

Catechism of Liturgical Ministers

DRAFT VERSION

editing: Wojciech Kosmowski STL

translation: Anna Wątróbska

AD 2013

Preface for the 3rd edition

From 1st edition of “Catechism of liturgical ministers”, prepared personally by Rev. Francis Blachnicki, lasts 34 years. This book became a very precious manual for the *diakonia* of liturgy of the Light - Life Movement and for several generations of liturgical servants in many polish parishes.

In the last few years several important documents have been written by the Apostolic See and Polish Episcopate which precise certain norms on the Eucharist and its celebration. These facts brought the need for the new version of “Catechism” that would include the newest liturgical norms of the Catholic Church. Documents mentioned above are as follow: GIMR from 2002, Instruction of Congregation of Divine Cults and Discipline of Sacraments *Redemptionis sacramentum* form 25.03.2004, Instruction of polish Episcopate after promulgation of new General Instruction of Misale Romanum from 25.11.2004 and Directory of formation of liturgical servants from 27.11.2008 adopted by 346. Plenary Conference of Polish Episcopate. Taking norms and regulations from these documents into consideration was necessary to actualize “Catechism” and to make the use of this book fruitful for formation of persons serving in liturgy, especially from the Light – Life Movement.

In this edition of “Catechism” the division into chapters and main course proposed by Rev. Francis Blachnicki has been preserved. Therefore, this publication is simple and clear, which seems to be its greatest advantage. It seems to be proper to maintain of yet the traditional (for polish liturgy) system of liturgical formation division between men and women liturgical team, who perform their functions respectively inside and outside the presbytery. Of course, there is a special function of lector and psalmist, which - according to norms - can be performed both by women and men. The basic principle in this measure is preparation of both women and men to progress in their faith and to be ready to serve the Church using the very gift that they received. Detailed description of aims and directions of liturgical formation is included in the Directorium of formation of liturgical servants (*Pol. Dyrektorium duszpasterstwa służby liturgicznej*), no. 1-34.

Redaction works under the new edition of “Catechism” proceeded in several steps. First – a dozen people actively involved in diocesan *diakonias* of liturgy prepared their proposition of corrections and changes in certain parts of this book, according to recent liturgical norms. Then final texts were harmonized during the last redaction. In this way the final text of “Catechism” take into consideration both liturgical norms and remarks of persons actively using “Catechism” in practice.

Although originally this work was prepared particularly for groups of the Light-Life Movement following 10-yrs formation program, there are no objections to use it in other groups and environments. Some methodological suggestions and manuals will be available on: www.oaza.pl/cdl_eng/clm

Rev. Tomasz Bać STD, Wojciech Kosmowski STL

Rzeszów – Bydgoszcz, Poland, the 5th Sunday of Easter AD 2012

Chapter 1

The Importance, Dignity, Structure and Elements of the Holy Mass

1. *What is the place of the Mass in the Christian life?*
 - “The celebration of Mass, as the action of Christ and of the People of God arrayed hierarchically, is the center of the whole of Christian life for the Church both universal and local, as well as for each of the faithful individually” (GIRM 16).
 - Council Fathers of Vatican II called the liturgy *the fount* and *the summit* of Christian life (cf. CSL 10, CCC 1324 says “The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life”). Therefore, it is the center of the life of the Church. All other actions and activities in the Church’s life are bound up with the Eucharist and are ordered to it (GIRM 16).
2. *Why must the Holy Mass be in the center of the Christian life?*
 - The essence of the Christian liturgy and the Christian life is expressed in the Holy Mass in the most complete way, for the two dimensions of God-Man relationship meet in it: “it is found the high point both of the action by which God sanctifies the world in Christ and of the worship that the human race offers to the Father, adoring him through Christ, the Son of God, in the Holy Spirit”. (GIRM 16).
 - Moreover, during the course of the liturgical year the mysteries of redemption are commemorated and made present in the Mass, therefore all the events through which God redeemed the human race are experienced as present, with the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ being the central event (GIRM 16).
3. *What measures should be taken to make the celebration of Mass properly arranged?*
 - “The celebration of the Mass or the Lord’s Supper be so ordered that the sacred ministers and the faithful taking part in it, according to the state proper to each, may draw from it more abundantly those fruits, to obtain which, Christ the Lord instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of his Body and Blood and entrusted it as the memorial of his Passion and Resurrection to the Church, his beloved Bride.” (GIRM 17).
4. *When is it possible to receive the true fruits of the Holy Mass?*
 - The fruits of participation in the Mass cannot be obtained automatically through simple “saying Mass” or thanks to mere physical presence, but only when “the entire celebration is arranged in such a way that it leads to a conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful, namely in body and in mind, a participation fervent with faith, hope, and charity” (GIRM 18).
5. *What are the three fundamental attributes of good and fruitful participation in the Holy Mass?*
 - The good and fruitful participation in the Holy Mass must be: conscious, active and full (GIRM 18).

