret alludes to the saint or occasion of the day and asks God to receive these present gifts and to sanctify them through our Lord. If you wish to read this prayer in English it is available in the Leaflet Missal (Ordinary form Mass) or the supplement to the Church Bulletin (Extraordinary form Mass).

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)



Sursum corda ! (Lift up your hearts !)

Solemn High Mass: Ordinary Form

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)



Sursum corda ! (Lift up your hearts !)
High Mass: Extraordinary Form

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

Eucharistic Prayer

The Greek term "*eucharistia*" ("thanksgiving") came to designate the consecratory blessing at Mass and eventually the entire Eucharistic action itself. The first term used was "*fractio panis*", ("breaking of the bread,") found in both the *Gospel of St. Luke* (LK 24:35) and *Acts of the Apostles* (Acts 2:42). Later, we see St. Ignatius of Antioch (d. 110 AD) using the word eucharist as a technical term.

The age of the Church Fathers represents a liturgical "golden age," with a proliferation of Eucharistic liturgies originating in the major cities in the Christian world: Antioch, Alexandria, and Constantinople. The first substantial evidence for the existence of portions of the Eucharistic Prayer that came to be known as the "*Roman Canon*" (Canon means fixed in form) occurs back in the fourth century. St. Ambrose of Milan (Bishop of Milan from 374 to 397) quotes the Eucharistic Prayer of his church in his work "*De Sacramentis*". It bears a great similarity to the Roman Canon. Some scholars propose that it was written during the pontificate of Pope Damasus I (d. 383 AD).

Pope St. Gregory the Great (d. 604 AD) receives credit for giving the Roman Canon its definitive form. If you examined a copy of the "*Gelasian Sacramentary*" from the late seventh century, you would find a text of the Roman Canon which is virtually identical to the prayer currently used. This prayer seems to have been gradually imposed upon all in the West during the Carolingian empire, beginning with Charlemagne in 800 AD.

In 1562, the Council of Trent very rightly held the Roman Canon in high esteem declaring: "...the Catholic Church many centuries ago instituted the holy canon. It is so free from all errors that it contains nothing which does not savor strongly of holiness and piety and nothing which does not raise to God the minds of those who offer. For it is made up of the words of our Lord himself, of apostolic traditions, and of devout instructions of the holy pontiffs." (The Council of Trent, Twenty-second Session, 1562 AD).

The Eucharistic Prayer begins with the Preface and ends with the Final Doxology and Amen.

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

Preface and Acclamation

The Preface is the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer. During the early years of Christianity, the term preface indicated some solemn prayer of thanksgiving offered before a congregation. Hence, it referred to the entire Eucharistic Prayer. Later on, it referred only to the introduction, and this varied according to the feast celebrated. The rest of the Eucharistic Prayer, called the Canon, became fixed in form.

The Preface is ancient. It goes all the way back to the early Church when it was still a sect within Judaism. Most of the elements of the prayer, including the "Holy, Holy," were part of a prayer said every morning in the synagogue. In the fourth century, Saint Cyril of Jerusalem (315 to 386 AD) in his "*Catechetical Lectures*" mentions two parts of this prayer:

"The priest cries out:

("Sursum corda") "Lift up your hearts!"

For in this most solemn hour it is necessary for us to have our hearts raised up with God, and not fixed below, on the earth and earthly things. It is as if the priest instructs us at this hour to dismiss all physical cares and domestic anxieties, and to have our hearts in heaven with the benevolent God.

Then you answer:

("Habemus ad Dominum") "We have lifted them up to the Lord,"

giving assent to it by the acknowledgment that you make. Let no one come here, then, who could say with his mouth, "We have lifted them up to the Lord," while he is preoccupied with physical cares."

The priest continues:

"Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro"

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

The people respond:

"Dignum et iustum est."

It is right and just.

Next, the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale sings the last part of the Acclamation; the Sanctus:

"Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest."

