

HINTS ON CELEBRATING MASS

(Father Hanshell gave this paper at a meeting of the Association for English Worship of which he is chairman.)

Preliminaries

Because the rubrics of the Mass have been simplified the notion has gained currency that the very idea of rubrics is out or on the way out. The do-it-yourself liturgy of course affects not only rubrics but the text of the Mass itself. The bloom however has worn off the dream of beautiful priests with their beautiful people being *spontaneous*. Such an approach to the liturgy has repeatedly been condemned, and it stands to reason that the liturgy being for public use must be set and formal. Nor may it be changed by private whim but only by the competent authority, which should of course allow for genuine creativity, something very different from "spontaneity."

The commentary here offered aims neither to minimize nor to go beyond what the rubrics indicate but to adapt them where this seems called for or to interpret them where the directives are indeterminate. For instance at the collect the priest is told to join his hands for the *Oremus* and to extend them for the prayer itself. Nothing is said about what is to be done during the conclusion when it seems fitting that the hands should be joined again, not only because of the long tradition behind this but because otherwise a certain unfinishedness not to say gawkiness results. Likewise it seems best to interpret the extending of the hands more or less as was previously the practice, *i.e.*, making the width of the shoulders the measure. When the arms are extended much farther apart than this they too often give the impression of a bedraggled vulture.

Again, we should do well to observe the old rule about keeping one hand on the altar while the other is occupied for example in turning the leaves of the missal or in moving the chalice from the side of the altar to the center. Particularly at the offertory this can obviate a certain unsightliness or clumsiness which it is to be presumed the revisers never intended.

While we are on the subject of hands: when they are not otherwise occupied these should be held in the "praying" position, *i.e.*, joined together palm to palm at chest height. This applies to servers and all ministers at the altar.

It is desirable that the altar be so placed in the sanctuary as to leave adequate space for maneuver in front of it.

The chair or chairs for priests and ministers should be on the hither side of the altar and preferably away from the center. It is important that the priest should go up to the altar or at least not come down to it for the offertory and the beginning of the liturgy of the sacramental sacrifice.

If there isn't a pulpit or if it is not to be used, a proper ambo should be provided if at all possible: a structure of some dignity and permanence which should be properly designed for preaching as well as for reading the lections. The reader or preacher should not have to bend low to read the book or to consult his notes. A lectern in addition to the ambo or the lectern used for the readings may often be found serviceable.

Second thoughts, however, might well be entertained on the banning of the

pulpit where there is a well placed one and the construction of a proper ambo is for one reason or another impracticable. Better surely to preach from a rostrum designed for the purpose than to be restricted to a lectern without due prominence in the sanctuary. Nor is it satisfactory that the ambo should be to the side of the altar and at the same depth in the sanctuary. It should on the contrary be well forward. Since the reform came in, preaching has been hamstrung by the misunderstanding about the scope of the "homily," a misunderstanding symbolized and encouraged by the failure to separate adequately the place of preaching from the area dominated by the altar.

The significance of movement, of change from position to position, must once again be emphasized. The priest standing (and bowing) before the altar for the penitential rite, his proceeding to the ambo, his going up to the altar: all this is eloquent of what is being done; and not least would it be so were he to go in procession to the pulpit.

The rubrics say little about the use of the voice save that the words of consecration are to be uttered *distincte et aperte*, distinctly and clearly, "as the nature of these words requires," an injunction which presumably applies in general to the Mass nearly all of which is now audibly recited; but the words of consecration ought surely to be spoken with a special deliberateness, more slowly than the rest of the canon but not more loudly and certainly not dramatically. There is an art of liturgical declamation which is neither droning nor theatrical.

In the course of Mass there is room for the lowering and raising of the voice as the case suggests. Those parts which in general do not change are best perhaps treated with a moderate voice, and the canon with a moderate-to-lowered voice. Leading the people in the *Gloria*, *Credo*, etc., might call for a more raised voice, likewise the collects and the readings. Nor where the rubrics indicate this should the claims of silence be disregarded. The priest is well within his rights if he recites the offertory prayers silently, while for the majority of the faithful it would provide a welcome relief.

It has been overlooked that silence at Mass, especially at a "low" Mass, does not just denote a cessation of sound: it has a positive role akin to that of music in the creation of atmosphere conducive to prayer and adoration. As then there needs to be a variety of movement in the Mass, so is there need for a variety of sound.

The question of the microphone is here to the purpose, and it is this: "Is your microphone really necessary?," and if it is, hadn't you better learn how to use it, and this may mean to begin with adjusting the thing? I venture to suggest that in the majority of cases the microphone is not necessary and that we should speak better and the people hear better if we were to learn to use our natural voices.

It is, generally speaking, regrettable that the young or those under a certain level of education or who are unable to use their voices properly should be appointed lectors. Perhaps an order of lectors should be organized in each diocese and membership of it restricted to the trained and competent.

In the sacristy

Silence and an atmosphere of silence should be preserved in the sacristy.

All bow to the crucifix before leaving for Mass and afterwards on returning.

If Roman vestments are worn it is best to cross the stole in order to cover a snowy expanse of alb.

Penitential rite and liturgy of the Word.

When the priest and ministers enter the sanctuary they stand before the altar. The priest bows deeply while the servers genuflect unless it is preferred that they too bow deeply. If the Blessed Sacrament is reserved on or behind the altar all genuflect instead of bowing.

The priest having ascended to the altar and kissed it, turns round, descends from the altar or takes a few paces away from it, turns to the altar again, bows deeply, and making the sign of the cross says "In the name of the Father" etc. Bowing again slightly the priest then turns to the people and greets them with "The Lord be with you" or one of the alternatives, following this with the *Fratres agnoscamus*. He is not obliged to use the exact words of this exhortation, but he cannot be expected to be original or spontaneous every time he addresses the people here, nor should he aim at being so. A useful brief formula might be: "Brethren, let us remember before God that we are sinners."

There are occasions when the priest may fittingly say something on his own, though it might be better to do so before actually beginning Mass. It is inept to explain why the people are gathered together when this is obvious. However, when there is no sermon a few words carefully prepared and explanatory of the Mass of the day are by no means to be censured, only it might not be everyone's gift.

Turning again to the altar and bowing deeply the priest then begins the *Confiteor* (if he is following this form of the penitential rite). He straightens up for the absolution (so called), and then follows the *Kyrie* recited in the same position and the *Gloria* if it is to be said. It seems appropriate that for the acts of penitence and adoration in this part of the Mass the priest should adopt the position here outlined. He can then go to the chair for the recitation of the collect. The server should hold the book which otherwise will have to be placed on a lectern: it is uncouth for the priest to hold it himself and this also prevents his extending his hands as he should do. Or else, though less suitably, the collect can be read from the altar.

To backtrack for a moment. At a Mass where there is no proper singing and no cantor, if there is a lector he reads the introit or entrance antiphon as well as the lections and communion verse. The lector, properly clad in alb or in cotta or surplice and cassock if the Mass is a congregational one, should enter with the priest as one of the ministers, if indeed he does not also act as server. When the priest goes to his position before the altar the lector goes to his, and after bowing when the priest does so, he turns round and reads the introit (from the extra lectern if there is one). There will be plenty of time for this and the people will be better disposed to join in should they be in a position to do so. If there is no lector and the priest has himself to read the introit, it would seem better to follow the order of Mass without a congregation and for the priest to recite the introit after the absolution. According to the rubrics "if there is no server at the entrance, the antiphon in the missal is recited either by the people, by some of them, or by a reader. Otherwise it is said by the priest after the greeting" (N. 26). We suggest however that if this antiphon may thus be a little postponed, for

good reasons it might be postponed a little further. The priest would go to the extra lectern (preferably) for this and remain there for the *Kyrie* etc.

Before going to the ambo or what does duty for it for the gospel, the priest accompanied by the server(s) bows deeply before the altar saying the *Munda cor meum*. Priest and servers then proceed to the ambo. Having once more greeted the people, the priest follows with the words "A reading from the gospel" etc., and while doing so signs the book with the sign of the cross (in the traditional manner using his thumb) and then himself on forehead, lips and breast. At the end of the gospel he kisses the book saying silently *Per evangelica dicta* etc., or its vernacular equivalent.

