

IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH:
BLACK CATHOLIC REFLECTIONS ON THE ORDER OF MASS

Black Liturgy Subcommittee
Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy
National Conference of Catholic Bishops
Washington, D.C.

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"But the hour is coming, and is now here,
when true worshipers will worship the Father
in Spirit and truth;
and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him.
God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship
in Spirit and truth."

John 4: 23

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Preface

The Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy established its Black Liturgy Subcommittee in late 1984 in order that the liturgical concerns and needs of the Black Catholic community could be addressed directly by Black Catholics and that their wisdom might be brought to the deliberations of the Committee in the many projects in which it is involved. In establishing the subcommittee, it was the hope of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy to respond to the pastoral challenges highlighted in the letter on evangelization issued by the Black Catholic bishops of the United States, What We Have Seen and Heard, which states: "We believe that the liturgy of the Catholic Church can be an even more intense expression of the spiritual vitality of those who are of African origin, just as it has been for other cultural groups . . . Through the liturgy, Black people will come to realize that the Catholic Church is a homeland for Black believers just as she is for people of other cultural and ethnic traditions"(p.30).

The subcommittee was also given the mandate to address the whole matter of the inculturation of the liturgy according to the genius, gifts, and the centuries-old traditions of the Black community in the United States. In so doing, the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy was also conscious of the need for the entire Catholic Church in the United States to come to a better understanding and appreciation of the genius of Black Catholicism and to welcome the liturgical and spiritual traditions of Black Catholics in the lives of all American Catholics.

The first project undertaken by the Black Liturgy Subcommittee was to review and evaluate the various styles of celebration found in Black or predominantly Black parishes and to determine how the subcommittee could assist in the development of a liturgical style that is at once

authentically Black and Catholic. Therefore, at a subcommittee meeting on September 25-26, 1985 it was decided to study the Order of Mass, the General Instruction of the Roman Missal(GIRM), and related documents to determine what options and choices in the celebration of the Mass are currently permitted or encouraged by Church law and just how such options might be used to good effect in the Black Catholic community and, by extension, in the whole Catholic community in the United States. Accordingly, a first draft of In Spirit and Truth was prepared and then reviewed by the subcommittee in September 1985, a second draft of that document was reviewed at the subcommittee meeting on March 15-16, 1986, in Chicago, and approved by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy in June of 1986. A third draft was written by the subcommittee at a meeting in New Orleans on September 29-30, 1986. The present document was approved by the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy at its June 10-12, 1987 meeting.

The basic thrust of In Spirit and Truth is to review each element of the Order of Mass, describing what choices are permitted or encouraged, and offering commentary on those elements, especially, but not exclusively, for the celebration of the Eucharist in Black or predominantly Black parishes. In Spirit and Truth was written by Black Catholics for the Church. We hope that this work will be received in the spirit in which it was composed, as a sincere effort to encourage Black Catholics to utilize fully all of the present options and opportunities to bring our cultural treasures to the worship life of the Church we love. Likewise it is the Subcommittee's hope that this document will also contribute to the aspirations expressed at the 1987 National Black Catholic Congress when the participants resolved that "a conscious effort be made to infuse

elements of Black culture into the Roman Liturgy . . . through the development of liturgy which would meet the authentic needs of Black Catholicism and which would reflect their lived experience."

Most Reverend Wilton D. Gregory

Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago

Chairman, Black Liturgy Subcommittee

September 1987

BLACK LITURGY SUBCOMMITTEE

Chairman:

Most Reverend Wilton D. Gregory, Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago

Members:

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Most Reverend James P. Lyke, O.F.M., Auxiliary Bishop of Cleveland

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that wonderful chorus of praise . . ." (CSL, no. 123).

7. African-American traditions of art arising from the genius and gifts of the Black people are a part of that "treasury of art" which must enhance and express what is signified in the liturgy: the worship of God and the building up of God's people. The liturgy, therefore, must be authentically Black just as it is authentically Catholic. The liturgy must encompass and embrace "the African-American cultural idiom or style in music, in preaching, in bodily expression, in artistic furnishings and vestments, and even in tempo" (What We Have Seen and Heard, p. 31).