6. *What does the duty of conscious, active and full participation in the Holy Mass result from?*
 - *This sort of participation in the liturgy is “desired by the Church” and “required by the very nature of the celebration” (GIRM 18).*
 - *To this kind of participation “the Christian people have a right and duty in virtue of their Baptism” (GIRM 18).*

7. *In what way does the participation of the lay faithful affect the efficacy and dignity of the Eucharist?*
 - *The presence and participation of the faithful in the Eucharist is always desired, as it manifest the ecclesial character of the celebration. However, the celebration of the Eucharist is always endowed with its efficacy and dignity, regardless of the participation of the faithful, since the Holy Mass is always the act of Christ and of the Church, in which the Priest fulfills his principal function and always acts for the sake of the people’s salvation (GIRM 19).*

8. *How is the celebration of the Eucharist carried out?*
 - *It is carried out “by means of perceptible signs by which the faith is nourished, strengthened, and expressed” (GIRM 20).*

9. *What issues should be taken into consideration when it comes to choosing forms and elements in the celebration of the Eucharist?*
 - *Where liturgical laws permit or enable choosing among various forms and elements, the primary criteria of the selection are: responding to the spiritual needs of the faithful and enabling them active, full and conscious participation in liturgical rites (GIRM 20).*

10. *What function in the liturgy has the Diocesan Bishop?*
 - *The Holy Mass with the Bishop presiding, especially taking place in the cathedral church, with the Presbyterate, the Deacons, and the people taking part, particularly manifests the mystery of the Church and it must be exemplary for the entire diocese (GIRM 22).*
 - *The Bishop, being responsible for the liturgical life in his diocese, should care about deeper liturgical awareness of the faithful, and also their ability to celebrate the Eucharist with dignity and fully take part in it (GIRM 22).*
 - *Moreover, the Bishop should be concerned about the enhancement of dignity in liturgical celebrations taking place his diocese. The beauty of the sacred architecture and the liturgical music and art lies also within his competence. (GIRM 22).*

11. *What are the reasons for which allowed accommodations and adaptations can be made in the liturgy?*
 - *Certain lines in the Order of Mass allow some accommodations and adaptations. They are set out in order that a particular celebration „may correspond more fully to the prescriptions and spirit of the Sacred Liturgy, and also in order that its pastoral effectiveness be enhanced” (GIRM 23).*

12. *What do the allowed accommodations and adaptations consist in?*

“These adaptations consist, for the most part, in the choice of certain rites or texts, that is, of the chants, readings, prayers, explanatory interventions, and gestures capable of responding better to the needs, the preparation, and the culture of the participants” (GIRM 24).

13. *Who is allowed to make necessary accommodations and adaptations?*

The choice of certain parts of the Mass and their accommodation and adaptation is entrusted to the Priest Celebrant, who “will remember that he is the servant of the Sacred Liturgy and that he himself is not permitted, on his own initiative, to add, to remove, or to change anything in the celebration of Mass” (GIRM 24).

14. *What other institutions in the Church are allowed to make accommodations and adaptations in the liturgy?*

- Permitted accommodations and adaptations concerning the liturgy pertain, in certain circumstances, to the Diocesan Bishop or to the Conference of Bishops (GIRM 25).
- Certain liturgical matters are regulated also by other Church documents publicized by the Apostolic See (GIRM 26).

15. *How else can we name and describe the Holy Mass?*

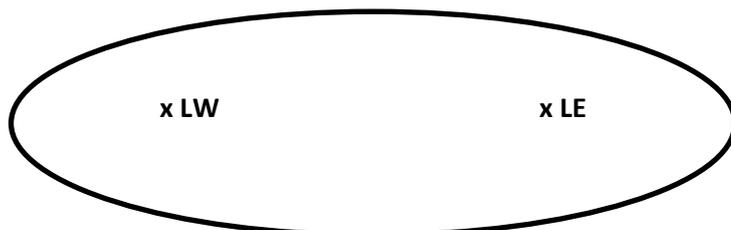
- The Holy Mass is: the Lord’s Supper, celebrating the memorial of the Lord, Eucharistic Sacrifice, a local gathering of the holy Church (GIRM 27).