The sermon follows next if it is to be given, and on a Sunday although the rubrics indicate that the notices should be read out after the last prayer of the Mass and before the blessing, in practice a better place for these does seem to be before the sermon or homily. Notices in any case should be brief, and if given out towards the end of Mass should preferably perhaps precede the last prayer, which should follow the "Let us pray" after a due pause for recollection. Thus Mass would conclude less perfunctorily.

It adds somewhat to the solemnity if the priest goes to the center in front of the altar and faces it for the creed, if this is to be said. All should bow deeply at the *Incarnatus est* except on the feasts of the Annunciation and the Nativity when all genuflect.

For the prayers of the faithful when these are included — and again the briefer the better — the priest returns to the ambo while the lector reads from presumably a lectern elsewhere.

According to local custom the priest goes to his chair, bowing (slightly) before the altar on his way, while the offertory procession assembles (supposing there to be one) or the collection is made (as on Sundays). The celebrant goes to meet the procession at the sanctuary steps, handing the offerings to the server(s) when he has received them. A quiet "thank you" to those who have brought him the offerings is in keeping. The sort of informality which cuts across gravity is not.

The priest then takes his position before the altar as at the opening of Mass, bows (slightly) and proceeds to his place at the altar for the offertory. When there is no offertory procession etc., he proceeds direct from the ambo to the altar.

The Eucharistic Liturgy

The servers fetch the corporal, purificator, chalice (and paten) from the credence table and place them on the altar, and also the missal (with stand) which goes on the left side of the priest. While many do not scruple to place a microphone on the altar, some are horrified at a missal-stand's appearing there though a cushion is correctly primitive.

The priest then takes the paten with the large host on it and lifting it a little above the altar table says the first of the offertory prayers silently if it is so wished. There is no obligation to say these prayers aloud. The rubrics even seem to indicate that ordinarily they will be said *secreto*.

The servers bring the cruets to the edge of the altar on the celebrant's right,

and he pours wine into the chalice and a little water afterwards, saying (in any case *secreto*) the prayer accompanying the mingling. Raising the chalice a few inches above the altar table the priest says the prayer that goes with this. He replaces the chalice on the corporal and covers it with the pall, if he wishes to use this as he may (cf. n. 103: *Et palla pro opportunitate cooperit*). After this with his fingers extended and joined and resting on the edge of the altar he bows or bends forward moderately (*inclinatus*) and says silently (always) the prayer, *In spiritu humilitatis*.

He then proceeds again to the right of the altar for the *Lavabo*, and while the water is poured over his fingers or while he is drying them afterwards he says silently *Lava me, Domine* etc.

He returns to the middle of the altar and extending and joining his hands in the customary mode says *Orate fratres*. "My sacrifice and yours" is the correct version though "our sacrifice" is still permitted.

It may be noted here that for the *Orate fratres* the priest is told to stand facing the people, which seems to indicate that Mass in the new rite is not exclusively envisaged as *versus populum*.*

After the people's response the priest extends his hands and recites the prayer over the offerings, presumably joining his hands again for the conclusion.

With hands extended the priest says *Dominus vobiscum*; he then raises his arms as he says *Sursum corda*, "Lift up your hearts;" and with hands (apparently) still extended he next says "Let us give thanks" etc. He maintains this stance throughout the preface.

But the rubrics are again somewhat imprecise, omitting an injunction — which seems to be called for — to extend the hands in the first place lower than usual in order to raise them a few inches to the normal height at *Sursum corda*. It would be better in fact to hold the hands extended on the altar for the *Dominus vobiscum* and to raise them at *Sursum corda*. Perhaps one could go a little further and recommend that the hands be joined again and the head bowed (as formerly) at *Gratias agamus Domino*. The hands would then be extended again for the preface.

After the *Sanctus*, for which the hands are once again joined, the priest follows the eucharistic prayer according to the rubrics contained in each of the canons. Some points may here be adverted to.

First of all what has already been said about the voice may be recalled: a moderate-to-subdued delivery, clear and unhurried yet expeditious, might be best employed for this part of the Mass.

Secondly, in all four canons the priest at a certain point is required to hold his hands extended over the *oblata*. Here surely the old way of doing things is to be recommended, *i.e.*, with thumbs crossed. This might even seem to be indicated by the rubric: in Canons II, III and IV: *Jungit manus, easque expansas super oblata tenens*; whereas it previously ran: *Jungit manus . . . Tenens manus expansas super oblata*; and thus it remains in Canon I. This is a more gainly gesture than to hold out the hands unjoined.

Thirdly, a special solemnity is intended for the consecration. In all four canons as has already been noted the rubrics direct that the dominical words be recited distinctly and clearly as the nature of the words requires. At the words *Qui pridie quam pateretur* or their equivalent the priest takes the host and holding it a little above the altar proceeds with *accepit panem*, (He took the bread) *etc.*, and bowing

or bending forward a little says the words, *Accipite et manducate ex hoc omnes*, "take this all of you and eat it." Note that these words in the official Vatican edition are in large type and that there is a slightly accentuated space between them and the words *Hoc est enim Corpus meum* etc. This would seem to indicate that these words are to be said with a particular deliberateness, with a discernable pause before the words *Accipite et manducate*, etc., and a lesser one between these words and *Hoc est enim Corpus meum*, etc.

The priest then shows the consecrated host to the people. The same word *ostendit* is used in the old rubrics, and it is evident that the host is to be elevated; and it would seem best to do this to the same height — just above the priest's head — as formerly, even though he may be and generally is facing the people. The reason for this is that the host is liable not to be clearly seen if held lower (nor is it the priest whom one particularly wishes to have in view at this time). Traditionally the host has been elevated in order that the people might see and adore, and this is still why it is done. Such a minimizing maneuver as holding the paten with the host on it a little above the altar is to be deplored. In no way is it indicated that this should be done by the rubric which follows, namely, that the priest is to replace the host on the paten. There is a school of thought in the Church now against adoration of the Blessed Sacrament inside as well as outside Mass. Faithful observance of the rubrics here, then, is both a safeguard and a challenge. After each consecration the priest is to "genuflect and adore" (*Et genuflexus adorat*).

The rubrics for the consecration have been modified but they insist no less than hitherto on the sacrality of the action and on recognition of the real presence. It is at the "little elevation" that the priest is instructed to elevate the paten with the host on it together with the chalice; and the host will already be laying conveniently on the paten.

Perhaps we can get things into proportion by considering the reason for this slight change in rubrics. Previously it may be remembered the priest was to take the host between the thumb and index finger of his right hand and holding the chalice with his left hand to elevate them in a single gesture. Before this however, he was to make signs of the cross with the host over the mouth of the chalice, and these have since been deleted. We may deduce nevertheless that the real reason for what is now laid down is that the deacon or a concelebrant — should either be officiating — now elevates the chalice at the little elevation while the (principal) celebrant elevates the host and paten, and were he to elevate the host alone this could seem to be merely a repetition of the "great" elevation. All the same in the case of a single priest's celebrating without deacon second thoughts might be permitted. The old way of doing things had perhaps a grace which the new hasn't.

After the consecration of the host and again after that of the wine the priest is instructed to genuflect. The custom that has grown up especially in certain student Masses of nobody's genuflecting at all is not to be tolerated. The people should kneel for the consecration. It will not be often that they are too crowded together for this or that for some other reason it is not practicable (cf. n.21). Nor is their gathering round the altar an excuse: they should not have been invited to do this in the first place.

On no account may the people be permitted to recite with the priest any part

of the eucharistic prayer or canon, not even the doxology at the end — which would destroy the whole impact of what does belong to the people, the “great amen,” their affirmation of all that has gone before. Granted that the full force of the amen is only realized when the doxology is sung — particularly of course, in Latin — the priest can nevertheless elicit a more than perfunctory response by reciting the doxology in a slightly raised voice and at a slightly reduced pace.

Care should be taken before giving out communion to genuflect before the ciborium whether this has been brought from the tabernacle or whether the hosts in it have been consecrated in the same Mass. If any hosts are left after communion there should be another genuflection when the ciborium has been placed on the altar.