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

The Sanctus is derived from several different passages in the Bible:

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory." (Isaiah 6:3)

"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty . . ." (Revelation 4:8)

"Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! . . . Hosanna in the highest!" (Mark 11:9-10)

All kneel

Invocation of the Holy Spirit (Epiclesis)

As the chorale sings the Sanctus the priest continues with the Eucharistic Prayer. In the Old Testament, the high priest, carrying the blood of the victims (Heb 9:7), entered the Holy of Holies alone, once a year. Leaving behind the people, he offered a sacrifice to God in an atmosphere of awe and respect for God.

In the early Middle Ages, the priest entered the sanctuary, and curtains were drawn, thus isolating him from the people. To accentuate the importance of this part of the Mass, clerics carrying candles placed themselves on either side of the altar. This is the origin of the custom of placing a lighted candles on the altar. The people attended these ceremonies kneeling.

Epiclesis is a Greek word that means to "invoke upon." The first epiclesis during the Eucharistic Prayer asks God the Father to send His Holy Spirit upon the gifts of bread and wine so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord.

He places his hand, palms down, over the bread and wine as he says the prayer, then makes a sign of the cross over them with his right hand. In the Eastern Churches, this is the moment at which they believe that the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of our Lord. But in the Roman Catholic Church (the West), it is believed that it is at the moment when the priest says the words of institution (Consecration).

There is a second part to the epiclesis that invokes the Spirit again, asking that all who share in the Body and Blood of Christ may be brought together in unity to become one body, one spirit in Christ. That is, by receiving the Body and Blood of Christ we become part of the one Body of Christ.

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

Consecration (The Words of Institution)

The Consecration is the essential part of the Mass. The human minister, the priest, has received, with his ordination, the power to pronounce the great and wonderful prayers of the Consecration.

In truth, he is but the instrument of Christ. The priest offers the Holy Sacrifice in persona Christi. The priest does not act on his own account. The priest's identity is being a direct and daily instrument of the saving grace which Christ has won for us.

At this moment, we are invited to a more solemn recollection and devotion. To remind us about this, a bell in the church tower softly rings during the words of consecration and a server rings a small bell as the priest elevates the consecrated host and chalice.

The priest pronounces the words of the Consecration (Luke 22: 17-20 and 1 Cor 11:23-25).

For The Bread:

*"Take this, all of you, and eat of it,
for this is my body which will be given up for you."*

For The Wine:

*"Take this all of you, and drink from it,
for this is the chalice of my blood,
the blood of the new and eternal covenant.
which will be poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.*

Do this in memory of me."

After the Consecration, what were bread and wine are no longer bread and wine; They are now Christ himself with his Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. This is the same body that was hung on the cross, the same blood that was poured there. It is the same Christ who opened the blind man's eyes in John 9:6. It is the Lamb of God!

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)



This is My Body
Solemn High Mass: Ordinary Form

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)



This is My Body
High Mass: Extraordinary Form

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

The Mystery of Faith and Benedictus

Since the seventh century, the expression *mysterium fidei* (now rendered, “*The mystery of faith*”) has appeared united to the consecratory formula. At first, it was within the formula itself; now, it is at the end. The congregation responds:

“Mortem tuam annuntiamus, Domine, et tuam resurrectionem confitemur, Donec venias.”

We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again.

At this point the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale sings the Benedictus in adoration of the True Presence of Christ on the altar:

“Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.”

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord

Memorial (Anamnesis)

This part of the Canon, called Anamnesis (memorial), comes after the acclamation of the Consecration. In the anamnesis the Church calls to mind the Passion, resurrection, and the glorious return of Christ Jesus; she presents to the Father the offering of his Son which reconciles us with him.

Intercessions of the Living and the Dead

In the intercessions, the Church indicates that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the whole Church in heaven and on earth, the living and the dead, and in communion with the pastors of the Church, the Pope, the diocesan bishop, his presbyterium and his deacons, and all the bishops of the whole world together with their Churches.