16. *In what way in the local gathering of the Church Christ realizes his promise: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst” (Mt 18:20)?*

- In the liturgy of Mass Jesus Christ “is really present in the very assembly gathered in his name, in the person of the minister, in his word, and indeed substantially and uninterruptedly under the Eucharistic species” (GIRM 27).

17. *What are the two main parts of the Holy Mass?*

- Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council states very clearly, that the Mass consists “in a certain sense” of two parts, “namely, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, these being so closely interconnected that they form but one single act of worship” (cf. CSL 56, GIRM 28).
- It can be illustrated as an ellipse containing two equivalent poles:

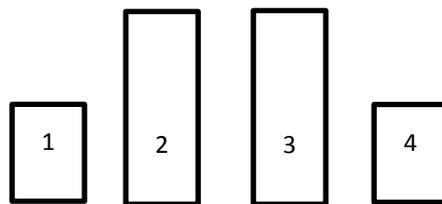


18. *How to express the structure of the Mass figuratively?*

- It can be depicted as two tables:” in the Mass is spread the table both of God’s Word and of the Body of Christ, and from it the faithful are to be instructed and refreshed” (GIRM 28).

19. *Is it correct to say that the Mass has four-element structure?*

- Yes, if to the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist we add the Introductory Rites and the Concluding Rites. “There are also certain rites that open and conclude the celebration” (GIRM 28).
- The structure can be illustrated as below:



- 1 - the Introductory Rites
- 2 - the Liturgy of the Word
- 3 - the Liturgy of the Eucharist
- 4 - the Concluding Rites

20. *In how many parts the Liturgy of the Eucharist can be divided?*

- The Liturgy of the Eucharist consists of:
 - a) the Preparation of the Gifts - bread and wine with water are brought to the altar,
 - b) the Eucharistic Prayer - thanks is given to God for the whole work of salvation, and the offerings become the Body and Blood of Christ,
 - c) Communion - the faithful receive from the one bread the Lord’s Body and from the one chalice the Lord’s Blood.

21. *What basic formal elements the celebration of Mass contains?*

- We can express basic formal elements of the Holy Mass using three terms: word, gesture, silence.

22. *What is the role of the Word of God in the liturgy?*

- “When the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church, God himself speaks to his people, and Christ, present in his word, proclaims the Gospel” (GIRM 29).
- The readings from the Word of God “are an element of the greatest importance in the Liturgy” (GIRM 29).
- The Word of God, which is “addressed to all people of whatever era”, ought to be explained, actualized in the Homily. The task of the Homily is to lead the faithful to a fuller understanding of the Word of God and to discover its efficaciousness in the life of the community listening it (GIRM 29).

23. *What kinds of word we can point out in the Holy Mass?*

- With respect to a form:
 - spoken,
 - singed;
- With respect to a speaker:
 - a) the Word of God,
 - b) the word of the Priest presiding over the assembly,
 - c) the word of the people who answer God.

24. *What are “presidential prayers” and how should they be pronounced?*

- Presidential prayers are prayers that the Priest, who presides over the assembly in the person of Christ, addresses to God “in the name of the entire holy people and of all present” (GIRM 30).
- Among presidential prayers there are: the Eucharistic Prayer (the high point of the whole celebration), the Collect, the Prayer over the Offerings, and the Prayer after Communion (GIRM 30).
- It is also for the Priest presiding over the assembly to offer explanations foreseen in the rite itself, to regulate the Liturgy of the Word, and to impart the final blessing (GIRM 31).
- The Priest presiding is permitted, furthermore, in a very few words, to:
 - give the faithful an introduction to the Mass of the day - after the initial Greeting and before the Penitential Act,
 - an introduction to the Liturgy of the Word - before the readings,
 - an introduction to the Eucharistic Prayer - before the Preface,
 - “make concluding comments regarding the entire sacred action before the Dismissal” (GIRM 31).
- “The nature of the «presidential » parts requires that they be spoken in a loud and clear voice and that everyone listen to them attentively. Therefore, while the Priest is pronouncing them, there should be no other prayers or singing, and the organ or other musical instruments should be silent” (GIRM 32).
- The Priest pronounced presidential prayers “in the name of the Church and of the assembled community” (GIRM 33).

25. *What is the role of silent prayers that the Priest says during the Mass?*

- The Priest says certain prayers quietly in his own name, “asking that he may exercise his ministry with greater attention and devotion” (GIRM 33).
- Silent prayers occur: before the reading of the Gospel, at the Preparation of the Gifts (before the washing of hands), and before and after the Communion of the Priest (GIRM 33).

