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The Place of Music in Eucharistic Celebrations

Statement, Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy
November 1967

(See also nos. 4, 6, 10, 14, 31)

Probably no statement of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy has had the impact of this one, either in its original version or as revised and expanded in 1972. It was prepared, like the preceding statement on education and formation in liturgical music, in the wake of the 1967 Roman instruction *Musicae sacram* (DOL 508). Written by the Music Advisory Board, it was formally agreed to by the episcopal committee itself: "The committee has approved the statement, adopted it as its own, and recommends it for consideration by all."

There is no need to summarize the matters extensively treated in the statement, but it can be compared with the other substantial statements of the committee on church music and then evaluated for its own principal characteristics. The other major statements, two in number, are not included in this collection, both because of their length and because they are still in print.

After several years, an extensive review and revision of the present statement was conducted by a committee of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), which the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy had convened, and with which it collaborated in many programs, including the sponsorship of annual meetings of members of diocesan liturgical commissions. (After the first separate meeting of commission members in October 1969, held in Pittsburgh, a charter committee of the new federation approved a constitution for the new body in January 1970.)

The revised text, entitled *Music in Catholic Worship*, was formally approved by the committee as *The Place of Music in Eucharistic Celebrations* had been approved in 1967, and it was published in 1972 (revised in 1983). The following excerpt from the introduction indicates the relationship of the two statements:

The following statement on music in liturgical celebrations is a further development of that [1967] statement and was drawn up after study by the committee on music of the National Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions. Their work was reviewed by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy and their advisors. The finished copy is presented to all by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy as back-

ground and guidelines for the proper role of music within the liturgy. . . .

A few years have elapsed, and the pastoral situation in the United States can be regarded with greater calm and serenity. However, it is urgent that fresh guidelines be given to foster interest with regard to music in the liturgy.

After several years with the 1967 statement, it should now be clear that mere observance of a pattern or rule of sung liturgy will not create a living and authentic celebration of worship in Christian congregations. That is why statements such as this must take the form of recommendation and attempts at guidance. In turn, this demands responsible study and choice by priests and leaders of singing: "a very wide field of diverse liturgical practice is now open, within the limits set by the present discipline and regulations. . . . Not all priests appreciate how wide the opportunities are for planning lively and intelligible celebration" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, April 1967)—especially in the various combinations of song and spoken prayer in the liturgy (MCW, Intro.).

The reference to "greater calm and serenity" suggests, in part, the less than calm and serene reception received by the 1967 version, at least within parts of an entrenched church music establishment—which, indeed, did not accept even the more irenic approach of the 1972 edition.

The broad problem was that of the pastoral and liturgical dimension of church music. No matter how strongly the necessary and integral role of music is stressed, it still remains second to and servant to the liturgical rite, act, and text. To a certain extent, this problem was later faced in the programs of the new National Association of Pastoral Musicians. That association was established in 1978 as a voluntary and unofficial body—that is, like the older Liturgical Conference (1943) and unlike the federation of official diocesan commissions mentioned above. The new body attempted, with some success, in its meetings and its publication *Pastoral Music*, to marry the sometimes conflicting pastoral and musical interests.

One particular point at issue, in which the efforts of the episcopal committee had been resisted, was not substantive. It was the canonical or juridically binding force of the successive statements. With great care, the committee had insisted in 1967 that the statement eschewed any "set or rigid pattern," merely intending to "offer criteria" in the form of "recommendations and attempts at guidance." The same language was employed, again with great deliberation, in the introduction to the 1972 edition. This was done each time precisely because these statements draw their strength from the reasoned presentation and the force of their exposition. Implicit is a recognition that the creative arts cannot be truly regulated, aside from proscribing abuses and aberrations; much less can they be created by norms and laws.

In this, the liturgical and pastoral specialists who advised the committee in the second version of 1972 could take heart from the statement of Pope Paul VI in a very different context. In the apostolic constitution *Laudis canticum* on the liturgy of the hours (November 1, 1970: DOL 424), the

pope made the point that those mandated and obliged by the Church to celebrate the canonical hours of prayer "should not only be drawn to celebrate the hours through obedience to law, but should also feel themselves drawn to them because of the intrinsic excellence of the hours and their pastoral and ascetical value."