Final Doxology and Amen

The Eucharistic Prayer ends with the Final Doxology. It is a song of praise to God. The priest takes the chalice and the paten with the host and, lifting them up, says:

“Through him and with him and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.”

These words are said by the priest alone. They are taken in part from St. Paul (Romans 11:36), and are to be found in the earliest forms of the Eucharistic Prayers.

The congregation responds with the great “**Amen**” which ends the Eucharistic prayers.

All stand.

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

Communion Rite

The Communion Rite starts with the Lord's Prayer and ends with the prayer after communion.

Lord's Prayer and Doxology

In the early Church, the Lord's Prayer was taught to the catechumens only a few weeks before baptism. Outside the Mass, it seemed that the faithful recited it before Communion, which they took home on Sundays and received there on ordinary days. Then, it may have been introduced into the Mass. There are many allusions made to this custom in the writings of the Fathers of the Church, and St. Augustine regarded it as something well established in his own time.

Note: In a Mass of the Ordinary form the people sing the Lord's Prayer together with the priest. In a Mass of the Extraordinary form the priest sings the Lord's Prayer alone with the people joining in the last line:

*"Pater noster, qui es in coelis:
sanctificetur nomen tuum:
adveniat regnum tuum:
fiat voluntas tua sicut in coelo et in terra.
Panem nostrum quotidianum da nobis hodie:
et dimitte nobis debita nostra,
sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris.
Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.
Sed libera nos a malo. Amen."*

Our Father, Who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

The priest then asks, on behalf of all of us, for deliverance from the power of evil:

“Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.”

We join in that petition with our acclamation, which is also a doxology or hymn of praise to God:

“Quia tuum est regnum et potestas, et Gloria in saecula.”

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Rite of Peace

In the early Church, the rite of peace was at the end of the Mass of the catechumens (before the Offertory). It followed the Prayers of the Faithful and, at that point, could be seen as a sign of love before the gifts were offered. Perhaps it was placed there in reminiscence of this passage in the Gospel: *“If you are bringing your offering to the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering.”* (Mt 5:23-24)

Breaking of Bread (Agnus Dei)

At the Last Supper, our Lord broke the bread. It was in the act of breaking bread that the risen Lord was recognized by the disciples at Emmaus. On the road to Emmaus, as if it were a Mass celebrated by the Lord, the breaking of the bread was preceded by the liturgy of the word: *While they were walking, “Jesus explained to them the passages throughout the Scriptures that were about himself.” Then, “while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognized him.”* (Lk 24:27, 30-31) *The two disciples returned to Jerusalem, announcing that they had recognized the Lord “at the breaking of the bread.”*

Immediately after the sign of peace is exchanged, the priest breaks the Eucharistic bread. This is one of the key actions of Jesus, who took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to His disciples. After the priest breaks it, he places a small piece into the chalice while saying:

“May this mingling of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.”

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

During the breaking of the bread and the commingling, the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale sings the Agnus Dei:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world have mercy on us.

All kneel.

At first, the breaking of the bread was done in silence. It was a Syrian pope, St. Sergius (687-701), who established the singing of this invocation.

The priest, after a silent prayer of preparation, turns toward the people. Taking the host, he raises it slightly above the paten and says:

"Ecce Agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccata mundi. Beati qui ad cenam Agni vocati sunt."
Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world.
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

The people respond in a paraphrase of the Centurion in Mathew 8:8:

"Domine, non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum meum: sed tantum dic verbo, et sanabitur anima mea."

Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed."

The priest then takes communion asking that the body and blood of Christ will bring him to everlasting life.

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)



*Behold the Lamb of God
Solemn High Mass: Ordinary Form*

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)



*Behold the Lamb of God
High Mass: Extraordinary Form*

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

Communion and Communio

The Schola Cantorum sings a short verse from Scriptures called the Communio at the beginning of communion.