26. *Which part of presidential prayers is principally important?*

- Especially important is the conclusion that begins with: “Through our Lord Jesus Christ”, for in this particular moment the Priest, by the power of his participation in Christ’s priesthood, incorporates prayers of the assembly in the archpriest mediation of Christ. Saying “Amen” by the assembly is also important, for that is how the faithful acknowledge a given prayer as their own.

27. *Which parts and formulas of the Mass are especially significant for showing and maintaining active participation of the whole assembly in God service?*

- Concerning active participation in the celebration, „the dialogues between the Priest and the assembled faithful, and the acclamations are of great significance; for they are not simply outward signs of communal celebration but foster and bring about communion between Priest and people” (GIRM 34-35).
- “Other parts, most useful for expressing and fostering the active participation of the faithful, and which are assigned to the whole gathering, include especially the Penitential Act, the Profession of Faith, the Universal Prayer, and the Lord’s Prayer” (GIRM 36).

28. *In what manner should the texts of the Mass be pronounced?*

- “In texts that are to be pronounced in a loud and clear voice, whether by the Priest or the Deacon, or by a reader, or by everyone, the voice should correspond to the genre of the text itself, that is, depending upon whether it is a reading, a prayer, an explanatory comment, an acclamation, or a sung text” (GIRM 28).
- Singing should be “suited to the form of celebration and to the solemnity of the gathering” (GIRM 28).

29. *Why is singing so significant for the liturgy?*

- The Christian faithful who come together as one in expectation of the Lord’s coming are instructed by the Apostle Paul to sing together Psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles - cf. Col 3:16 (GIRM 39).

30. *What does the liturgical singing express?*

- “Singing is the sign of the heart’s joy (cf. Acts 2:46). Thus St. Augustine says rightly, »Singing is for one who loves, « and there is also an ancient proverb: »Whoever sings well prays twice over«” (GIRM 39).

31. *What are the general rules concerning singing during the Holy Mass?*

- “Great importance should (...) be attached to the use of singing in the celebration of the Mass, with due consideration for the culture of peoples and abilities of each liturgical assembly” (GIRM 40).
- “Every care should be taken that singing by the ministers and the people not be absent in celebrations that occur on Sundays and on Holydays of Obligation” (GIRM 40).
- It is not always necessary to sing all the texts in weekday Masses (GIRM 40).
- “In the choosing of the parts actually to be sung, preference is to be given to those that are of greater importance and especially to those which are to be sung by the Priest (...) and people” (GIRM 40).

32. *Which kind of singing is the most proper to the Roman Liturgy?*

- „The main place should be given (...) to Gregorian chant, as being proper to the Roman Liturgy” (GIRM 41).

- Other kinds of singing “are in no way excluded, provided that they correspond to the spirit of the liturgical action and that they foster the participation of all the faithful” (GIRM 41).
- “Since the faithful from different countries come together ever more frequently, it is desirable that they know how to sing together at least some parts of the Ordinary of the Mass in Latin, especially the Profession of Faith and the Lord’s Prayer, according to the simpler settings” (GIRM 41).

33. What is the importance of gestures and bodily postures during the celebration?

- The gestures and bodily posture “must be conducive to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, to making clear the true and full meaning of its different parts, and to fostering the participation of all” (GIRM 42).

34. Why should all participants of the Liturgy have a common bodily posture?

- It is “a sign of the unity of the members of the Christian community gathered together for the Sacred Liturgy, for it expresses the intentions and spiritual attitude of the participants and also fosters them” (GIRM 42).

35. Standing posture – what is its meaning and when it should be maintain?

- Standing posture expresses respect, readiness to serve and freedom of God’s children. It is the most common Christian praying posture.
- During the Holy Mass the faithful should stand (GIRM 43):
 - from the beginning of the Entrance Chant, or while the Priest approaches the altar, until the end of the Collect;
 - for the Alleluia Chant before the Gospel;
 - while the Gospel itself is proclaimed;
 - during the Profession of Faith and the Universal Prayer;
 - from the invitation, Orate, fratres (Pray, brethren), before the Prayer over the Offerings until the end of Mass, except at the places indicated here below.

36. Sitting posture – what is its meaning and when it should be maintain?

- Sitting posture means readiness to listen, concentration and meditation, relaxation.
- The faithful should sit (GIRM 43):
 - during the readings before the Gospel and the Responsorial Psalm;
 - for the Homily and during the Preparation of the Gifts at the Offertory;
 - if appropriate, they may sit or kneel during the period of sacred silence after Communion.