8. When planning worship, parishes should always be aware of the artistic dimensions of the liturgy, the manner in which the environment for worship is prepared, and how these relate to the spiritual content of liturgical prayer. Thus, those involved with liturgy planning should study Chapters 5 and 6 of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and the statement of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, Environment and Art in Catholic Worship (EACW). Planners should be fully knowledgeable about the principles of both documents so that in worship the climate of hospitality and the experience of mystery can arise from the environment of worship as it does from the prayer of the people (see EACW, nos. 11-12). Black Catholics face the same challenges that confront contemporary Catholics everywhere in designing or adapting liturgical spaces which preserve a sense of the beauty and dignity which ought to be found in places of worship while also inviting creative artistic expressions from a particular culture, region or tradition.

Preliminary Gathering of the Assembly

9. We observe that it is not uncommon in Black Churches to find a preliminary period of prayer, reflection, testimonial, and song which precedes the entrance procession of the Mass. The purpose of this preliminary gathering is most commonly to help the congregation experience Christ's presence and to build up a fellowship within the assembly. During this period the parish may also welcome visitors, inquirers, new parishioners, and all interested in Christ and the Church. It is appropriate that during this preliminary gathering the members of the assembly should greet one another in Christian communion, welcome, and fellowship. The choir may sing before the entrance song to assist the sense of gathering.

The expressions or art forms employed in this preliminary gathering should draw their spirit and tonality from the liturgical season. Similarly, when adaptations are made to other parts of the Eucharist, the liturgical mood or sense proper to that portion of the liturgy should be respected.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

10. In every celebration of the liturgy there should always be a proper balance among its various elements: prayers, music, ministry, and the forms of participation. Such balance can be achieved when the nature and purpose of individual elements in the Order of Mass are understood for what they contribute and when proper liturgical planning guides the worship. The principle of "progressive solemnity" is always helpful in this regard. Progressive solemnity simply means that more important elements of worship receive greater emphasis. When parishes apply this principle appropriately they will avoid monotony and misplaced or inappropriate attention or emphasis in their worship life. "This . . . principle takes into account the abilities of the assembly, the relative importance of the individual rites and their constituent parts, and the relative festivity of the liturgical day" (Liturgical Music Today, no. 13).

Entrance Song and Procession

11. When the assembly is ready to begin the celebration of the Eucharist, the entrance song or hymn invites the members of the Church to begin its worship in a spirit of unity and hope. Music plays such an important role in the worship life of Black Americans that it is only reasonable to find it in a place of prominence in the celebration of the Eucharist. The styles, the positioning, and the manner of execution of music are important considerations in selecting music for the eucharistic liturgy. Music should reflect and highlight the homily, accentuate the liturgical moment, and respect the capabilities and talents of the assembly.

The entrance song should clearly underscore the moment of beginning of worship and the Church's invitation to active participation in the liturgy.

"The entrance song is sung alternately either by the choir and the congregation or by the cantor and the congregation; or it is sung entirely by the congregation or by the choir alone" (GIRM, no. 26). However, because of the principle of active participation of the faithful, the singing of the entrance song by the choir alone should be done only by way of exception and not as a regular practice since the entrance song is intended to gather the entire assembly in one act of worship.

12. Various forms of participation in the entrance procession are possible:

- a) the procession may be accompanied with ritual gesture and movements such as hand-clapping or singing;
- b) the entrance song may reflect a variety of tempos or rhythms;
- c) the assembly itself may be involved in the procession through singing (antiphonally or responsorially, in unison, or in parts), hand-clapping, etc.

13. In addition to the principal ministers of the liturgy, others associated with carrying out the celebration may sometimes walk in the procession. For example, on occasion the choir itself may process in, rather than beginning from an assigned or stationary place in the assembly.

Greeting

14. "After the entrance song, the priest and the whole assembly make the sign of the cross. Then through his greeting the priest declares to the assembled that the Lord is present. This greeting and the congregation's response express the mystery of the gathered Church" (GIRM, no. 28).

15. The Roman Missal provides various forms of the greeting. After the greeting the celebrant or another minister may give a brief introduction to the liturgy of the day suited to the nature of the celebrating community and to the celebration itself. These remarks should be brief since the act of worship with its various ritual elements ought to invite the assembly to experience the mystery of Christ's presence in ways too profound to be exhausted by words.

Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling with Holy Water

16. The blessing and sprinkling with holy water may take the place of the penitential rite at all Sunday Masses, but should not be used in Lent. Lent is that time of the Church year when the faithful are engaged in an intense preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation and it would thus be inappropriate to use a rite which anticipated that special Easter mystery. The music used to accompany this rite should express the paschal and baptismal nature of the Sunday liturgy.