Communion under whichever species is always to be *administered* to the people; they should never be encouraged to help themselves from the chalice placed on the altar for that purpose.

The giving of communion is a ministerial function, and if layfolk are promoted to this office, they are, while they are officiating, lieutenants as it were of the ordained clergy, and they should be clad as ministers of the altar, *i.e.*, in cassock and cotta. The question about women ministrants is perhaps part of a larger one.

To give the blessing the priest holds his hands together before his chest, and then while saying the words parts his hands and joins them again. Then while the right hand describes the sign of the cross towards the people, the fingers held straight (as always) and cutting as it were with the little finger, the left hand is placed, fingers together (as always), on the chest. The hands are then brought together for the *Ite missa est*.

When the priest kisses the altar at the end of Mass let him do so as at the beginning with a certain deliberateness.

Some further points and conclusion

It would help with regard to the spirit and general appearance of reverence if at the offertory as hitherto the priest were to make the sign of the cross over the corporal with the paten and the chalice before replacing them after the prayer of offering. This may be the more desirable when Mass is said facing the people. Likewise it would add to the solemnity without overloading things if as formerly the priest were to make the sign of the cross with the host and with the chalice as he says (silently) *Corpus . . . Sanguis Christi*, etc., before communicating himself.

In general when Mass is said in the old position some sign of reverence should be made before turning away from the altar or on turning back to it: a slight inclination of the head would seem fitting, *i.e.*, in the time before the consecration. When however, the *Sanctissimum* is on the altar and the priest turns to the people to say “The peace of the Lord,” etc., he ought to make a stronger sign of reverence, perhaps by a deep bow before doing so.

Nothing has been said about solemn Mass though of course the new missal allows of degrees of solemnity. But those who have a right view of “simple” Mass will have no difficulty when it comes to the higher degrees of solemnity. Simple Mass is to be regarded as an adaptation of (fully) solemn Mass, and not solemn Mass as the simple sort with bits added on to it.

The rite of Mass comprises ceremonies, and though these have been simplified to a greater or lesser degree, ceremonies they remain; and ceremony-public ceremony - requires attention to detail if it is to be fully expressive and not slipshod. Not all perhaps will agree with all that has been said here, but if nevertheless it contributes to a more thorough awareness of what celebrating Mass entails it will have served its purpose.

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* (In point of fact, the rubrics in the Latin, but not in the English translation, state on some five occasions that the priest, *conversus ad populum*, "turned toward the people," says *Dominus vobiscum*, *Domine non sum dignus*, or *Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum*, thus indicating that the new rite is not envisaged as *versus populum*, but perhaps that the priest turned away from the people is the norm. Ed.)

HOW AND HOW NOT TO SAY MASS

There can be little doubt that the revised Mass could do with some re-revision, and in a direction which some would find regressive but others soundly traditional. One cannot but advert incidentally to the possible shape of things to come, although they could only come by the definitive act of authority. Moreover, we must learn to walk before we can run. The aim of the following remarks, therefore, is to plot what seems to be the best way of doing things within the present parameters.

We are told in the constitution on the sacred liturgy that the reformed rite should be marked by a “noble simplicity.” That it is marked comparatively speaking by simplicity I don’t think we could deny. In practice, however, is this generally speaking a *noble* simplicity? Where in art or in the theatre (or in ballet) a noble or a telling simplicity is achieved it is the result of a good deal of technical mastery. I should say then straight away that where the celebration of Mass fails in due degree to be impressive—to be *expressive* indeed of the mystery at its core—where it thus fails the cause lies first of all in the lack of conscious and yet concealed art on the part of the celebrant.

This art is a twofold one: an art of the voice and an art of movement. The sphere of the word is prominent in the revised Mass, and where the vernacular is used, as it mostly is, it poses a special problem. For while using his native language with a proper awareness of its resources the priest has yet to divest it as it were of the “personal” or at least of the idiosyncratic. He is speaking and yet it is not he, but the *leitourgos*, who speaks in the name of the Church and in the name of the Lord of the Church. His voice must be the conduit of that which speaks through him. Granted first of all that he has learned how to use his voice so as to be heard without shouting, as also to speak where it is suitable with a lowered voice and yet distinctly—granted this, he has yet to observe a certain remoteness, something at any rate far from the elocutionary. A degree of formality is called for that neither degenerates on the one hand into insensitiveness nor on the other into sing-song or the parsonic. The sermon, of course, is another matter. Volley and thunder can there have its place as well as the colloquial or the simply earnest; but from this we are here prescinding.

So much for the voice. The rest can be summed up in the word “movement.” The *leitourgos* has a body with head, hands and feet, and he must know how to use the body that the spirit may be expressed through it. This is what the larger part of liturgy (for the priest) is about, and why it is an art. To convey this we must use the not altogether happy expression, “body language.”

If we still have something to learn from what is improperly known as “the old rite”—and should rather be thought of as the previous edition of the western rite—we could also with advantage recall some of the comments to be found in J. O’Connell’s *The Celebration of Mass* (Burns, Oates and Washbourne). In the second volume, O’Connell has a chapter on liturgical gesture. He remarks, to being with, that the rubrics “constitute a very real spiritual discipline.” He goes on to quote from the old rubric which says that the priest is to go to the altar “with eyes cast down, and with a dignified carriage, holding himself straight.” To look around him indeed or to look glassily straight ahead will neither of them do. And as for holding himself properly, this is not only good for him personally but is part of the body language which should be spoken by one who realizes how great is his office and his privilege in the house of God, and that the eyes of the faithful are upon him. They too need to be stirred to devotion by the sort of deportment on the priest’s part that reflects his inner attitude.

Of course, there is no such rubric now, and this prompts the question as to whether the omission of such detailed directives has been altogether wise. One result in the somewhat bare setting has been the introduction of procedures not altogether in keeping with the sacrality of the Mass. To say “good morning” to the congregation, who obediently reply “good morning, Father,” is not only to reduce things to the level of the classroom but betrays a misunderstanding of what the Mass is about. Mass is not just a social gathering. It is an ecclesial and cultic one. From first to last what it celebrates is the saving presence of God. The greeting proper to this is “the Lord be with you”—or one of its variations—with the reply (as it should be) “and with your spirit.” “Good morning” is not only out of place but *de trop*. Moreover, it precisely wrong-foots the priest in his relation to the people. It is not (dear) Father So-and-So who should be seen first of all but the priest, the *leitourgos*, the instrument of Christ in His Church. As such the priest himself is anonymous. “Facing the people” is in no way meant to obscure this truth.

We left our celebrant, however, on the way to the altar. Immediately the question of what to do with the hands presents itself. One sees priests striding to the altar with their hands held stiffly to the side. But this simply looks wrong, for it is neither natural—when a man is walking he tends to swing his arms—nor is it apt for the role the priest is called upon to play. Indeed, we might almost say that the *natural* reverential gesture is for the hands to be held together palm to palm before the chest. At least they should be held there joined.

On the subject of hands O’Connell cannot be improved upon:

In general, when the hands are not in use during a ceremony they are to be held joined before the breast—a position of reverence and dignity. If one hand only is in use, the other, if the priest be at the altar, is placed palm downwards on the table, unless it is to be placed on the book or on the foot of the chalice. If the priest be not at the altar, or when he signs himself, it is placed on the chest just below the breast. It must not be held suspended in mid-air nor hanging at the side.

In reciting the collect and the prayers of the Mass in general, and not least the canon or Eucharistic prayer, two positions of the hands when not otherwise engaged may be recommended. One is to hold them from the elbows upward with palms facing inward and preferably not beyond the width of the shoulders. The other is to

hold them forward with palms upward. In either case the elbows should be tucked in as in rowing, and the fingers held straight together and not curling. To extend the arms widely is lacking in poise and generally tends to sagging. The arms should be opened within these limits and again in a measured fashion and without jerking at the words, “the Lord be with you.” It is perhaps a pity that there is no directive to part the hands slightly and rejoin them at “let us pray.” It just removes a suspicion of woodenness, but as being judged semi-Tridentine, it would, no doubt, merit a semi-anathema.