37. Kneeling posture – what is its meaning and when it should be maintain?

- Kneeling posture express adoration and humility before God.
- “In the Dioceses of the United States of America, they should kneel beginning after the singing or recitation of the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy) until after the Amen of the Eucharistic Prayer, except when prevented on occasion by ill health, or for reasons of lack of space, of the large number of people present, or for another reasonable cause. However, those who do not kneel ought to make a profound bow when the Priest

genuflects after the Consecration. The faithful kneel after the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) unless the Diocesan Bishop determines otherwise” (GIRM 43).

38. What should be taken into account regarding processions during the Mass?

- There are processions by which:
 - the Priest, with the Deacon and ministers, goes to the altar;
 - the Deacon carries the Evangeliary or Book of the Gospels to the ambo before the proclamation of the Gospel;
 - the faithful bring up the gifts;
 - the faithful come forward to receive Communion.
- “It is appropriate that actions and processions of this sort be carried out with decorum while the chants proper to them are sung, in accordance with the norms laid down for each” (GIRM 44).

39. What is the meaning of silence as a part of celebration?

- The nature of sacred silence depends on the moment when it occurs in the different parts of the celebration (GIRM 45):
 - in the Penitential Act and after the invitation to pray, individuals recollect themselves;
 - after a reading or after the Homily, all meditate briefly on what they have heard;
 - after Communion, they praise God in their hearts and pray to him.
- “Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner” (GIRM 45).

Chapter 2

Duties and functions in the Holy Mass

40. *How and why should each member of the Church contribute to the common participation in the Eucharist?*

- The celebration of the Eucharist “pertains to the whole Body of the Church, manifests it, and has its effect upon it. Indeed, it also affects the individual members of the Church in a different way, according to their different orders, functions, and actual participation. In this way, the Christian people, “a chosen race, a royal Priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession,” expresses its cohesion and its hierarchical ordering” (GIRM 91).
- “All, therefore, whether ordained ministers or lay Christian faithful, in fulfilling their function or their duty, should carry out solely but totally that which pertains to them” (GIRM 91).

41. *Under what conditions is a celebration of the Eucharist legitimate?*

- When it is directed by the Bishop, either in person or through Priests, who are his helpers (GIRM 92).

42. *Why is most fitting for the Bishop who is present at a Mass to celebrate it himself, with Priest as concelebrants?*

- When the Bishop presides the Eucharist, surrounded by Priests concelebrants, “it is done not for the sake of adding outward solemnity to the rite, but to signify more vividly the mystery of the Church, »the sacrament of unity«” (GIRM 92).
- If the Bishop does not celebrate the Eucharist, “it is appropriate that he should preside over the Liturgy of the Word, wearing the pectoral cross, stole, and cope over an alb, and that he should give the blessing at the end of Mass” (GIRM 92).

43. *Why the Priest presides over the faithful?*

- Because he “possesses within the Church the sacred power of Orders to offer sacrifice in the person of Christ” (GIRM 93).

By this fact a Priest:

- presides over the faithful people gathered here and now,
- presides over their prayer,
- proclaims to them the message of salvation,
- associates the people with himself in the offering of sacrifice through Christ in the Holy Spirit to God the Father,
- gives his brothers and sisters the Bread of eternal life and partakes of it with them (GIRM 93).

44. *What functions at the Mass pertain to the Deacon, if he is present?*

- “After the Priest, the Deacon, in virtue of the sacred Ordination he has received, holds first place among those who minister in the celebration of the Eucharist” (GIRM 94).
- At Mass the Deacon has his own part:
 - in proclaiming the Gospel,
 - from time to time in preaching God’s Word,
 - in announcing the intentions of the Universal Prayer,
 - in ministering to the Priest,
 - in preparing the altar and in serving the celebration of the Sacrifice,
 - in distributing the Eucharist to the faithful, especially under the species of wine,
 - from time to time in giving instructions regarding the people’s gestures and posture (GIRM 94).

45. *Which demands of the spiritual participation of the faithful in the Holy Mass particularly refer to Liturgical Ministers?*

- “In the celebration of Mass the faithful form a holy people, a people of God’s own possession and a royal Priesthood, so that they may give thanks to God and offer the unblemished sacrificial Victim not only by means of the hands of the Priest but also together with him and so that they may learn to offer their very selves. They should, moreover, take care to show this by their deep religious sense and their charity toward brothers and sisters who participate with them in the same celebration” (GIRM 95).
- “They are consequently to avoid any appearance of singularity or division, keeping in mind that they have only one Father in heaven and that hence are all brothers or sisters one to the other” (GIRM 96).