Penitential Rite

17. The forms of the penitential rite of the Mass are not intended to accentuate individual sinfulness, but rather the most universal and splendid presence of Christ's merciful and abundant pardon. Christ's mercy may be proclaimed in the form of a litany of praise. "This litany [the third form of the penitential rite] functions as a general confession made by the entire assembly and as a praise of Christ's compassionate love and mercy" (Liturgical Music Today, no. 21). However, such a "confession" should be understood as neither a "litany of sins" nor as a form of the sacrament of Penance.

18. The words with which the priest invites the people to recall their sins may be one of the three introductions which appear in the Sacramentary or the priest may use similar words of his own. The Sacramentary provides three forms for the penitential rite. While the third form admits of variety, newly composed strophes should follow the form and style found in the Sacramentary; that is, they should by very nature acclaim Christ with praise. The priest, deacon, or cantor may lead the people by using the invocations contained in the Sacramentary or other similar invocations may be used. The leader may be accompanied by the organ or other musical instruments and the choir and the assembly or the assembly alone may respond. The style of delivery may depend on the leader's ability to improvise vocally.

Kyrie Eleison

19. The simple singing of Lord have mercy/Christ have mercy without a preparatory invocation, in a recurring refrain, is a legitimate variation. Whatever form employed, it is important that the correct nature of this rite be maintained. It is a song by which the faithful praise the Lord and implore his mercy. It is ordinarily prayed by all, that is, alternately by the congregation and the choir or cantor (GIRM, no. 30).

We have observed that occasionally the penitential litanies tend to devolve into expressions of personal or even specific communal statements of sinfulness and lose their function of praise. Whatever options are selected for this rite, the Lord's mercy and triumph over the sin of the world should be emphasized.

Gloria

20. The Gloria is a song of praise and is ordinarily sung by the assembly. "The Gloria may be sung by choir alone, by the congregation or alternately with the choir or cantor" (GIRM 31). The Gloria is always omitted during the seasons of Lent and Advent. It is a sung prayer of great joy as many settings frequently used by the Black Catholic Community attest. Such an expression is not appropriate to the seasons of Lent and Advent.

Opening Prayer

21. After the Gloria "the priest invites the people to pray and together with him they observe a brief period of silence so that they realize they are in God's presence and may call their petitions to mind. The priest says the opening prayer. This expresses the theme of the celebration and the priest's words address a petition to God the Father through Christ in the Holy Spirit. The people make the prayer their own and give their assent by the acclamation Amen" (GIRM, no. 32).

22. The invitation, Let us pray, is always addressed to the assembly, and never to God. This invitation may be extended and adapted to the needs of

the assembly, in the style of the alternative opening prayers found in the Sacramentary. Any variation in this invitation should focus upon the opening prayer prescribed for the day, which must always be said. The priest guides the prayer of the people, drawing together their concerns and aspirations. How he does this depends on his talents and whether he sings or recites the opening prayer depends on his musical ability. Both the invitation and the opening prayer may be sung or proclaimed in a style reflective of Black tradition.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

23. In the African-American tradition, the Scriptures have always played a central role. "In the dark days of slavery, reading was forbidden, but for our ancestors the Bible was never a closed book. The stories were told and retold in sermons, spirituals and shouts, proverbs and turns of phrase borrowed freely from the Bible. . . Thus when the word of Scripture is proclaimed in the Black community, it is not a new message but a new challenge" (What We Have Seen and Heard, p. 4-5). For Black Catholics, therefore, the Liturgy of the Word of the Mass is a very important moment rooted firmly in their tradition.

24. According to custom or tradition, instrumental music may be used sometimes to mark the transition from the Introductory Rites to the Liturgy of the Word.

Readings

25. On Sundays, solemnities, and certain feasts of the liturgical year, the pattern of three readings prescribed in The Lectionary for Mass is always to be followed. None of the readings may be omitted (see GIRM, no. 318, Appendix for the Dioceses of the United States of America, no. 318; and Introduction, The Lectionary for Mass, no. 14).