An analogy may be drawn, related to one's concept of church law as existing because of the will of a legislator or legislature or, rather, intrinsically sound because of the reasons and purposes of the law itself. In the case of the statements on music, the appeal is to the excellence of the doctrine that they propose and to the quality of the reasons and recommendations.

The tenth anniversary of *Music in Catholic Worship* was observed by the committee not by a rewriting or updating of the earlier texts but by a supplementary statement, *Liturgical Music Today*, which appeared in 1982 and is still available. It is supplementary because it avoids retracing the area covered earlier but, instead, elaborates on matters barely mentioned before: music in the celebration of the sacraments other than the Eucharist and the revised liturgy of the hours. It also treats "a number of unforeseen issues in need of clarification and questions revealing new possibilities for liturgical music."

Since the first of the three substantive statements, reprinted here, is the last text on music to be included in this collection (except for a brief 1980 letter to composers), the question may be asked whether a kind of definitive statement is now possible, twenty years after the first effort. The committee of bishops has spoken frequently and positively over many years about the significance of liturgical music of quality, integrated into the liturgy with a fullness of church participation. As noted earlier, there are limits to the effects of statements—and, certainly, the quality of church music has not yet reached a level of general, popular satisfaction. Yet, statements are supportive, and there is a later parallel in the success of the committee's *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship* (Washington, D.C.: USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services, 1978), the first section of which eloquently introduces the general matter of the arts of worship, applicable not only to the visual arts and architecture but, indeed, to music itself.

The 1978 booklet on the arts at the service of the liturgy is not included in this collection, both because of its length and because it remains in print (in the original edition, with illustrations, and also in a bilingual English/Spanish edition, with newly chosen illustrations, issued in 1986). This is the place to mention it for the sake of completeness. It resulted from the fruitful collaboration of the committee with the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions. Perhaps, even more than the statements on music, it avoids any stress on the normative, at the same time being uncompromising on the quality and the liturgical appropriateness of church furnishing, vesture and vessels, decor and design, and the architectural setting of the celebration.

A distinctive feature of the committee's *Environment and Art* was the publication of supporting volumes in the next couple of years. The first is *The Cathedral: A Reader*, a collection of papers edited collaboratively

by the secretariat and the Center for Pastoral Liturgy of The Catholic University of America (Washington, D.C.: USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services, 1979). The second, prepared in a similar collaboration, is *The Environment for Worship: A Reader* (Washington, D.C.: USCC Office of Publishing and Promotion Services, 1980). These volumes place in context the deep concern for offering broad guidance in the liturgical arts as a whole, as well as in the case of church music, which has been so often addressed.

To return to *The Place of Music in Eucharistic Celebrations* of 1967, which is the direct occasion of this note of comment, the statement has some characteristics worth studying and comparing with what the committee issued later. Perhaps, the first characteristic is that, while disclaiming all rigidity of norms, the text is somewhat apodictic in setting forth criteria. One instance is the succession of theses in capital letters; another is the repeated declaration, in pointing out the principal elements of some part of the eucharistic rite, "All else is secondary."

This tone is explained almost as an attention-getting device, a desire to say as forcefully as possible what had, in fact, been overlooked by professional church musicians. The goal is clearly harmony rather than discord, and an underlying conviction is that the liturgical and pastoral considerations are not in any way the enemy of the highest quality of music, either in composition or in actual singing (and playing, in the case of instrumental accompaniment)—provided always the overtones of "performance" of artists before an audience can be avoided.

This is the sense of the presentation in a theological or doctrinal context, specifically in the context of Christian faith—a matter not attended to or at least not adequately employed as a basic approach in Roman documents on liturgical or sacred music. It is also the sense of the directness with which the "humanly attractive experience" of celebration is described, in particular that celebration in which the musical arts are fully integrated. In this feature, the statement relies not only on the specifics of official texts but on the fundamental position of the *Constitution on the Liturgy*, which had enumerated a critical series of norms based upon the formative and pastoral nature of the liturgy (SC 33-36).