In general, the order of Mass as we now have it, is to be seen as a modification of the previous order and not as something “new.” As was earlier suggested, the revised Mass is a later edition of the same western Mass (in its Roman form). The tendency has been to highlight where the present Mass differs from what went before, while minimizing what remains unchanged. We need to reverse this tendency. In emphasizing the present rite’s continuity with the previous one, such details as the use of the chalice veil should not be ignored. And this, of course, heightens that reverence for the material adjuncts of the Mass, which is by no means to be deplored even if it was overdone in the past. If others than the priest handle these things they should be aware of their privilege. Nor should trendy variations on the traditional style of vestments—such as wearing the stole outside the chasuble—be indulged in.

In going through the Mass the following points might be adverted to:

1. To begin with we have to question the more or less regular custom of opening the Mass with “a few words.” Ordinarily these are rarely if ever called for. Even at a wedding or a funeral it is surely unnecessary to explain to the people why they are there. It is for the sermon or homily to do any commenting that may be called for. As an alternative, a well-prepared introduction on some point in the Mass is, however, acceptable. Exceptionally a congregation may be swelled by those for whom the Mass is a quite new experience. An explanation of what it is all about and of why things proceed as they do could then be offered, but it would seem better to do this at greater length before the Mass begins. Once begun, it should be allowed to speak for itself.

Besides not overloading the Mass with talk there is also a deeper principle at stake. It is what in the first place the Mass is *about*. In the name of the reform there has been a tendency to equate the “theme” of the Mass with the theme to be derived from the readings. This is a misunderstanding of the nature of the Mass, in which the liturgy of the word leads up to and is subordinate to the liturgy of the sacrifice. In every Mass there is properly speaking one theme and one theme alone: the theme of the paschal mystery, of the death and resurrection of Christ. To bury this under excess verbiage unrelated to this theme is in some sort to keep Christ buried in the tomb.

2. *The Penitential Rite*. To strike the breast three times at the *mea culpa* or its English equivalent in the *Confiteor*, instead of just once (if at all), by no means offends against the *caveat* concerning duplication of elements in the rite. To suppose so is to confuse categories. It is a matter of *expressiveness*, whether verbal or kinetic or both, as with *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*. Likewise limiting the ringing of the bell to a single stroke at the consecration of the host and of the chalice, instead of the full three strokes each time, is to fail to understand the role that these things play. In no way do the rubrics here exclude what was formerly thought to be proper. As is often the case now they merely indicate in general what is to be done and so are open to a minimalist interpretation.

3. *At the Altar*. When at the beginning and end of the Mass the celebrant kisses the altar, he should lay his hands on it. Not to do so is ungainly. Before the gospel, however, he should bow deeply while saying the prayer, and here he holds his hands

in front of him in the praying position. When, as in the prayer after the preparation of the elements, he bends over the altar, he touches it with the tips of his fingers, both hands being held straight and together. So the old rubrics directed and this cannot, of course, be enforced, but it is still the best way to do it.

4. *The Gloria*. At the first words of the *Gloria* there is no rubric prescribing any action on the part of the celebrant. Rarely, however, at this point does he not do something with his hands, if only to continue to hold them before his chest. To let them hang at the sides would indeed be grotesque. In the sort of future revision of the rubrics that seems to be called for—one in the direction of greater detail and precision—it might serve to recall what previously obtained here: “Standing at the middle of the altar, with his hands at shoulder height, and joining his hands and bowing his head a little,” etc. Rightly or wrongly and mostly unwittingly many have gone on doing just this.

5. *The Collect*. After the priest has said “let us pray,” all are invited to spend a short time in silent prayer. I think myself a definite but short pause is indicated, and that the pause is meant for recollection in the first place. It is not as if the theme of the prayer has been announced beforehand, as is the case with the Good Friday intercessions. Silence in the Mass in general tends to distract when nothing is going on during it. It is when something is being done, as at the offertory, that silence can enhance the action. To extend the application of this principle does not, of course, lie with the individual.

At present in a bare rubric when the celebrant recites the collect or the other *orationes* he is directed to extend his hands and no more. Nothing is said about rejoining them at the conclusion, “through our Lord, Jesus Christ” etc., although this seems a natural and consonant piece of body language. The ending certainly looks awkward otherwise. Nothing either is said about bowing slightly at the holy Name or at the mention of our Lady or the saints specially commemorated: a devout custom surely and one that was never meant to have been discontinued, though it largely has been as the best of traditions are like to be if they are not reinforced.

6. *The Gospel*. At the words “the Lord be with you,” it should be noted that there is no rubric enjoining the extending of the hands. It was explicitly stated in the previous rite that the hands should be kept joined. They have enough to do with the signing of the book, etc., and this *Dominus vobiscum* is not so much a greeting as a calling to attention. In both rites the procedure is the same, only the thumb not being mentioned now in the rubrics.

7. *The Creed*. Again nothing to accompany the first words of the Creed is prescribed; and here the same could apply as at the beginning of the *Gloria*. The priest would do well to bow his head at the holy Name, while the old rubrics directed that he do so at the word *Deum*, God. Be it noted, however, that I say this, as in other like cases, not to encourage going beyond what is at present laid down but to raise the question rather as to whether the line has been always well drawn. Such matters are not and never have been determined once and for all. We should be concerned about them, however, because it is possible to err by defect no less than by excess. Moreover, what may seem good to a panel of experts concerned very much with theory may not turn out so well in practice. In the Creed this is notably exemplified. Formerly all knelt at the *Et incarnatus est*. Why not reserve this, the pundits thought, for the two feasts of the Incarnation, Christmas and the Annunciation, and have a lesser observance, namely bowing, for ordinary occasions? We see the result. How often does anybody do anything? If these things matter it is hard to see why kneeling on all occasions has not been re-established.

A further thought suggests itself here. With the celebrant standing at the reading

desk or ambo and facing the people, his bowing at *Et incarnatus est* (when he does so) is not something that visibly impresses the congregation. If he with the servers, however, were to stand for the Creed at the center in front of and facing the altar, their bowing—and making a good thing of it—would plainly be seen by the people and prompt some of them at least to do likewise.

7. *The Offertory*. Three or four points may here be noted. There is no obligation to recite the prayers out loud. Two of them in any case are marked to be said *secreto*. This means not in a low voice but silently.

According to the rubrics the paten and the chalice when they are offered should be raised *aliquantulum*, “just a little,” above the altar. It is interesting to note how many priests follow in fact the old rubrics without for the most part realizing this. They raise the paten to chest height and the chalice to eye height (in the latter case such was the *practice* at least). It seems that the present directives reflect a compromise between two schools of thought. One has been for abolishing the offertory or at least for reducing it to the function of setting aside the elements from common use. The other school evidently fought to preserve the idea of offering, oblation. So we still have the word *offerimus* for both the host and the chalice, but the gesture is minimal, *aliquantulum*, and scarcely conveys the notion of offering. As things stand they are not perhaps satisfactory although half a loaf is better than none.

Most of us are not born liturgists and need to be trained and directed in the art. There is a right way to handle the chalice and a wrong way. One holds a glass of wine by the stem and not by the cup or bowl. In handling the chalice, therefore, the right hand should take hold of the stem while the left supports the base, and so it should be raised.

In bowing and saying (silently) the prayer *In spiritu humilitatis* let the priest remember to lay his joined hands on the altar (that is, preferably). It is not such a deep bow as when he says the *Munda cor meum* before reading the gospel.