26. The reader should be practiced in the art of proclamation, reading slowly, distinctly, and clearly. Particular attention should be given to the pronunciation of Hebrew and Greek names and words. The manner of

reading should point to and prepare for the homily and ultimately should encourage Bible study. A reader may according to his or her talent, lend a spirit of enthusiasm to the proclamation of the Scripture texts. Many Black Americans have long grown accustomed to such a spirited proclamation of God's word. So long as the word of God is announced with faith, clarity and sincerity such styles may be appropriate in the Eucharist.

Responsorial Psalm

27. The responsorial psalm (chant between the readings or gradual) "as a rule is drawn from the Lectionary because the individual psalm texts are directly related to the readings" (GIRM, no. 36). Since the psalms are songs, "as a rule the responsorial psalm should be sung. There are two established ways of singing the psalm after the first reading: responsorially and directly. In responsorial singing, which, as far as possible, is to be given preference, the psalmist or cantor of the psalm sings the psalm verse and the whole congregation joins in by singing the response. In direct singing of the psalm there is no intervening response by the community; either the psalmist or cantor of the psalm sings the psalm alone as the community listens or else all sing it together" (Lectionary for Mass, Introduction, no. 20).

28. Since musical selections other than the psalms, such as hymns, may not take the place of the responsorial psalm, special consideration should be given to developing a solid repertory of psalm responses for the congregation (see Music in Catholic Worship (MCW), no. 34). There are a number of beautiful, moving and spirited compositions of responsorial

psalm composed in musical forms which reflect the African American heritage. The Church encourages other composers and artists to take up the challenge of enlarging its musical repertory with such works expressive of the vast musical tradition of Black Americans.

29. To facilitate the building of such a repertory, a community may use the common responsorial psalms and antiphons (see Lectionary for Mass, nos. 174-175). Many of the common responsorial psalms are also quite appropriate for other parts of the eucharistic liturgy as well, e.g., communion. A gifted psalmist or cantor may improvise the music of the verses which are always taken from the psalm. The creative artist can weave the psalm/Scripture text and melody together for use in other appropriate places in the Eucharist, e.g., as musical prayer during the preparation of the altar and presentation of the gifts or as part of the communion procession, or by using the same melody in other sung texts.

Gospel Procession

30. The Alleluia is sung by the congregation during the gospel procession except during the season of Lent. The following four acclamations are approved for use during the season of Lent:

- A. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!
- B. Praise and honor to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
- C. Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
- D. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

These acclamations should be sung and the musical texts may be either elaborate or simple depending on the occasion.

31. Great reverence must be shown the Book of Gospels. Such reverence is a special sign to Black people who have traditionally placed a great emphasis on the proclamation of the word of God. Reverence for the gospel can be shown in a variety of ways: in the entrance procession when the Book of Gospels is carried by the deacon and then placed on the altar; in the solemn procession which precedes the proclamation of the gospel; by the incensation of the book; the use of processional candles; and even by the chanting of the gospel by the deacon or, in his absence, the priest. (For all aspects of the proclamation of the gospel, see Book of the Gospels, Introduction, nos. 1-15.)

32. If music follows the proclamation of the gospel, the Alleluia with its verse (or in Lent, the acclamation) may be repeated. If another hymn or

acclamation is sung, it should enhance the meaning of the gospel. It is not appropriate that a soloist sing at this time or that the musical selection be very lengthy and thus distract from the importance of the gospel and the homily which follows. On certain occasions, however, it may be appropriate to sing a hymn on the gospel theme after the homily.

Homily

33. The homily is preached to an assembly of believers. Its primary purpose is to deepen and enrich the meaning of the sacred texts and to allow the assembly to celebrate more faithfully the liturgy and give Christian witness in the world. The purpose of the homily is not to offer such elementary catechesis so as to move the assembly from initial unbelief to belief. Rather, the homily is an application of the Scripture readings and the meaning of the solemnity or feast to everyday Christian living and continued conversion.

34. The style and manner of preaching should be influenced by "the composition and expectations of the congregation to which it is addressed, and not exclusively by the preference of the preacher" (see Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, Fulfilled in Your Hearing: The Homily in the Sunday Assembly, p. 25:1).

35. The art of preaching, the actual style of delivering the homily, is also important. Traditionally good "Black preaching" is rich in content and expression, relies heavily on the biblical text, and draws generously from story, song, poetry, humor, anecdote and descriptive language. Good Black

preaching balances emotion and content, and never descends to crass affectation. The homily must enable the community to worship God with praise and thanksgiving. Black Catholics, like Catholics everywhere, are demanding more creative and spirit-filled preaching. Style is of great importance but sincerity and content are not to be given secondary significance.