Still, another telling feature of the statement, which required and received later elaboration, is its practical description of the threefold judgment to be made in the selection of church music: musical, liturgical, pastoral. These interdependent considerations can resolve most of the conflicts between the pastoral and the musical emphases if they are thought out fully and applied. It is one of the statement's major contributions, deserving even greater stress.

No single aspect of the threefold judgment can stand by itself. The music may be a religious masterpiece but may not fit the liturgical elements or the character of the assembly. The music may respect the genre of the liturgical text but be tawdry and demeaning to the celebration. The music may meet the experience of the people gathered for worship but contradict the divine reality of the mystery or its tradition—or weaken the liturgy by musical weakness.

As already noted, the practical application in the initial version of the

statement on music was limited to the Eucharist, and the deficiency was made up for partly in the second version and especially in *Liturgical Music Today*. These later statements may seem more sophisticated, and certainly, they addressed a more highly developed liturgical renewal. Overall, however, the force of the first effort was hard to equal, and the very concerns—and even antagonism—it aroused proved its worth.

The following statement was drawn up after study by the Music Advisory Board and was submitted to the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy. The committee has approved the statement, adopted it as its own, and recommends it for consideration by all.

In particular, the committee draws attention to the principles underlying the use of music in the Eucharist and to the following points:

1. While it is possible to make technical distinctions in the forms of Mass—all the way from the Mass in which nothing is sung to the Mass in which everything is sung—such distinctions are of little significance as such, and any combination of sung and recited parts may be chosen. The important decision is whether, in the particular circumstances of the individual celebration, this or that part may or should be sung. The statement attempts to offer criteria; no set or rigid pattern can be proposed.

2. The preferences and priorities indicated in the text should be studied more seriously. For example, the apparent disproportion between the liturgy of the Word and the eucharistic liturgy can be somewhat ameliorated by enhancing the latter by singing the "Holy Holy Holy" or adding an acclamation after the words of institution, even in Masses in which little or nothing else is sung. The disproportion between the entrance rite and the service of the Word may be reduced by reciting rather than singing the "Lord, Have Mercy" and the "Glory to God."

3. Above all, it should now be clear that mere observance of a pattern or rule of sung liturgy will not create a living and authentic celebration of worship in Christian congregations. That is why statements such as this must take the form of recommendations and attempts at guidance. In turn, this demands responsible study and choice by priests and leaders of singing: "A very wide field of diverse liturgical practice is now open, within the limits set by the present discipline and regulations . . . not all priests appreciate how wide the opportunities are for planning lively and intelligible celebration" (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, April 1967)—especially in the various combinations of song and spoken prayer in the liturgy.

It is planned that further recommendations and guidelines will be published when the texts of the Simple Gradual and other alternatives to the present liturgical chants become available in English.

[The instruction frequently referred to below is *Musicam sacram* (= MS), issued on March 5, 1967, by the Congregation of Rites.]

I. The Theology of Celebration

GOOD CELEBRATIONS FOSTER AND NOURISH FAITH. POOR CELEBRATIONS WEAKEN AND DESTROY FAITH.

We are Christians because through the Christian community we have met Jesus Christ, heard his word of invitation, and responded to him in faith. We assemble together at Mass in order to speak our faith over again in community and, by speaking it, to renew and deepen it. We do not come together to meet Christ as if he were absent from the rest of our lives. We come together to deepen our awareness of, and commitment to, the action of his Spirit in the whole of our lives at every moment. We come together to acknowledge the work of the Spirit in us, to offer thanks, to celebrate.

People in love make signs of love and celebrate their love for the dual purpose of expressing and deepening that love. We too must express in signs our faith in Christ and each other, our love for Christ and for each other, or they will die. We need to celebrate.

We may not feel like celebrating on this or that Sunday, even though we are called by the Church's law to do so. Our faith does not always permeate our feelings. But this is the function of signs in the Church: to give bodily expression to faith, to transform our fragile awareness of Christ's presence in the dark of our daily isolation into a joyful, integral experience of his liberating action in the solidarity of the celebrating community.