8. *The Altar, etc.* In *The Feast of Faith*, Cardinal Ratzinger reminds us that “the strongly felt community character of the Eucharistic celebration,” with the priest facing the people, expresses only “one aspect of the Eucharist. The danger is that it can make the congregation into a *closed circle*. . .but the community does not carry on a dialogue with itself; it is engaged in a common journey towards a returning Lord.” How then to integrate the congregational orientation with the traditional “Godward” one? One thing we might do, the Cardinal suggests, is to restore the cross, presumably a hanging one between priest and people, to its central position before the eyes of all, so that it is not to each other but to the cross and to all that it symbolizes that all are invited to look. One would add that for the priest in any case it is very necessary to be, and to be seen to be, concentrating on what is being done “on” the altar. If his eyes are not on the cross or on the missal they should be, for example, on the consecrated host and chalice. Even in the dialogue before the preface they should not be on the people. The *oeillades*, apt to be attempted here, are as out of place as they are usually self-conscious. Indeed, the last thing one would want is the *compère’s* manner with his audience. The priest has no audience. His relation with the congregation is not that sort of thing at all. In inviting them to “lift up their hearts” he is directing them well away from himself. The better he ordinarily keeps his eyes lowered the more effective will be his looking and stretching his arms towards them on the one occasion when he should do so, namely at the words, “the peace of the Lord be with you always.” Even so, he should not look at the people but a little *over* their heads, and thereby be seeming to look at each one of them but without the misplaced “magnetism” of the star performer.

A few points of detail may now suffice. For the Eucharistic prayer the voice may well be somewhat lowered until the doxology at the end is reached. While directing

the action, the words of the canon are also subordinate to it, and they are familiar from repetition. At the heart of the Mass something happens. It also helps if the words of consecration are spoken slowly but not in any heightened way. Resuming the previous pace afterwards provides as well variety and contrast and helps to hold the attention.

In all of the four usual canons the sign of the cross is made over the *oblata*. There is an art in performing this. It should not be made streakily and haphazardly but in a moderate fashion so that the transverse movement does not exceed the limits of the *oblata* themselves. And the fingers should be held straight and together.

At the consecration, the celebrant should remember to bow slightly when reciting the dominical words. (In the Roman canon he will have previously raised his eyes at the words "looking up to heaven.")

Here the rubric which directs the paten to be placed at the center in front of the chalice has given rise to a regrettable habit. Too often the priest raises the paten and then lifts the host off it for the elevation. Something about this gesture recalls a polite tea party. One is almost surprised when the little finger is not also raised. Surely the traditional way of doing things is preferable. Let the host or chalice be raised with both hands above the head. It is to be clearly seen and adored. The rubric here could clearly do with revision. The nonchalant habit of raising host or chalice with one hand should also be deprecated.

A further abuse has also crept in. It is one thing to place the missal in front on the altar instead of at the side, but now priests have taken to placing the missal on the corporal, and in order to do so even displacing the *oblata*. Any idea of the point of using the corporal does not seem to have occurred to them, and this whether or not there is an altar stone containing relics beneath it. Could liturgical uncouthness go further?

Since the nonchalant habit of raising host or chalice with one hand is to be deprecated, at (in the present version) "This is the Lamb of God," the sacred host should be held up in the right hand (for right-handed people) while the other hand either holds the paten beneath or itself is held beneath with the palm open.

In giving communion the host should be raised a little before being placed in the hand or on the tongue of the recipient.

It is always an abuse to distribute the consecrated hosts to the people before the priest has made his own communion. The idea is that all should communicate together and it is a mistaken one. The Church is hierarchic and not populist, and the leading role of the priest reflects the headship of Christ. Nor should the sacred hosts or the chalice be handed round among the congregation. It is for the priest or at least the Eucharistic ministers to distribute communion.

Care should be taken to genuflect if the ciborium has been taken from the tabernacle and when it is placed on the altar, both before and after the giving of communion. Not only is this good for the devotion of the priest but also for that of the people.

Finally, and once again, let the priest be a priest. The blessing at the end of Mass is a *blessing*, the Church's blessing bestowed by the ordained minister who alone can do so, and the people have a right to receive this. It is an abuse to deprive them of this. It is also a strange denial of the priest's privilege and obligation. Let us hear no more then of "may almighty God bless us". . . however well intentioned this may be.

For the blessing, the left hand should be placed on the breast while the right makes the sign, on the downward stroke carving as it were with the little finger. There is a still better way of doing this but not perhaps within the present parameters.

DERYCK HANSHELL, S.J.

RESACRALIZATION

Some fifty years ago when the reform with us was only a small cloud on the horizon, one of the great Swedish Lutheran theologians was writing:

When the claims of the pulpit to undisputed primacy, together with a rationalized theology, have all but completed the work of disintegration, another voice arises and claims to be heard; the irrepressible need of the soul of man for devotion, adoration, and mystery awakens again the sense of reverence for ancient forms, and demands outward beauty and spiritual depth in the Church's worship.

The danger for Protestantism is that its justifiable opposition to the external form has all too often involved the loss of the inwardness of the mystery; and the result has been that the holy rite has sometimes become like an empty shell, not without didactic value, but robbed of its deepest religious meaning. For wherever mystery, the apprehension of the supernatural, is present in living power, it is bound to find for itself some outward expression — as by the solemnity and dignity of the service, or by a "holy

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silence," full of sacred awe which words cannot express, for it is the outward form of the approach of the humble soul to meet its God.¹

According to Brilioth, then, "the danger for Protestantism" lay in a desacralizing involving "the loss of the inwardness of mystery;" and who shall say that there is not now a similar danger for Catholicism?

However, the regaining of "the inwardness of mystery" is not to be accomplished for the whole Church — and we can be concerned with nothing less — by the retention merely of the old, "Tridentine" Mass in what could easily become a backwater Catholicism. It is because it is vital for the fostering of the whole sacral tradition of the Church that the Latin Mass must be a mainstream activity. Whether or not this would mean working primarily and exclusively in the revised rite we need not go into here.

The Latinist movement however would not be enough. There needs no less to be a rallying from within the vernacularist camp itself. And this rallying has three aspects. There must first of all be proper preaching and instruction — which goes of course for Latinists too. A sound and solid grasp of the doctrines of the faith, including the doctrine of the Mass, must be the principal aim of sermons. Secondly, a certain decent minimum of priestly deportment at the altar must be insisted on, together with a certain decent minimum of sacrality in the arrangement of the sanctuary and in particular with regard to the altar. In a word this must be basically "traditional." Thirdly, there must be a new vernacular translation of the Mass, both ordinary and propers, which shall adhere closely to the Latin and render it in a style of English traditional and suited to the task. A close rendering of the Latin need not mean a slavishly literal translation, but it does mean the avoidance of the sort of liberties taken by ICEL and ICET which amount to license. The notion that translators into the vernacular are to be free to produce versions owing as much to their own way of thinking and feeling as to that which is expressed in the Latin is highly dangerous. Of course, though indirectly, the three measures I have just indicated would help to dispose those who vaguely or sharply suspect Latin of being against their interests to see it rather as an ally.

It is not however with the first point, preaching, nor with the third, the quality of the vernacular, that I shall now be dealing, but with the second, in a word, with resacralization.

We need to think in terms of *mystery*; but mystery does not basically mean, though it may include, what is conveyed by the plural, "mysteries," as in the expression "the sacred mysteries." Such things may appear to some to be mumbo-jumbo, and so they are if there is not a basic mystery which they subserve, which they, according to the genius of a particular culture, express. At the very center of the great prayer in the Mass the word mystery is enshrined and given its proper context: the Mass speaks of the "mystery of faith," which mystery it is the function of the Mass by word and sacrament to "proclaim."

We come then to the Mass as the *mysterium tremendum*, the *mysterium fidei*. We can only indeed act, and it is right that we should do so, *humano modo*, in a human way. And the human way of acting when confronted with the *mysterium tremendum*, the *mysterium fidei*, is — in the traditional, cultic sense of the expression — the religious way: such as we see exemplified in what is known as the old

Mass, and which kind of celebration it was never the intention of the reform to do away with: to prune, to adjust, to develop, yes: to renounce, no.

Not all that has happened to the liturgy since the constitution was produced by the Vatican Council is in accordance with that document; and the last official instruction issued by what was formerly the liturgical commission in Rome has found it necessary to stress over and over again the *sacralit * — it comes over well in the Italian — the *sacralit * which alone comported with the mystery celebrated.

I should like, then, briefly to outline not dogmatically but as food for consideration how we could celebrate the Mass in order that what we do may answer both to the mystery at the core of our celebration and to that tradition from which we can only separate ourselves at the risk of losing our hold on the faith it enshrines.