Dismissal Of Catechumens

36. Catechumens are those persons preparing for the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist. From the moment they are accepted into the Order of Catechumens, "the Church embraces the catechumens as its own with a mother's love and concern. Joined to the Church, the catechumens are now part of the household of Christ, since the Church nourishes them with the word of God and sustains them by means of liturgical celebrations" (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, no. 47).

37. The Church makes special provision for the participation of the catechumens in the eucharistic liturgy. "Gradually the catechumens should be admitted to the first part of the celebration of the Sunday Mass. After the Liturgy of the Word they should, if possible, be dismissed, but an intention for them is included in the general intercessions" (RCIA, no. 83:2). Catechumens are dismissed to remind them and the assembly that the privilege and responsibility to participate in the Liturgy of the Eucharist belongs in a unique way to those who are fully initiated. By their dismissal the Church wishes to remind the rest of the assembly of our baptismal dignity and to heighten the catechumen's desire for full

membership.

Profession Of Faith

38. The Sacramentary provides three forms of the profession of faith:

- a) the profession of faith (Nicene Creed), which is said on Sundays and solemnities. It may also be said on solemn local occasions;
- b) in celebrations of Masses with children, the Apostles' Creed may replace the Nicene Creed;
- c) the renewal of baptismal promises normally occurs at the Easter Vigil, at Easter Sunday liturgies, and during the rite of Confirmation.

Catholics profess their faith on such occasions as another reminder that local assemblies are united with other communities of believers.

General Intercessions

39. In the general intercessions the people exercise their priestly function by interceding for the Church and all humankind (see GIRM, no. 45; see also Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, no. 53). Petitions are to be offered for the Church, for civil authorities, for those in need, for all people, and for the salvation of the world. Care should be taken to avoid a narrow particularism in the composition or spontaneous creation of intentions, for the local Church must always relate its celebration of the Eucharist to the Church throughout the world. "The general intercessions are a sign of

communion of the particular assembly with other assemblies and with the universal Church" (Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, General Intercessions, p. 4).

40. The priest introduces the intercessions with an invitation directed to the assembly and concludes them with a prayer addressed to God. A deacon, cantor, or other person announces the petitions. They may be offered in a variety of ways suited to the local community. They may also be sung and/or accompanied by instrumental music as the congregation responds after the manner of a litany with short responses; the response is always sung by the assembly. The musical setting, the tempo, and the needs expressed may be clear reflections of the nature and make-up of the assembly. Care should be taken to keep the intercessions from becoming disproportionately long or drawn out.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

41. "At the last supper Christ instituted the sacrifice and paschal meal that make the sacrifice of the cross to be continuously present in the Church, when the priest, representing Christ the Lord, carries out what the Lord did and handed over to his disciples to do in his memory" (GIRM, no. 48). The Liturgy of the Eucharist is structured on the model of the words and actions of Christ at the Last Supper (Take and eat, this is my body. Take and drink, this is the cup of my blood. Do this in memory of me):

- (a) the presentation and preparation of the gifts and altar;

- (b) the eucharistic prayer in which thanks is given and Christ becomes sacramentally present;
- (c) the breaking of the bread and the communion of the faithful in the body and blood of the Lord (see GIRM, no. 48).

Preparation of Altar and Presentation of Gifts

42. The procession of gifts may sometimes reflect the cultural or ethnic make-up of the assembled faithful. Song or instrumental music may accompany this action. In keeping with the simplicity of this rite, the choir may sing a hymn, motet, or other musical selection. Instrumental music may also be appropriate at this time (see Liturgical Music Today, no. 58).

43. "This is also the time to receive money or other gifts for the Church or the poor brought by the faithful or collected at Mass. They are to be put in a suitable place but not on the altar" (GIRM, no. 49). The preparation rite is and should be ordinarily maintained as a simple transition activity from the Liturgy of the Word. The introduction of cultural elements should underscore the transitional nature of this ritual moment.

Eucharistic Prayer

44. The eucharistic prayer, also called the anaphora, "a prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification, is the center of the entire celebration" (MCW, no. 47). It may be proclaimed in a clear spoken fashion or it may be sung in various musical styles, e.g. a "Black" stylistic delivery, if it is within the capabilities of the priest celebrant. The words of the

eucharistic prayer itself may not be adapted or changed.