From this, it is clear that the manner in which the Church celebrates the liturgy has an effect on the faith of men. Good celebrations foster and nourish faith. Poor celebrations weaken and destroy faith.

II. The Principle of Pastoral Celebration

THE PRIMARY GOAL OF ALL CELEBRATION IS TO MAKE A HUMANLY ATTRACTIVE EXPERIENCE.

A. Good Signs: Simple and Comprehensible

To celebrate the liturgy means to do the action, or to perform the sign, in such a way that its full meaning and import shine forth in the most clear and compelling fashion. The signs of sacramental celebration are vehicles of communication and instruments of faith. They must be good signs, simple and comprehensible; they must be humanly attractive. In order to fulfill their purpose, liturgical actions must be genuine celebrations: in themselves, in articulation and proportion, in manner of celebration.

1. *In themselves.* "The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear, and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people's power of comprehension and normally should not require much explanation" (SC 34).

2. *In articulation and proportion.* Each part of the celebration should be clear in itself. (E.g., an entrance rite should clearly demonstrate by the elements that make it up and by the manner in which these are carried out in the celebration just what its purpose is.) Each part should be so articulated with the other parts that there emerges from the celebration the sense of a unified whole. What is of lesser importance should appear so; what is of greater importance should clearly emerge as such. (E.g., the offertory procession, from its manner and length of celebration, should not appear to be of greater importance than the canon.)

3. *In manner of celebration.* Each sacramental action must be invested with the personal care, attention, and enthusiasm of those who carry it out. (E.g., when the celebrant greets the community, he should do so in a way indicating clearly that he knows what he is doing and that he really means to do it.)

B. Four Criteria: Humanly Attractive Experience, Degree of Solemnity, Nature of Congregation, Available Resources

The celebration of any liturgical action, then, is to be governed by the need for the action to be clear, convincing, and humanly attractive; the degree of solemnity suitable for the occasion; the nature of the congregation; the resources that are available.

1. Under this principle, there is little distinction to be made between the solemn, sung, and recited Mass. Cf. MS 28: "For the sung Mass (*missa cantata*), different degrees of participation are put forward here for reasons of pastoral usefulness, so that it may become easier to make the celebration of Mass more beautiful by singing according to the capabilities of each congregation."

Cf. also MS 36: "There is no reason why some of the Proper or Ordinary should not be sung in recited Masses. Moreover, some other song can also, on occasion, be sung at the beginning, at the offertory, at the communion, and at the end of Mass. It is not sufficient, however, that these songs be merely 'eucharistic'—they must be in keeping with the parts of the Mass, with the feast, or with the liturgical season."

Cf. also MS 5: "They (pastors of souls) will try to work out how that assignment of different parts to be performed and duties to be fulfilled, which characterizes sung celebrations, may be transferred even to celebrations which are not sung, but at which people are present."

2. Under this principle, the celebrant may speak those parts that he cannot sing effectively. Cf. MS 8: "Whenever, for a liturgical service which is to be celebrated in sung form, one can make a choice between the various people, it is desirable that those who are known to be more proficient in singing be given preference; this is especially the case in more solemn liturgical celebrations and in those which either require more difficult singing or are transmitted by radio or television. If, however, a choice of this kind cannot be made, and the priest or minister does not possess a voice suitable for the proper execution of the singing, he may render without singing one or more of the difficult parts which concern him, reciting them in a loud and distinct voice. However, this must not be done merely for the convenience of the priest or minister."

3. Under this principle, each single song must be understood in terms of its own specific nature and function. Therefore, the customary distinction between the ordinary and proper parts of the Mass with regard to musical settings and distribution of roles is irrelevant. For this reason, the musical settings of the past are usually not helpful models for composing truly contemporary pieces (cf. MS 6).

4. Under this principle, it is clear that all sacramental celebrations are in themselves pastoral. Liturgies of a more elaborate form (e.g., pontifical liturgies, liturgies of special occasions) must not be less pastoral than those of

any parish. The pastoral purpose always governs the use and function of every element of the celebration. Cf. MS 11: "It is to be borne in mind that the true solemnity of liturgical worship depends less on a more ornate form of singing and a more magnificent ceremonial than on its worthy and religious celebration, which takes into account the integrity of the liturgical celebration itself, and the performance of each of its parts according to its own particular nature. To have a more ornate form of singing and a more magnificent ceremonial is at times desirable when there are the resources available to carry them out properly; on the other hand, it would be contrary to the true solemnity of the liturgy if this were to lead to a part of the action being omitted, changed, or improperly performed."