The Mass is first of all an action: something happens which is not the work of man but of God, though it happens in the rite which was instituted by Our Lord Himself, and which must be humanly performed. The statement that the Mass is first of all an action is in flat contradiction to the persuasion all too widely to be met with in liturgical circles that the word has the primacy. It is a persuasion that has bedevilled Protestantism. Speaking of “the tyranny of the pulpit,” Brilioth thus concluded: “The result is seen in the listless passivity which now comes to be the normal attitude of the churchgoer.”² May Catholics not now note the same phenomenon resulting from the tyranny of the word, though not of the sermon so much as the set liturgy itself? Where the Mass, where the liturgy is concerned, it is with the East and with Orthodoxy that we have a common heritage, rather than with Protestantism, though this latter prophetically recalls us none the less to the importance of preaching. However, our own reform has in practice little stressed or understood this aspect of the theology of the Word. It is for Catholicism to integrate this valid insight of Protestantism — its very high doctrine of the Word as preached — with that liturgical tradition of adoration and mystery which, if we are true to ourselves, we share with the East.

But before treating of how we should speak and use our voices so as best to show forth the mystery we celebrate, and likewise how we should move and act in the liturgy, let us think of how things should *look*, quite apart from anything we say or do. For it is first of all through the eyes that we take in the right or wrong impression, and impressions can begin to impinge on us before Mass itself begins.

First of all, then, the altar. It is still at an altar that Mass is celebrated; and as Mass can only be allowed to be a “meal” if we allow it to be so with all the difference in the world, so can the altar only be allowed to be a table if it is something so different from an ordinary table that we shall do better to call it what it really is, namely, an altar. And whether it is brought forward in the sanctuary and the priest stands behind it facing the people, or whether it is in the old high position, it is the altar and nothing else which is or should be the center-piece both of the celebration and — in effect — of the space where the celebration takes place. This space is one that is set aside for a holy, sacral purpose, for the celebration of a divine mystery. And even if the space should need to double in function, becoming a hall for non-liturgical purposes when it is not being used for Mass, nevertheless in its use for Mass that space ceases to have a secular orientation: it becomes a sacred space, and its center is that which

has no secular but only a sacral function, the altar; and this is still the case where the presidential thronelet is given a prominent position behind the altar. Never mind what may have obtained in the fifth or the tenth century. In Norwich cathedral for instance, a mainly Norman building, the bishop's throne (rarely occupied) is up a flight of steps behind the old high altar. Nevertheless this is not what catches the eye in the first place. Nor in any case is ancient practice necessarily the best. A parish priest whose chair in the sanctuary takes visual precedence over the altar needs to be reminded of his true place in the scheme of things.

I have now mentioned the word *sanctuary*. I am afraid we cannot do without this. All the people are priests and kings, but this has nothing to do with the ministry at the altar. The royal priesthood of God's people has to do with the living of their lives, the sacrificial living, not with the sacramental sacrifice. It is in fact for the sake of all, that all may see and hear and equally participate, that there is a distinction made and a sanctuary set apart. We remember that when the people were thronging the sea shore Our Lord stepped into a boat and put out a little, precisely in order that He might reach them all with His words and with His presence. The theater-in-the-round has been tried and on the whole found wanting. It is a fallacy also to think that art and drama are to be taken down to the people so that at their level they can lay hold of what is presented. Rather, the people are to be brought up to the level of the art and drama presented, in order that *at its level* they may participate. A church then is to be so constructed that the people may be drawn up to the level of the altar, remembering that this is not just a table but the center of a mystery; and however near the people may be to that center, they need to be drawn up to it, visually, imaginatively, by the art and structure of church and sanctuary; and however far away they may physically be, yet to this center they are at once drawn — drawn forwards and drawn upwards — if the right sort of imagination and understanding have been exercised. The altar must have distance, that is to say, it must be seen to be set apart; and it is this that enables it to have equidistance, in impression, from all, and nearness in effect and openness to all. It is doubtful if altars centrally placed, in churches which may or may not be themselves circular, do in fact give this impression.

I shall not say whether anything should habitually be on the altar — crucifix, candlesticks etc. I shall content myself with saying what should not under any circumstances be there and which nowadays too often is. I refer of course to the microphone. Musical shows in the theater — those which are not just pop-group affairs — have the microphones (where they use them) concealed: otherwise they would so obviously ruin the scene. But we who pride ourselves on bringing in the secular skills to help articulate the liturgy, and who wire up our churches to that end, make this elementary mistake. But the effect is more serious: the sight of a microphone on the altar of God is not only aesthetically wrong and *gauche*: it is injurious to the symbolism of the altar and therefore to the Mass itself.

Generally speaking also there is no need for an altar microphone, even a concealed one, but I shall touch on this again later. There is, however, one point to add here. Those who minister in the sanctuary are not to be brought down to the level of those to whom and for whom they minister. Servants of the people, yes, but first of all of the Lord of tremendous majesty. It is always the people that

are to be raised up to the level of the ministry of the sanctuary in proportion as they take part in it. Inwardly of course they are on a par; but always speaking and dealing *humano modo*, externally and according to the formality of the occasion they are not. And there is no sin but rather rightness about what are known as "occasions" and the formality for which they call. The Mass is one such occasion, and indeed no other can compare with it. It calls among other things for the right habiliments. Those who serve in the sanctuary or those who enter it in order to perform a service, such as the reading of the scripture, should be suitably clad. And even if the lectern from which the laity read is outside the sanctuary, those who perform a liturgical function such as reading, which unlike the offertory procession is integral to the Mass, should be attired as recognizably ministers of the sanctuary, whether in alb or surplice and cassock or in a gown.

We now come to ceremony and deportment. For some reason it was held to be a reformed thing in the liturgy for priests when not otherwise engaged, that instead of holding their hands together as formerly in an attitude of prayer, they should do nothing in particular with them. Frequently this meant rubbing them together in a dry-washing movement. People who don't know what to do with their hands are liable precisely to do this. One of the first things taught at drama school is what to do with your hands. Nothing so much shows up in a public appearance as awkwardness in this matter. And priests in the sanctuary whether they like it or not are making a public appearance. The old rubrics told them what to do and this was not only practical but right. The priest in the sanctuary and about the things of the liturgy must not only preserve an inner but an outer attitude of prayer. He is not acting just as a private individual but as a *persona* and a public one. We have to rid ourselves of the illusion that the informal can be mixed with the formal in the liturgy, and the more so the better, as if informal is good and formal bad. When a gentleman takes off his hat to a lady he is acting formally, but he is also acting rightly and properly and humanly. *Ars est celare artem*, the adage goes. The art of the thing is to hide the art. The old rubrics of the Mass were designed to make every movement of the priest look *natural*: natural and right and proper in the circumstances, which were those of the liturgy and sacral and duly ceremonial. It is an error to suppose that we make it easier for the people by being sloppy, makeshift and amateurish when we are about our priestly business. On the contrary, like true artists the more we efface ourselves in the striving after formal perfection, the more the reality of what we are doing will come home to the faithful.

I think the time is arriving when some of the old rubrics and gestures too hastily discarded will be brought back. Meanwhile it is for us surely to make the most of what is at present laid down. The principal ceremonies of the Mass have by no means been abrogated, though some have been modified. For instance in the creed we are to bow instead of (except on two occasions) genuflecting. The result is that ordinarily nobody does anything. It would help perhaps if priests made a proper bow and not just a slight inclination, and if they turned towards the altar when they did so. To stand before the altar facing it and with their backs to the people for the creed, and for the *Confiteor* at the beginning of Mass, bowing deeply for the appropriate periods would be better still.

Nor at the *Orate Fratres* for example should priests indulge in a sort of mute dialogue with the people, casting meaningful *oeillades*. No more than when the

celebrant for the most part had his back to the people is he meant to be addressing them and not God in the first place (except in the sermon and to a lesser degree in the readings). If celebration *versus populum* means a lessening of the essential orientation *versus Deum* it is to be deplored. It can only be justified on the grounds that it gives the people literally a better view and with it a better hearing of what is going on, and so enables them better to enter into the mystery, though whether in fact it does this last we need not here inquire.