45. The three congregational acclamations (Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, and Amen) which are a part of this prayer must always be acclamations and are preferably sung. "The acclamations are shouts of joy which arise from the whole assembly as forceful and meaningful assents to God's word and action . . . It is of their nature that they be rhythmically strong, melodically appealing, and affirmative. The people should know the acclamations by heart in order to sing them spontaneously" (MCW, no. 53).

46. The Sacramentary provides four different memorial acclamations:

- A. Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.
- B. Dying you destroyed our death,
rising you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.
- C. When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.
- D. Lord, by your cross and resurrection
you have set us free.
You are the Savior of the world.

These acclamations have been set to a number of melodies. The Church encourages the composition of additional settings.

47. When the assembly sings the Amen at the end of the eucharistic prayer, it assents to the Church's act of thanksgiving. "To be most effective, the Amen may be repeated or augmented. Choirs may harmonize and expand upon the people's acclamation" (MCW, no. 58).

48. Care should be taken that all the acclamations of the eucharistic prayer not grow too lengthy lest they lose their character and become independent musical selections during the anaphora.

Lord's Prayer

49. The Lord's Prayer "begins our immediate preparation for sharing in the paschal banquet. The traditional English text is retained and may be set to music by composers with the same freedom as other parts of the Order of Mass. All settings must provide for the participation of the priest and all present" (MCW, no. 67). Musical settings of the Lord's Prayer must always include all the liturgical texts prescribed in the Sacramentary, that is, the invitation of the priest, the Lord's Prayer, the embolism, and its concluding doxology.

50. "The embolism Deliver us, Lord, developing the last petition of the Lord's Prayer, begs on behalf of the entire community of the faithful deliverance from the power of evil. The invitation, the prayer itself, the

embolism, and the people's doxology are sung or are recited aloud" (GIRM, no. 56a). The doxology always concludes the embolism and not the Lord's Prayer. Thus while musical settings reflecting the rich heritage of the Black community are encouraged, they must be true to the accepted form of the Our Father with its separate embolism and concluding doxology.

Sign of Peace

51. The purpose of the sign of peace is to enable the faithful, "before they share in the same bread," to implore "peace and unity for the Church and for the whole human family and offer some sign of their love for one another" (GIRM, no. 56b). While no specific form or words have been predetermined, the sign or rite of peace should nevertheless be a moment which expresses unity. It should not be unduly prolonged. The sign of peace is an anticipatory ritual moment which is intended to remind us all of that unity which we share in the Eucharist and live in its fullness in God's kingdom. Like other ritual gestures it always points to a more perfect expression in God's kingdom. The warmth and affection of Black Catholic communities may prompt the extension or enlargement of this ritual to the point that it overshadows the sharing of the Bread of life, the richest sign of Christians' oneness in Christ. Extended greetings and signs of communicating affection are more properly given during the Preliminary Gathering of the Assembly and not at this time.

52. The use of music tends to lengthen the rite of peace, which is clearly out of character with its liturgical function and purpose. As such, a prolonged sign of peace conflicts with (or even at times eliminates entirely)

the Lamb of God which follows (see the statement of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, The Sign of Peace, 1977.)

Communion

53. "Since the eucharistic celebration is the paschal meal, it is right that the faithful who are properly disposed receive the Lord's body and blood as spiritual food as he commanded. This is the purpose of the breaking of bread and the other preparatory rites that lead directly to the communion of the people . . ." (GIRM, no. 56).

54. When Communion is distributed under both kinds, the norms found in This Holy and Living Sacrifice: Directory for the Celebration and Reception of Communion under Both Kinds are to be followed. Every community of peoples prides itself upon its table-fellowship and practice of hospitality. Black Catholics, calling upon the finest in their traditions, should serve the Bread of life and the Cup of salvation in a manner which recognizes the dignity of each person and the uniqueness of the gift which is offered. Eucharistic ministers should be reverent and conscientious in distributing that gift, who is Christ.

In every way the communion rite should be celebrated with the same sense of generosity and love that participants experience in the warmth of their homes and in the homes of neighbors and friends.