III. The Place of Music in the Celebration

MUSIC, MORE THAN ANY OTHER RESOURCE, MAKES A CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY AN ATTRACTIVE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

A. The Amount of Singing Will Vary According to the Circumstances
(cf. MS 5)

B. Music Serves the Expression of Faith

Music in worship is a functional sign. It has a ministerial role (cf. MS 2). It must always serve the expression of faith. It affords a quality of joy and enthusiasm to the community's statement of faith that cannot be gained in any other way. In so doing, it imparts a sense of unity to the congregation.

C. Three Judgments to Be Made about Music in Worship: Musical, Liturgical, Pastoral

One of the major concerns of good celebrations is to select suitable music and perform it adequately. Such concern calls for different kinds of judgments:

1. *The musical judgment.* Is the music technically and aesthetically good? This question should be answered by competent musicians. This judgment is basic and primary. The musician has every right to insist that the music used be good music; but when this has been determined, there are still further judgments to be made.

2. *The liturgical judgment.* The nature of the liturgy itself will help to determine what kind of music is called for, what parts are to be preferred for singing, and who is to sing them.

a. *Text requirements.* Thus, we must ask, first of all, Does the music interpret the text correctly and make it more meaningful? Is the form of the text respected? Is this piece of music properly proportioned to the feast for which it is intended and its specific role in the liturgy? (E.g., in the "Holy Holy Holy" the musical setting must not only enhance the meaning of the text, lifting it to a higher expressive level, but also respect its basic character: that of an acclamation by all assembled, which flows immediately from the

preface.) In making this liturgical judgment, we must keep in mind the four principal classes of texts:

Readings: Proclamations of God's Word: epistle, gospel; proclamation of faith: creed.

Acclamations: "Holy Holy Holy," Alleluia, Amen.

Psalms and Hymns: The psalms sung between the readings (gradual, tract, etc.), entrance songs, communion songs, closing songs, offertory songs, "Glory to God."

Prayers: Priest's prayers: eucharistic prayer (canon), collect, prayer over the gifts, postcommunion; people's prayers: litanies, "Lord, Have Mercy," "Lamb of God"; responses: "And with your spirit," "Thanks be to God," etc.

b. *Role differentiation.* In addition, the liturgical judgment must take into account the different kinds of people who fulfill specific functions in each of these rites. (E.g., the celebrant, whose function it is to pray in the name of the entire assembly, must be heard and understood by all present—cf. 1 Cor 14:16.) In this regard, special attention should be paid to the role of cantor.

c. *The cantor.* While there is no place in the liturgy for displays of virtuosity for its own sake, an individual singer can effectively lead the assembly and proclaim the Word of God in song, especially in the psalm sung between the readings. Cf. MS 21: "Provision should be made for at least one or two properly trained singers, especially where there is no possibility of setting up even a small choir. The singer will present some simpler musical setting, with the people taking part, and can lead and support the faithful as far as is needed. The presence of such a singer is desirable even in churches which have a choir for those celebrations in which the choir cannot take part but which may fittingly be performed with some solemnity and, therefore, with singing."

3. *The pastoral judgment.* The pastoral judgment must always be present. It is the judgment that must be made in this particular situation, in these concrete circumstances. Does music in the celebration enable those people to express their faith in this place, in this age, in this culture? A musician may say, for instance, that Gregorian Chant is good music. His musical judgment really says nothing about whether and how it is to be used in this celebration. The signs of the celebration must be accepted and received as meaningful. They must, by reason of the materials used, open up to a genuinely human faith experience. This pastoral judgment can be aided by sociological studies of the people who make up the congregation, studies which determine differences in age, culture, and education, as they influence the way in which faith is meaningfully expressed. No set of rubrics or regulations of itself will ever achieve a truly pastoral celebration of the sacramental rites. Such regulations must always be applied with a pastoral concern for the given worshipping community.