I now come to the most ticklish aspect of all: how priests should speak and use their voices. Let us consider first of all a simple spoken Mass in the vernacular. It is this which most priests will be celebrating most of the time. It can become monotonous, I mean for the people in the first place. The priest comes into the sanctuary. It is likely that he is never while speaking out of range of a microphone, which may or may not have been adjusted to his particular voice, and which he may or may not have learned to use. Unless our priest is unusually adept, he starts with the same volume and pace and tone of voice with which he ends, having hardly varied it in between. He is liable to be rather on the loud than on the subdued side, being persuaded that the people must at all events hear the word.

But they are not there in the first place to hear the word — and I am speaking now not of the word preached or of the lections but of the set words of the liturgy. The people are there to pray, to worship, to adore and to receive their Lord. It was the great merit of the old Mass that it was geared to this: to prayer and worship and adoration. If, before the dialogue Mass came in, it fell short on the congregational side, that is to say in vocal participation, and if careless and philistine priests could gabble and jerk their way through it, nevertheless by and large and not least by its quietness and its great pools of silence, and in the impressiveness of its gestures and movements, the old Mass spoke all the time of the mystery it was about.

A Mass properly said under the old order was quite an achievement, but so it must be under the new. There used to be definite directions with regard to the voice: silent, low, raised. We ought to adapt these directions. Monotony saps the attention as effectively as any other defect. There must be a variation of voice delivery in the course of the Mass. I would suggest, then, dividing the Mass vocally into that part which is more or less familiar and constant and that which changes from day to day. What is familiar — and where the canons are concerned, all but Canon IV become sooner or later familiar — need not be said in the same sort of full voice as the collects and the readings from scripture. It aids rather than hinders attention if what is familiar is said rather quietly, especially when it is so sacred and central a portion of the Mass as is the canon. I have to disagree with Professor G. B. Harrison when he advocates an almost dramatic and certainly elocutionary delivery here.³ I would recommend therefore a moderate voice for the beginning of Mass; a full voice for the collect and other prayers of the day and for the scripture readings; and without going into too much detail, a somewhat subdued yet audible voice for the canon, and a more raised voice for the doxology and in general for the rest of the Mass. Pace also needs varying.

The liturgy as we know is primarily intended to be sung. Singing is the norm: speaking is a secondary adjustment. Of course a number of problems disappear

when Mass is sung. In order to sing you have to raise your voice to begin with, but without shouting. And even in the most cavernous of cathedrals there is scarcely need for a microphone. However, there is one part of the spoken liturgy which approximates to singing: I refer to preaching. Unless the building is very cavernous the preacher will not only be able to make his voice heard without mechanical assistance, but it will sound much the better for it. How much of the voice's natural range and quality is simply not called into play by the use of the microphone, whether we have mastered its technique or no. If we are to proclaim the Word of God we need every bit of the voice God has given us if we are to do it effectively. And I would say that in a lesser degree but nevertheless basically this is true for the reading of the scripture and for the enunciation of the prayers. A concomitant advantage would be that first of all no lectors would function that were not up to the mark (and here I am altogether with Professor Harrison); and secondly, the microphone would no longer be seen in the sanctuary.

Nothing by way of comment or explanation or information should be spoken during the Mass if it can be avoided, as for the most part it can. The time for comment on the liturgy, supposing this to be required (which ordinarily it should not be), is before Mass begins, and at a sung Mass this may fittingly conclude the congregation practice beforehand where such is feasible. Rubric 29 should therefore be interpreted in this sense: it is in fact less suitable to introduce any comment or announcement "after the priest's greeting of the people." The sacred action has then begun and it is to be kept sacred. Nor is this greeting anything but formal, though in its sacral setting it is none the less real for that: it does not preface a business meeting or a parish bun-fight, but a gathering or *convocatio* in which the first step has already been taken towards the making present in its midst of the mystery of the Body and Blood.

Another rubric which needs to be sanely interpreted is that which enables the priest to give out notices after the communion prayer and before the blessing. If this sort of thing has to be done surely the communion prayer should come after this distraction and do something to repair it. There is a natural break and readjustment of wave-length before the sermon begins, and this is ordinarily the place for notices (sparingly) as it always used to be. For Mass is not just a *meeting* however religious: it is a sacred action which must not be interfered with, least of all after communion. It will be replied: But you've had or should have had your time of silent recollection. Even so it is fatal to the movement of the Mass to interrupt it in this way just before the blessing and dismissal, which should share in the solemnity of what has preceded them, and which they cannot really do after such a break. One may in any case question the worth of the recommended pause after communion. Mass is an action and the silence which may enhance the action is not that which extinguishes it.

I have not said anything so far about the offertory. The rubrics here leave a certain choice: between saying the prayers aloud — in a moderate voice I should hope, for they are familiar — and saying them silently, which is what I myself would choose in view of the reduction of silence in the new rite. We need all the silence we can get and I think a case could be made for some silence on some occasions in the canon, up till *Quam oblationem* in Canon I or its equivalent, and again after the acclamations till the doxology. We have to remember that at Mass

something happens which is not of our doing, though we must be busied about it. To repeat: we do not come to Mass just to hear what is being said but to follow what is being done. We *know* what is being done, and not because the priest should take it upon himself to tell us as he goes along; and we know what is being said at least sufficiently at the climactic moments, even though we may not clearly hear it.

We need to realize what it is we are aiming at when and if we make the sign of peace. This will affect the way we make it, the manner of sign that we give. There are two main types: the several minutes of greetings, hailings, slappings on the back and general fraternizing that goes on in a certain type of student Mass: that is one extreme; at the opposite pole is the liturgical *amplexus* as traditionally exchanged between priests and ministers at a solemn Mass. We have to consider what it is that our gesture — whatever it may be — is meant to convey. Is it the hot-house groupiness of student gatherings? Is it the slightly earnest or embarrassed or rather hearty expression of almost civic solidarity at the parish Mass? We give the *pax*, do we not, when the words of consecration have declared the real presence on the altar, the real presence in our midst, not a passive but an active presence, the presence of the saving God and Man, crucified and risen. Should we not spiritually at least be on our knees if not flat on our faces? Let us recall the event on the mountain when God revealed himself to Moses, albeit not face to face. “And when the Lord was come down in a cloud, Moses stood with him, calling upon the name of the Lord. And when he passed before him, he said: O the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, patient, and of much compassion and true, who keepest mercy unto thousands, who takest away iniquity and wickedness, and sin, and no man of himself is innocent before thee (*or*, who will by no means clear the guilty) . . . And Moses making haste, bowed down prostrate upon the earth . . . adoring” (Ex. 34, 5–8). *Who takest away the iniquity and wickedness and sin.* The “*pax*” comes between the *Pater noster*, with its prayer for forgiveness as we forgive others, and the *Agnus Dei*: the Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world. Is not the point of the *pax* the sign of our forgiveness of one another as one with our forgiveness by almighty God? Indeed by our mutual unforgiveness should we not block that forgiveness of which we all permanently and fundamentally stand in need? Reconciliation, the asking and the granting of forgiveness mutually among ourselves: is not this the point of the *pax*? And is this not within the context of the presence of the mighty and terrible and crucified and risen Lord, the omnipotent, holy, righteous God who has become for us the Lamb of God, who takes away our sin, who enables us to forgive as we have been forgiven? If this is the true way of looking at things, have we not been mistaken in the way that too often we have approached this element in the liturgy? And since in fact we may not be at Mass with those whom in particular we need to forgive or by whom we need to be forgiven, and if we are, it is unlikely that we shall turn to them or they to us if this has not already been done, any notion of spontaneity or informality, of its being primarily a personal gesture, has surely to be given up. It has of course nothing to do with the saluting of pals; nor is it just a social gesture. It would seem after all, then, that the old, formal, gracious liturgical *amplexus* is the right sort of gesture; and it may well be that ordinarily at least it should be restricted to priests and *ministri* in the sanctuary. It is rightly formal for it is part

of the symbolism of the Mass, and what it symbolizes is the mutual costly forgiveness in the hearts of the faithful in the presence of their holy, atoning, forgiving God.