Only Catholics in the proper disposition receive communion. St. Paul's warning on this issue is quite clear:

"Anyone who eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be behaving unworthily toward the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone is to recollect himself before eating this bread and drinking this cup; because a person who eats and drinks without recognizing the body is eating and drinking his own condemnation." (1 Cor 11:27-29)

If you are not a properly disposed Catholic and would like to come forward to the altar rail; please do! Just approach the altar rail, follow the ushers directions, kneel, and when the priest or deacon approaches, cross your arms over your chest. The priest or deacon will bless you instead of giving you communion.

Prayer After Communion

After Communion, the priest returns to the altar and collects any remaining particles. He purifies the paten or ciborium over the chalice, and then the chalice itself. In silence he prays:

"Lord, may I receive these gifts in purity of heart. May they bring me healing and strength, now and forever."

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)



The Body of Christ

Liturgy of the Eucharist (Continued)

Concluding Rite

The Concluding Rite includes the blessing, the dismissal, and the kissing of, and reverence to, the altar.

Once the Prayer after Communion is concluded, the priest greets us in the usual manner, extending his hands. As he receives our answer, he blesses us with these words:

*"Benedicat vos omnipotens Deus,
Pater, et Filius, et Spiritus Sanctus."*
May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The people respond: *"Amen."*

The priest gives us the sign of dismissal:
"Ite missa est".

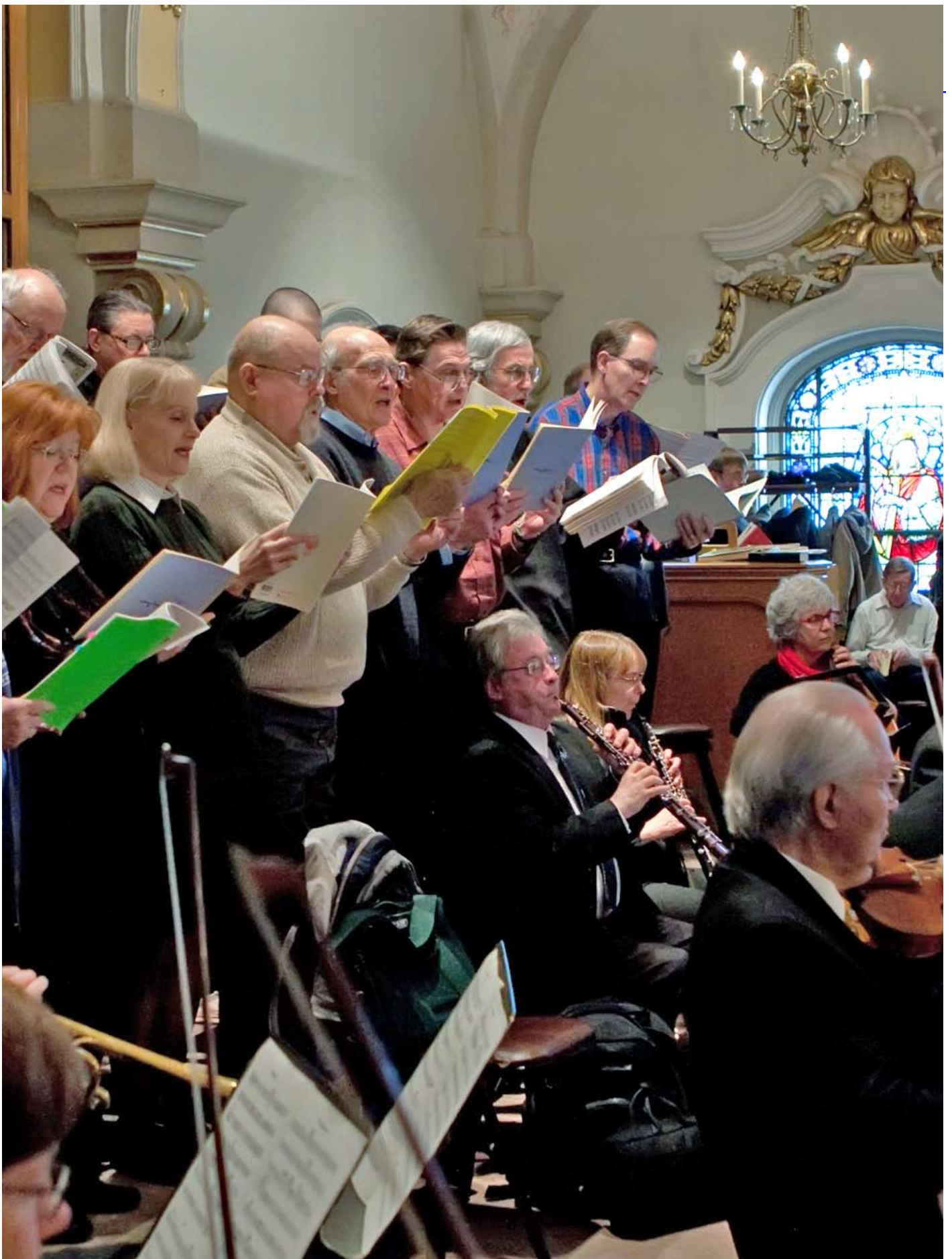
From as early as the fourth century this phrase has been rendered "Go forth, the Mass is ended"; it literally means "You are dismissed".