4. *There is a further problem.* It is the problem of faith itself. The liturgy, by its nature, normally presupposes a minimum of biblical culture and a fairly solid commitment of living faith. Often enough, these conditions are not present. The assembly or many of its members are still in need of evangelization. The liturgy which is not meant to be a tool of evangelization, is forced into a missionary role. In these conditions, the music problem is complex. On the one hand, music can serve as a bridge to faith, and, therefore, greater liberty in the selection and use of musical materials may be called

for. On the other hand, certain songs normally called for in the climate of faith (e.g., psalms and religious songs), lacking such a climate, may create problems rather than solve them.

IV. Application of the Principles of Celebration to the Eucharist

The best places to sing are at the "Holy Holy Holy," the Amen at the conclusion of the eucharistic prayer, the communion song, the responsorial psalm following the lessons.

Other places to sing are entrance and dismissal, "Lord Have Mercy," "Glory to God," Lord's Prayer, offertory song.

The celebration of the Eucharist has two parts: the liturgy of the Word, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The liturgy of the Word is generally introduced by an entrance rite, which varies in length and solemnity. A preparatory rite known as the offertory or preparation of the gifts precedes the eucharistic prayer. After the communion there is a brief conclusion known as the dismissal rite.

A. The Liturgy of the Word

1. Service of the Word

a. The purpose of the service of the Word is to proclaim the Word of God in the Christian assembly in such a way that the people hear and respond to God's message of love and become involved in the great covenant of love and redemption.

b. The service of the Word, at present, consists of epistle, psalm (gradual, tract), gospel, homily, creed, prayer of the faithful. Of these elements, the proclamation of the Word, response to the Word, and homily are primary. Everything else is secondary.

c. Recommendations for the celebration of the service of the Word:

(1) In the United States, it seems that the hearing of God's Word is a more meaningful and stirring experience when the lessons are read rather than sung.

(2) The psalms which follow the epistle make most sense when they are sung. They should be proclaimed in such a way that their words can be heard and reflected upon. Unlike the other uses of psalmody in the Mass, where the psalm accompanies a procession (e.g., entrance, communion), this psalm is sung for its own sake. The present text can be set more elaborately for a cantor to sing in true cantorial style; it can be set in choral form for the choir; or it may be set so that the people can participate by a brief refrain. It may be desirable that there be a brief period of reflective silence immediately after the reading of the epistle. When the text is not sung, it is more desirable that it be read by an individual or by the lector and listened to by the people rather than recited by all.

(3) Whenever the psalm is proclaimed in song, the "Thanks be to God" should be answered by the server only.

(4) The creed should be spoken in a declamatory fashion. This is usually preferable to singing it.

(5) The prayer of the faithful, if it is used properly, can be a most effective moment for achieving both the personal and communal experience. It can be sung in various forms, be spoken by one person, or be spontaneous. The purpose of the prayer of the faithful is to open the minds of the assembly to the concerns of the Church and the world. The intentions, whether spoken or sung, ought to be stated in a brief and concise manner.

2. The Entrance Rite

The service of the Word is generally introduced by an entrance rite, which varies in length and solemnity.

a. The entrance rite is quite secondary to the proclamation of the Word. It should be celebrated in such a way that it fulfills its purpose and leads quickly to the actual service of the Word.

b. The entrance rite should create an atmosphere of celebration. It serves the function of putting the assembly in the proper frame of mind for listening to the Word of God. It helps the people to become conscious of themselves as a community.

c. The entrance rite consists of entrance song (introit), confession prayers, "Lord, Have Mercy," "Glory to God," prayer. Of these elements, the entrance song and prayer (collect) are primary; the rest is secondary.

d. Recommendations for the celebration of the entrance rite:

(1) The musical setting of the entrance song should help the celebration tone of the entrance rite. There are a number of possibilities: the hymn, unison or choral, or both; psalms in various settings with or without refrain.

(2) The confession prayers: Under the present circumstance, if an entrance song is used, the least objectionable practice is that the celebrant and server recite the prayers quietly and with dispatch while the entrance song is being sung. If an entrance song is not used, the recitation of these prayers by the celebrant and the people can be pastorally effective.