46. *How the faithful express their unity participating in the Mass?*

- The faithful “form one body, whether in hearing the Word of God, or in taking part in the prayers and in the singing, or above all by the common offering of the Sacrifice and by participating together at the Lord’s table. This unity is beautifully apparent from the gestures and bodily postures observed together by the faithful” (GIRM 96).

47. *What attitude should the faithful have towards performing particular liturgical functions in the assembly?*

- The faithful “should not refuse to serve the People of God in gladness whenever they are asked to perform some particular service or function in the celebration” (GIRM 97).

48. *The acolyte – who is he and what are his duties?*

- The acolyte is a man, who is formally instituted for this service by the Bishop during a particular ceremony.
- The function of the acolyte was restored by Pope Paul VI's *motu proprio Ministeria quaedam* of 15 August 1972, related to the postconciliar reform of “minor orders”.

- “The acolyte is instituted for service at the altar and to assist the Priest and Deacon. It is his place principally to prepare the altar and the sacred vessels and, if necessary, to distribute the Eucharist to the faithful as an extraordinary minister” (GIRM 98).
- His duty is also to prepare those who temporarily as ministers perform various liturgical functions.

49. The lector – who is he and what are his duties?

- The lector is a man, who is formally instituted for this service by the Bishop during a particular ceremony.
- This function was also introduced by *Ministeria quaedam*.
- The lector is instituted to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, with the exception of the Gospel. He may also announce the intentions for the Universal Prayer and, in the absence of a psalmist, recite the Psalm between the readings” (GIRM 99).
- In the celebration of the Eucharist, the lector has his own proper function which he himself should carry out, even if superior ministers are present.

50. Apart from those instituted by the Bishop, can other persons perform the function of lector?

- “In the absence of an instituted lector, other lay people may be deputed to proclaim the readings from Sacred Scripture, people who are truly suited to carrying out this function and carefully prepared, so that by their hearing the readings from the sacred texts the faithful may conceive in their hearts a sweet and living affection for Sacred Scripture” (GIRM 101).
- The function of lector during the liturgy can be exercised by men or women.
- The readings basically should be proclaimed by adults, also in Masses with children.

51. The psalmist – who is he or her and what are their duties?

- “It is the psalmist’s place to sing the Psalm or other biblical canticle to be found between the readings. To carry out this function correctly, it is necessary for the psalmist to be accomplished in the art of singing Psalms and have a facility in public speaking and elocution” (GIRM 102).

52. What is the function of the choir, especially with relation to the faithful’s singing?

- “Among the faithful, the schola cantorum or choir exercises its own liturgical function, its place being to take care that the parts proper to it, in keeping with the different genres of chant, are properly carried out and to foster the active participation of the faithful by means of the singing” (GIRM 103).

53. Who else should take care of the active participation of the faithful in singing?

- An organist, “a cantor or a choir director direct and support the people’s singing” (GIRM 104).
- “When there is no choir, it is up to the cantor to direct the different chants, with the people taking the part proper to them” (GIRM 104).

54. *Who else exercises liturgical functions in the assembly of the faithful?*

- A liturgical function is also exercised by (GIRM 105):
 - the sacristan,
 - the commentator,
 - those who take up the collections in the church,
 - those who welcome the faithful at the church doors, seat them appropriately, and marshal them in processions.

55. *What is the function of the master of ceremonies?*

- The master of ceremonies is to “see to the appropriate arrangement of sacred actions and to their being carried out by the sacred ministers and lay faithful with decorum, order, and devotion” (GIRM 106).

56. *How can we divide other liturgical functions with regard to the place of exercise?*

- They can be divided into those that are to be performed inside or outside the presbytery.

57. *How can we divide liturgical functions that are performed inside the presbytery?*

- With regard to the item that the ministers hold or carry – the ministers of: the book, the cross, the candles, the bread, the wine, the water, the incense and the censer.

58. *What is the basic division of the male liturgical servers (with regard to the formation program implemented in Poland)?*

- There are several ranks of the liturgical ministers:
 - a) the aspirant – the chorister,
 - b) the junior minister – who carry the candle,
 - c) the minister – who carry the book and the cross,
 - d) the senior minister – who carry the water, the wine, the bread and the censer,
 - e) the lector,
 - f) the master of ceremonies,
 - g) the liturgical animator.