The people respond:
"Deo gracias".
Thanks be to God.

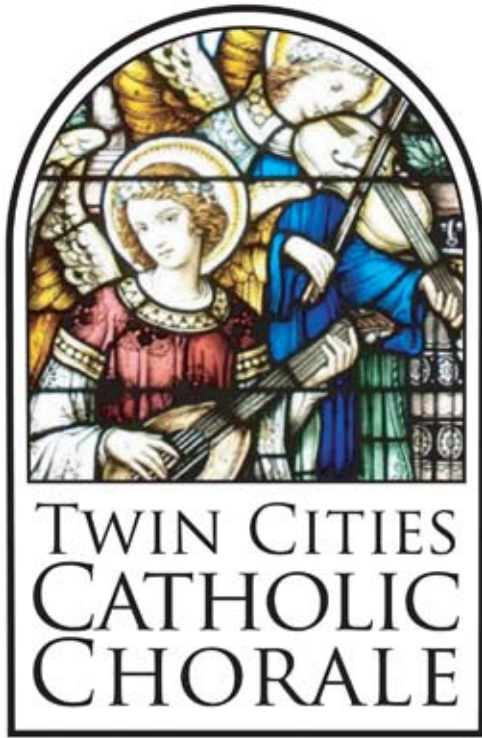
A Final Note: The word "missa" in the phrase *"Ite missa est"* is the origin of the word "Mass". Saint Ambrose (397 AD) is the first to record this use of the word for the liturgy. In a letter to his sister Marcellina describing the troubles of the Arians in the years 385 and 386 when the soldiers were sent to break up the service in his church, he wrote: *"The next day (it was a Sunday) after the lessons and the tract, having dismissed the catechumens, I explained the creed [symbolum tradebam] to some of the competents [people about to be baptized] in the baptistry of the basilica. There I was told suddenly that they had sent soldiers to the Portiana basilica. . . . But I remained at my place and began to say Mass [missam facere coepi or Mass of the Faithful]. While I offer [dum ofero], I hear that a certain Castulus has been seized by the people"* (Ep., I, xx, 4-5). It will be noticed that missa here means the Eucharistic Service proper, the Liturgy of the Faithful only, and does not include that of the Catechumens. Ambrose uses the word as one in common use and well known in his day.

As the Sacred Ministers and Altar Servers process out of church the organist plays an organ recessional. Please feel free to remain seated and listen.

Thank you again for coming to The Church of Saint Agnes. We hope you enjoyed the Mass.



A Commentary on the Roman Catholic High and Solemn High Masses at The Church of Saint Agnes



*Classical Music
in a Heavenly Setting*