(3) Reciting, rather than singing, the "Lord, Have Mercy" and the "Glory to God" may help achieve a better proportion between the entrance rite and the service of the Word on less solemn occasions such as weekdays. When both of these are sung, from the point of view of sign, they may tend to make the entrance rite top-heavy compared with the proclamation of the Word. When everything that can be sung is sung in the liturgy of the Word, the entire rite should not be out of proportion to the major sign, which is the liturgy of the Eucharist, particularly the eucharistic prayer. The musical setting of the "Lord, Have Mercy" should be simple, because it is a simple litany.

(4) The prayer (collect) may be sung or spoken, whichever is more effective.

B. The Liturgy of the Eucharist

1. The Eucharistic Prayer

a. The eucharistic prayer is the praise and thanksgiving pronounced over the bread and wine which are to be shared in the communion meal. It is an acknowledgment of the Church's faith and discipleship transforming the gifts to be eaten into the Body which Jesus gave and the Blood which he poured

out for the life of the world, so that the sharing of the meal commits the Christian to sharing in the mission of Jesus. As a statement of the universal Church's faith, it is proclaimed by the president alone. As a statement of the faith of the local assembly, it is affirmed and ratified by all those present through acclamations like the great Amen.

b. Now that the eucharistic prayer is proclaimed in the vernacular, the quality of the celebration will be even more dependent upon the celebrant. From the viewpoint of music, it is not so important that he sing—to sing the eucharistic prayer for many celebrants would be to detract from its effectiveness—as that he proclaim the prayer in such a way as to elicit a spirited response from the assembly.

When in addition to the Roman canon we will have the other expected eucharistic prayers, these may be chosen in its place. In each of these, there is a provision for a short acclamation after the words of institution, by which the assembly expresses its faith in, and gratitude for, the death and resurrection of the Lord.

This acclamation (frequently called an anamnesis), along with the "Holy Holy Holy" and the great Amen, will be much more meaningful and effective when sung. Among the most urgent tasks for composers is that of providing suitable settings for these acclamations. Instrumental preludes to the acclamations are to be avoided.

The great Amen at the end of the eucharistic prayer requires care. It is difficult to make an enthusiastic acclamation out of this single two-syllable word. Composers should feel free to repeat it several times or to explicate its many meanings when setting it to music.

c. Preparatory Rite (offertory):

(1) The purpose of the rite is to prepare bread and wine for the sacrifice. The secondary character of the rite determines the manner of celebration.

(2) The rite consists of the bringing of the gifts with accompanying music, the prayers said by the celebrant as he prepares the gifts, the "Brethren, pray," and the prayer over the gifts (secret prayer). Of these elements, the bringing of the gifts, the placing of the gifts on the altar, and the prayer over the gifts are primary. All else is secondary.

(3) Recommendations for celebrating:

(a) Bringing the gifts in procession is a most effective sign. The hosts that are distributed at Mass should be consecrated at that Mass, to give meaning and significance to the sign of the rite. The procession of gifts can vary in solemnity with the occasion. Ordinarily, it should be done rather simply. To elaborate the rite too much is to distort the proportionate value of the rite.

(b) The prayer over the gifts is sung or spoken, whatever is more effective.

(c) The celebrant's role and all prayers except the prayer over the gifts are secondary in the rite.

(d) The procession can be accompanied by song. Song is not always necessary or desirable. Organ or instrumental music is also fitting at this time. When song is used, it is to be noted that the song need not speak of bread and wine or of offering. The proper function of this song is to accompany and celebrate the communal aspects of the procession. The text, therefore, can be any appropriate song of praise or of rejoicing in keeping with the season. Such songs are even more desirable. The song need not accompany

the entire preparation rite. In fact, it is good to give the assembly a period of quiet before demanding, at the preface, their full attention to the eucharistic prayer.