59. *What are liturgical functions outside the presbytery?*

- There are several functions outside the presbytery:
 - a) the service of the commentator,
 - b) the service of keeping order,
 - c) the service of collecting gifts.

60. *What is the basic division of the female liturgical servers (with regard to the formation program implemented in Poland)?*

- a) the member of schola cantorum,
- b) the gift bearer,
- c) the order keeper,
- d) the commentator,
- e) the director of schola cantorum,
- f) the liturgical animator.

61. *What should be done if there are several persons who are able to perform the same function in the liturgy?*

- “If there are several present who are able to exercise the same ministry, nothing forbids their distributing among themselves and performing different parts of the same ministry or duty. For example, (...) if there are several readings, it is well to distribute them among a number of readers, and the same applies for other matters” (GIRM 109).
- “However, it is not at all appropriate that several persons divide a single element of the celebration among themselves, e.g., that the same reading be proclaimed by two readers, one after the other, with the exception of the Passion of the Lord” (GIRM 109).
- “If at a Mass with the people only one minister is present, that minister may exercise several different functions” (GIRM 110).

62. *Who and in what way should prepare each liturgical action?*

- “There should be harmony and diligence among all those involved in the effective preparation of each liturgical celebration in accordance with the Missal and other liturgical books, both as regards the rites and as regards the pastoral and musical aspects” (GIRM 111).
- “This should take place under the direction of the rector of the church and after consultation with the faithful in things that directly pertain to them” (GIRM 111).
- “However, the Priest who presides at the celebration always retains the right of arranging those things that pertain to him” (GIRM 111).

63. *How can we practically solve the problem of current preparation of the liturgy?*

- This can be done by creating teams of liturgical animators permanently and systematically working in each parish and church.

Chapter 3

Different forms of celebrating the Holy Mass

64. *What are the basic forms of celebrating the Mass?*

- The liturgical laws distinguish three forms of celebrating the Mass:
 1. Mass with the people;
 2. Concelebrated Mass;
 3. Mass at which only one minister participates (GIRM 112-272).

65. *Mass with the people – what celebration is it and what rules it has?*

- “By Mass with the people is meant a Mass celebrated with the participation of the faithful. Moreover, it is appropriate, in so far as possible, and especially on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation, that the celebration take place with singing and with a suitable number of ministers. It may, however, take place even without singing and with only one minister” (GIRM 115).

66. *What ministers should be present in the presbytery during the Mass with the people?*

- In the Mass with the people: “it is desirable that an acolyte, a reader, and a cantor should usually be there to assist the Priest Celebrant” (GIRM 116).
- Those three ministers create a minimum team. If possible, a greater number of ministers should be introduced, to divide functions among them.

67. *What form of celebrating the Mass should be especially appreciate and why?*

- “Great importance should also be given to a Mass celebrated with any community, but especially with the parish community, inasmuch as it represents the universal Church at a given time and place, and chiefly in the common Sunday celebration” (GIRM 113).

68. *What form of celebrating the Mass should have a first place in the local Church and why?*

- “In the local Church, first place should certainly be given, because of its significance, to the Mass at which the Bishop presides, surrounded by his Presbyterate, Deacons, and lay ministers, and in which the holy People of God participate fully and actively” (GIRM 112).
- In the Mass at which the Bishop presides the principal manifestation of the Church is found (GIRM 112).
- At a Mass with the Bishop the norms found in the *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* (Ceremonial of Bishops) should be observed (GIRM 112).

69. *What is the Conventual Mass or the “community” Mass?*

- “Among those Masses celebrated by some communities, a particular place belongs to the Conventual Mass, which is a part of the daily Office, or the community Mass” (GIRM 114).

- It is “most fitting that they be celebrated with singing, especially with the full participation of all members of the community, whether of religious or of canons”. In these Masses “all should exercise their function according to the Order or ministry they have received” (GIRM 114).

70. A Deacon in the Mass - when can he be present and what are his functions?

- A Deacon may exercise his functions resulting from his orders at any form of Mass celebration (GIRM 116).
- Deacon in the Holy Mass (GIRM 171):
 - assists the Priest and walks at his side;
 - ministers at the altar, both as regards the chalice and the book;
 - proclaims the Gospel and may, at the direction of the Priest Celebrant, give the Homily;
 - guides the faithful people by giving appropriate instructions, and announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer;
 - assists the Priest Celebrant in distributing Communion, and purifies and arranges the sacred vessels;
 - carries out the duties of other ministers himself, if necessary, when none of them is present.
- Moreover, Deacon carries the Book of the Gospels slightly elevated in the procession to the altar (GIRM 172), and also he incenses the Priest and the people - during the preparation of the offerings (GIRM 178) and the host and the chalice - at the elevation (GIRM 179).