Is there not a very real need now for the recovery of our Catholic and Roman identity, in doctrine, in ethos, in prayer: and does this not entail a traditional — I do not say traditionalist — liturgy: one in which we are not afraid to draw on our Latin treasury of music and chant, even though not exclusively, but in which whatever the language the orientation is what it always was, *to God, to the mystery of Christ, to the altar where the mystery is celebrated, and with recognizably the age-old ceremonies?* So shall we raise our people up, and only so shall we have anything to offer ecumenically. Ecumenism is the reverse of capitulation. It is a growing-together in due order, an order which finds the Catholic and Roman Church reaching out indeed, humbly and trustingly, but from the center. Our first duty is to heal the breach with Eastern Orthodoxy, with that great tradition of the Mass in all its splendor, of the seven sacraments, and of the Mother of God, *Theotokos*.

Meanwhile there is much that we can be quietly doing to resacralize the liturgy. May I in brief recapitulate or complete what I have been urging? 1) No microphone on the altar or in the sanctuary at all, at least visibly. 2) The varied use of the voice, with a due regard for silence. 3) It will take time to cancel the ICEL version of the ordinary and of the propers of the Mass, but we can meanwhile do something about the scripture readings. They don't have to be in the Jerusalem version or any modification of it. The Revised Standard Version is at least to be preferred. 4) Pastors should likewise know what to do with the responsorial psalm. There is no obligation to include this at all when there are only two readings, nor when there are three if the Mass is sung. The refrain of the responsorial psalm only makes sense if sung, and if the Mass is spoken, let the psalm be recited straight through without repetitions. 5) The use of Latin both chorally and congregationally as well as by the celebrant when the Mass is sung, as it regularly should be, though without prejudice to the use of the vernacular throughout or for the spoken parts if so desired. 6) The full use of ceremonial, incense etc. 7) The use of the chalice veil. 8) The holding of the hands in the traditional attitude of prayer when they are not otherwise engaged. 9) Care to bow to the altar for the *Confiteor* and at the *Incarnatus est*, if indeed genuflection at the latter point should not be speedily and authoritatively reintroduced. 10) The sooner the altar rails and kneeling communion are restored the better. An Italian ecclesiastic and liturgist explained to the present writer that in Italy there is no conflict between standing and kneeling. Ordinarily of course there are no pews in the churches, but the faithful either kneel to receive communion or they come up in procession and *on that account* receive it standing. The idea that standing to receive is meant to signify something different from kneeling — “active service of the Lord” — is of course nonsense.

The following points might be added, and not merely for North American consumption: 1) Priests should always be properly vested: to celebrate with a stole over ordinary clothes is philistine as well as forbidden. 2) That priests should fail to elevate host and chalice at the consecration and to genuflect is an abuse crying out for correction. 3) Priests should take care to genuflect after placing the ciborium (containing consecrated hosts) on the altar and before re-

moving it, and likewise, of course, at the tabernacle. 4) During the canon in concelebrated Masses only the voice of the leading concelebrant should be heard. It seems undesirable that more priests should concelebrate than can stand at the altar to do so, and even in special circumstances the number of concelebrants might well be limited to the symbolic number of thirteen (Our Lord and the twelve apostles) — a suggestion emanating from another monsignor. 5) Private Masses (so-called) are to be accorded their true value and dignity, and men who are not priests should be encouraged to serve them. Catholic boys should be brought up as in the past to serve Mass, while large and well-trained altar staffs with plenty to do should be the norm in parish churches. 6) Lay ministers of holy communion should be properly, *i.e.*, sacrally, clad. Such ministers should only be called upon to function where they are really needed. 7) Only lectors who are competent to do so should read the lections, and they should be suitably clad. 8) The chalice when it is to be received by the faithful must always be administered to them and not left on the altar for them to help themselves. 9) The faithful may not join the priest in reciting the doxology, still less any other part of the eucharistic prayer. 10) Let the sign of peace be made properly and sacrally or not at all.

The Mass, however, does not stand by itself. In the monastic order of the day it is the center-piece of a whole round of offices of prayer. And in the life of the faithful, where that life has not been reduced to its bare minimum spiritually speaking, Mass has always been supported by what are known as devotions, by para-liturgy. The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* explicitly recognizes this, yet has there not been a thinning-out of these devotions which is not entirely to be explained by the advent of evening Mass or by an allegedly more critical or refined grasp of the things of God? The loss of regard for the Blessed Sacrament, for Our Lady and the saints, in prayer and prayerfulness, is surely due to a drying up of faith, which itself goes along with the drying up of the traditional spirituality of whatever grade in the Church. Prayer and meditation always were the most difficult things in the priestly life, and if they are to be kept up and the difficulties faced they must continue to be seen as what is most important. Along with spiritual renewal we also need a doctrinal renewal, a deepening and strengthening of mind: a critical orthodoxy to outflank a progressivism which would claim to be well-founded intellectually but which is often shallow and credulous.

Nothing, I believe, would so much help the faithful for the most part to recapture their feeling for the Mass, or rather to draw it forth, for it is there, and to reinforce the sense of the supernatural in their prayer and in their lives, as regular exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and devotion to Our Lady. This might also give us second thoughts about the look of our churches.

REV. DERYCK HANSHALL, S.J.

¹ Y. Brilioth, *Eucharistic Faith and Practice Evangelical and Catholic*, pp. 1 & 68.

² *op. cit.* p. 274.

³ *Clergy Review*, November 1975.

4. There is no obligation to include the responsorial psalm when there are only two readings, nor when there are three readings if the Mass is sung. The refrain of the responsorial psalm only makes sense if it is sung, and if the Mass is spoken let the psalm be recited straight through without the repetitions.

5. Without prejudice to the use of the vernacular where judged suitable, it should be remembered that Latin remains the language of the Church and it can have positive pastoral value.

6. The full use of music and ceremonial (incense, etc.) is to be maintained. There should be regular solemn Mass whether in Latin (entirely or partly) or in the vernacular.

7. The chalice veil should always be used.

8. The hands of the ministers should be held in the traditional attitude of prayer when they are not otherwise engaged.

9. Care should be taken to bow to the altar for the *Confiteor* and at the *Et incarnatus est*, if indeed genuflection at the latter point should not be speedily and authoritatively re-introduced.

10. It should not be assumed that altar rails and kneeling for communion are a thing of the past, nor that standing to receive is meant to signify anything different from kneeling.

11. Priests should always be properly vested: to celebrate with a stole over ordinary street clothes is philistine as well as forbidden.

12. For priests to fail to elevate the host and chalice at the consecration and to genuflect then is an abuse crying out for correction.

13. Priests should take care to genuflect after placing the ciborium (containing consecrated hosts) on the altar and also before removing it. Likewise they should genuflect when passing the tabernacle.

14. During the canon of concelebrated Masses only the voice of the leading concelebrant should be heard. It seems undesirable for more priests to concelebrate than can stand at the altar to do so.

15. So-called private Masses are to be accorded their true value and dignity. Men who are not priests should be encouraged to serve them. Catholic boys brought up as in the past to serve Mass should be the norm in every parish church so that a large and well-trained altar staff with plenty to do forms the nucleus of the parish liturgical celebrations.

16. Lay ministers of holy communion should be properly (*i.e.*, sacrally) clad.

17. Only lectors who are competent should read the lections, and they also should be suitably clad.

18. When the chalice is to be received by the faithful it must always be administered to them and not left on the altar for them to help themselves.

19. The faithful may not join the priest in reciting the great doxology, still less any other part of the eucharistic prayer.

20. Let the sign of peace be made properly and sacrally or not at all (*i.e.*, no handshakes).

REV. DERYCK HANSHELL, S.J.

OPEN FORUM

I have enclosed a slightly modified version of the twenty points for the worthier celebration of Mass that conclude my article "Resacralization," which was published in the last issue of *Sacred Music*. I am thinking of issuing them in circular or leaflet form here in England.

1. There should be no microphone on the altar or (obtrusively) in the sanctuary at all.

2. The use of the voice should be varied (low, medium, full) with a due regard for silence, notably at the offertory.

3. Readings need not be taken from the Jerusalem or modern American versions. The Revised Standard or the Douai are at least to be preferred.