Lamb of God

55. During the breaking of the bread the Lamb of God is sung by the choir and cantor with the congregation responding, or by the choir and the congregation. "This invocation may be repeated as often as necessary to accompany the breaking of the bread. The final reprise concludes with the words grant us peace (GIRM, no. 56e). During the action of the breaking of the bread, and in the case of communion under both kinds, the filling of the chalices, tropes may be added to the Lamb of God "so that the prayerfulness of the rite may be enriched" (Liturgical Music Today, no. 20).

Communion Processional Song

56. "The communion song should foster a sense of unity. It should be simple and not demand great effort. It gives expression to the joy of unity in the body of Christ and the fulfillment of the mystery being celebrated. Because they emphasize adoration rather than communion, most benediction hymns are not suitable. In general, during the most important seasons of the Church year — Easter, Lent, Christmas, and Advent — it is preferable that most songs used at the communion be seasonal in nature" (MCW, no. 62).

57. The song during the communion of the priest and people expresses the spiritual union of the communicants who join their voices in a single song, shows the joy of all, and makes the communion procession an act of unity. This song begins when the priest receives communion and continues as long as necessary. The communion song should be concluded in sufficient time, to allow for a psalm or song after communion.

58. Because of the nature of the communion procession, the singing of "solos" at this time is not appropriate and should be avoided. A solo highlights the talents and gifts of one person while the spirit of the communion rite highlights our oneness in Christ.

Psalm or Song after Communion

59. The song after communion is optional. "The singing of a psalm or a hymn of praise after the distribution of communion is optional. If the organ ~~for~~ other musical instrument~~s~~ is played or the choir sings during the distribution of communion, a congregational song may well provide a fitting expression of oneness in the Eucharistic Lord. Since no particular text is specified, there is ample room for creativity" (MCW, no. 72). A solo may sometimes be appropriate at this time.

60. There should always be a period of silence after communion. "The proper place of silence must not be neglected, and the temptation must be resisted to cover every moment with music. There are times when an instrumental interlude is able to bridge the gap between two parts of a ceremony and help unify the liturgical action. But music's function is always ministerial and must never degenerate into idle background music" (Liturgical Music Today, no. 59).

Prayer after Communion

61. In the prayer after communion, as in the opening prayer, the invitation Let us pray is always addressed to the assembly, not to God. It may be expanded or accommodated to the needs of the assembly. But the prescribed collect must always follow the invitation. "The priest petitions for the effects of the mystery just celebrated and by their acclamation, Amen, the people make the prayer their own" (GIRM, no. 56k).

CONCLUDING RITES

62. Brief announcements important to the life of the community may be made after the prayer after communion, but never before the prayer. The prayer after communion concludes the communion rite. Announcements should not intrude upon this ritual moment.

Blessing

63. The Sacramentary provides three forms for the blessing: a simple blessing, the solemn blessing, and the prayer over the people, any of which may be chosen according to circumstances. The selection of the blessing should be influenced by the particular liturgical celebration or season, the biblical texts, and the make-up of the assembly. As noted already, the Black community values its gathering as an assembly of worshippers, sometimes embellishing the gathering rite with music, gestures of fellowship and periods of welcome; so too should the dismissal rite return

to the same awareness that a community which has been called together out of a world filled with worries and sometimes harsh concerns is now commissioned to go forth with Good News and renewed courage, strengthened through the sharing of the eucharistic gifts.

Dismissal

64. The Sacramentary provides three texts for the dismissal. The deacon, or in his absence the priest, dismisses the assembly, sending each member back "to doing good works, while praising and blessing the Lord" (GIRM, no. 57b).

Recessional

65. "The recessional song has never been an official part of the rite; hence musicians are free to plan music which provides an appropriate closing to the liturgy. A song is one possible choice. However, if the people have sung a song after communion, it may be advisable to use only an instrumental or choir recessional" (MCW, no. 73).

66. The various possibilities for the recessional are similar to the entrance procession:

- a) ritual gesture and movement;
- b) various styles of music;
- c) congregational involvement through singing, hand-clapping, and other forms traditional to the Black community.

CONCLUSION

67. "To be Catholic is to be universal. To be universal is not to be uniform. It does mean, however, that the gifts of individuals and of particular groups become the common heritage shared by all" (What We Have Seen and Heard, p. 4). As Black Catholics continue to deepen their reverence for the gift of their own blackness and their own African-American spirituality, a tradition rooted in the Scriptures, these gifts must be shared with other Catholics and so enrich the whole Church in the United States.