71. What should we know about the service of the Acolyte formally instituted by the Bishop?

- In the Mass the Acolyte formally instituted by the Bishop:
 - carries the cross in the procession to the altar and to the sacristy (GIRM 188);
 - presents the book to the Celebrant (GIRM 189);
 - in the absence of a Deacon – performs the purification and incenses the Priest and the people (GIRM 190);
 - may assist the Priest in distributing Communion to the people (GIRM 191);
 - helps the Priest or Deacon to purify and arrange the sacred vessels (GIRM 192).
- The functions of the Acolyte formally instituted by the Bishop (excluding assisting in distributing Communion and purification) may be performed by suitably prepared ministries.
- “It is desirable that these duties be suitably distributed among several acolytes. If, in fact, only one acolyte is present, he should perform the more important duties while the rest are to be distributed among several ministers” (GIRM 187).

72. What should we know about the service of the Lector (the Reader)?

- The Reader performs the following functions in the liturgy:
 - in the absence of a Deacon, the reader, wearing approved attire, may carry the Book of the Gospels in the procession to the altar (GIRM 194-195);
 - he reads from the ambo the readings that precede the Gospel, and (in the absence of a psalmist) he may also proclaim the Responsorial Psalm after the First Reading (GIRM 196);

- in the absence of a Deacon, the reader, after the introduction by the Priest, may announce the intentions of the Universal Prayer from the ambo (GIRM 197);
- if there is no singing at the Entrance or at Communion and the antiphons given in the Missal are not recited by the faithful, the reader may read them at an appropriate time (GIRM 198).
- In the absence of a Lector formally instituted by the Bishop, all his functions may be performed by readers suitably prepared to this function or other lay persons.
- It is desirable that all these duties be suitably distributed among several readers.

73. Concelebrated Mass – what is it?

- Concelebrated Mass is a Mass celebrated jointly by a number of priests at the same altar.

74. What special values the Concelebrated Mass have and when it may be celebrated?

- Concelebration appropriately expresses “the unity of the Priesthood, of the Sacrifice, and also of the whole People of God” (GIRM 199).
- Both the pastoral practice and theology present the Concelebrated Mass as an effective sign showing the nature of the Church as a “sacrament” of community and unity. Concelebration is a more visible sign of this community and unity, therefore it should have the first place before an individual celebrating.
- Concelebration “is prescribed by the rite itself for the Ordination of a Bishop and of Priests, at the Blessing of an Abbot, and at the Chrism Mass” (GIRM 199).
- It is recommended at: the Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper; the Mass during Councils, gatherings of Bishops, and Synods; the Conventual Mass and the principal Mass in churches and oratories; Masses at any kind of gathering of Priests, either secular or religious (GIRM 199).
- “Every Priest, however, is allowed to celebrate the Eucharist individually, though not at the same time as a concelebration is taking place in the same church or oratory” (GIRM 199).
- “On Holy Thursday, and for the Mass of the Easter Vigil, it is not permitted to celebrate Mass individually” (GIRM 199).

75. Mass at which only one minister participates – what is it?

- It is “a Mass celebrated by a Priest with only one minister to assist him and to make the responses” (GIRM 252).
- The minister says the people’s parts if appropriate (GIRM 252).

76. When a Mass at which only one minister participates is not allowed?

- When at the same time a Mass with the people is taking place in the same church or oratory. In this case a Priest who wants to celebrate the Mass should rather concelebrate (GIRM 199).

77. May a Priest celebrate a Mass without a minister, or at least one of the faithful?

- “Mass should not be celebrated without a minister, or at least one of the faithful, except for a just and reasonable cause. In this case, the greetings, the instructions, and the blessing at the end of Mass are omitted” (GIRM 254).

- In this case “the necessary vessels are prepared either at the credence table or on the right hand side of the altar” (GIRM 255).

78. What tendency can be seen in liturgical laws concerning the form and the manner of celebrating Mass?

- We can see the concern about the Mass expressing the communion character of the Church, which is the community of God’s People of the New Covenant. In this way the Eucharist becomes the epiphany (revelation) of the Church.

(...)

Abbreviations

CSL – Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*)

GIRM – General Instruction of the Roman Missal

LE - the Liturgy of the Eucharist

LW - the Liturgy of the Word