2. Communion Rite

a. The celebration of this part of the Eucharist must show forth in signs that the first fruit of the Eucharist is the unity of the Body of Christ, Christians loving Christ through loving one another.

b. Of the parts that comprise the communion rite, the most important are the Lord's Prayer, the communion procession accompanied by song, the postcommunion prayer. All else is secondary: "Lamb of God," priest's prayers, etc.

c. Recommendations for celebration:

(1) The principle of good celebration requires that the Lord's Prayer be done in the most effective manner possible. At times, the pastoral judgment may dictate that it be sung by all, at other times that it be spoken.

(2) The "Lamb of God" can be sung or spoken according to circumstances. If it is sung, the settings should be in keeping with the litany character of the prayer. Its purpose is to accompany an action: the breaking of the Bread. According to no. 34 of *Musica Sacra*, the "Lamb of God" may be repeated as often as necessary, especially during concelebrations.

(3) The communion song should foster an experience of unity. For this reason, the following points touching its nature and the manner of carrying out are essential:

—It is to be sung during the actual distribution of communion.

—It should not become wearisome. If the communion time is of any length, variety should be sought (e.g., instrumental interlude, period of silence, choir song, etc.).

—The ideal communion song is the short refrain sung by the people alternated with cantor or choir. The song can be learned easily and quickly. The people are not burdened with books, papers, etc. For the same reason, the metric hymn is the least effective communion song.

—The communion song can be any song that is fitting for the feast or the season; it can speak of the community aspects of the Eucharist. Most benediction hymns, by reason of their concentration on adoration, are not suitable.

—A new provision provides a period of silence and/or song before the postcommunion prayer. If song is used at this point, it may well serve in place of a final hymn.

d. The Dismissal Rite:

(1) The purpose of the dismissal rite is to bring the Eucharist to an orderly conclusion. The dismissal rite consists of the greeting, the blessing, the dismissal, followed by the closing hymn.

(2) The dismissal rite should be so performed that greeting, blessing, and dismissal form one continuous action.

(3) It is important to sing a closing hymn of fitting nature. The celebrant remains at the altar, singing with the people, for some portion of the hymn. On occasion, an instrumental recessional may be equally effective.

Latin in the Liturgy

Statement, Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy 1968

(See also nos. 1, 2, 5, 13, 32, 35)

This document, which was never published in the *Newsletter* of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy or elsewhere, was submitted to the bishops of the country for their information, guidance, and use. It has its genesis in some limited opposition to the use of the vernacular in the liturgy and also in a certain misunderstanding. Read in the light of the 1964 position of the committee (*Liturgical Constitution and the Vernacular in the United States and Use of the Vernacular*), this statement suggests that an important if small minority—never more than ten or fifteen percent of the Catholic faithful—might have been overlooked.

To appreciate the situation, it is necessary to explore a little pastoral history, somewhat oversimplified, and then the disciplinary steps taken to introduce the vernacular.

From the 1940s (and before) through the early 1960s, promoters of pastoral-liturgical renewal in the United States had moved, soundly and strongly, in the direction of a fully participated Latin liturgy—with emphasis on liturgical catechesis, communal song and spoken word, and broader ritual involvement. All this was without much hope of a vernacular liturgy or of a liturgy with reformed structures, improved selection of prayers and readings, and the like.

In the mid-1960s, the decisions concerning the liturgy in the vernacular, first by Vatican II, then by the conference of bishops, gradually but rapidly led to a fully vernacular liturgy, with minimal ritual changes but with an expectation of thorough reform and subsequent regional adaptation. Throughout the United States, the vernacular liturgy had become almost universal in parochial celebrations of the Eucharist and, of course, in the other sacraments and rites. All this left uncertain and disaffected those small numbers of people who had resisted the change and of people who had not expected the change and were dissatisfied when it occurred.

Little has been done to identify the reasons for this failure to accept, whether wholly or partially, a restoration undertaken for the most evident pastoral reasons. And, the matter is only complicated by uncertainty as to the desiderata of those disaffected by this aspect of the change: a desire to preserve the music written for the Latin; a preference for silent celebration to permit freer rein for individual piety; a will to maintain elements of continuity with the past; a simple nostalgia; a psychological resistance to change; only a partial acceptance of the vernacular, for example, for the readings. The question, moreover, is and was closely related to, but