68. It must never be forgotten that the liturgy has an evangelizing dimension. As the celebration of the faithful's reconciliation in Christ, the worship of God in the liturgy continually challenges the community to change their hearts, to be converted anew in Christ. Likewise, worship impels all Catholics to bring the message of conversion to others, especially those who do not know Christ Jesus.

69. The very style and manner of Black Catholic worship will assist in the evangelization of peoples, especially when the liturgy is accommodated to the cultural traditions and present needs of people. "From the standpoint of evangelization in the Black community, the liturgy of the Catholic Church has always demonstrated a way of drawing many to the faith and also of nourishing and deepening the faith of those who already believe. We [the Black Catholic Bishops of the United States] believe that the liturgy of the Catholic Church can be an even more intense expression of the spiritual

vitality of those who are of African origin . . ." (What We Have Seen and Heard, p. 30).

70. It is with that hope that these reflections were prepared. It is the hope of the Black Liturgy Subcommittee of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy that all who read these reflections will be encouraged to continue to enhance the celebration of the liturgy and so enrich the Catholic experience. Black Catholic Americans are intensely proud of their rich heritage and want to bring that heritage as a gift to the whole Church. Black Catholics want their artists, poets and musicians to continue to create from the beauty of that heritage for the worship life of our Church. Like all Catholics, Black Catholics are still experiencing the richness of the renewed liturgy. They have been enheartened to witness so many creative and inspiring celebrations of the Church's liturgy. As they continue to probe the possibilities inherent in the Roman liturgy they will recognize its limitations as well as its still untapped potential. The entire Church will be the richer for this journey and exploration made in Spirit, in truth and in love.

RESOURCES FOR LITURGY PLANNING

The following documents, essays, and books provide insight into the Church's norms and guidelines for worship, music, and other liturgical elements. They should also offer practical and valuable assistance to those engaged in planning liturgical celebrations, especially the Sunday Eucharist.

1. Documents, Statements, Hymnals

- Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, Environment and Art in Catholic Worship. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1978.
- Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, General Intercessions. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1979.
- Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, Liturgical Music Today. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1982.
- Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, Liturgy Documentary Series 1: The Lectionary for Mass, Introduction. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1982.
- Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, Liturgy Documentary Series 2: General Instruction of the Roman Missal. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1982.
- Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, Liturgy Documentary Series 6: Norms Governing Liturgical Calendars. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1984.
- Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, Music in Catholic Worship (revised edition). Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1983.
- Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, Sign of Peace. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1977.
- Bishops' Committee on Priestly Formation, Fulfilled in Your Hearing: The Homily in the Sunday Assembly. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1982.
- Black Catholic Bishops of the United States, What We Have Seen and Heard, Pastoral Letter on Evangelization. Cincinnati: St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1984.
- Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal. Chicago: G.I.A. Publications, Inc., 1987.
- National Black Catholic Congress of 1987, The National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan (especially Section I, Part VI "Liturgy" page 74 and The National Black Catholic Pastoral Plan, Implementation Plan. Baltimore: National Black Catholic Congress Office, 1987.

2. Essays, Articles, Books

Thea Bowman, F.S.P.A., "The Gift of African American Sacred Song" in Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 1987).

Anscar Chupungco, O.S.B., Cultural Adaptation of the Liturgy. New York: Paulist Press, 1982.

Austin Fleming, Preparing for Liturgy. Washington: The Pastoral Press, 1985.

Lawrence Johnson, The Word and Eucharist Handbook. San Jose: Resource Publications, 1986.

J-Glenn Murrar, S.J., "The Liturgy of the Roman Rite and African American Worship" in Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal (Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc., 1987).

Gilbert Ostieck, Catechesis for Liturgy. Washington: The Pastoral Press, 1986.

Clarence Joseph Rivers, Soulfull Worship. Washington, D.C.: National Office for Black Catholics, 1974.

Clarence Joseph Rivers, The Spirit in Worship. Cincinnati: Stimuli, Inc., 1978.

Mark Searle, Liturgy Made Simple. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1981.

AUTHORIZATION:

In its planning documents for 1985 and 1986 the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, through its Black Liturgy Subcommittee, was authorized to address the question of liturgical inculturation by providing guidelines for the celebration of the Eucharist. The present document In Spirit and Truth: Black Catholic Reflections on the Present Options Permitted in the Celebration of the Eucharist was approved by the members of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy on June 10-12, 1987 and is authorized for publication by the undersigned.

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