

# LITURGY NEWSLETTER

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## LITURGY MATTERS

In her book *Saying Amen: A Mystagogy of Sacrament*, Sr. Kathleen Hughes creates a beautiful expression when she speaks of the Eucharist as a “wave of grace rolling over the community again and again across the centuries of Christendom, hollowing out spaces for the divine in the midst of the everyday.” For those of us blessed to have grown up in Atlantic Canada, we were never far from the sea, and many of us know the thrill of watching the waves roll in as a storm passes offshore. I for one never tire of the sight of the majesty and the power of the ocean swells. And yet each successive wave is not all that different from the ones that crashed ashore before it. There is a power to beauty and mystery that familiarity does not lessen. It is never boring. In fact, repetition is an essential part of the experience. The sight of just one or two waves would leave us unsatisfied.

Repetition is an essential element in ritual. Just as the action of the ocean forms the coastland over many years, so the liturgy gradually forms and shapes us into what God calls us to be. Good ritual is always repetitious. We baptize each child the same way, we marry each couple with the same formula, and we bury each loved one with the same rites. On a practical level, repetition puts us at ease and lets us feel at home within the ritual. I have seen the reaction when a presider tampers with the words in a celebration that involves a dialogue with the assembly. No one knows for sure what to say and the assembly stumbles through a response.

This should tell us a few things. First of all, it tells us that liturgy is not entertainment. Repetition in entertainment can induce boredom. “I’ve already seen that film” is a statement often heard at video rental shops. In liturgy however, repetition frees us to give ourselves over to the mystery in prayer. The surprise comes from the experience of the presence of Christ, not from a new twist to the words. Secondly, it should tell us that liturgy is not the property of an individual or a particular group, no matter how well-intentioned they may be. Liturgy is the treasured property of the whole church, and should be respected as such. Presiders, musicians, and liturgy committees should be very conscious of this in preparing and carrying out the rites. The liturgy is not meant to be the vehicle for their preferences, their private devotional practices and predilections. To put it bluntly, those of us who have responsibility are to do what the Church asks us to do and not what we prefer or invent. Just as accomplished pianists acquire their skill through hours of repeating the scales day after day until the “feel” of the keyboard is embedded in their souls, so it is for Christians to be formed by the Eucharist.

### In This Issue —

Articles	page
• Message from the National Liturgy Office (NLO)	1
• Mystagogy in the Catholic Deaf Community	2
• Funerals and Such	5
• Unfolding the Mysteries	7
• Lectionary Update	8

General information	sidebar page
• We’re on the web	2
• NLO is easy to reach	2
• NLO staff	2
• To Order CCCB Products	2
• Episcopal Commission for Liturgy Members	3
• Consultants	3
• National Council for Liturgy Members	3

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Only repeated Eucharistic praying week after week can ingrain within us a spirit of gratitude to God, such that it becomes a habit that we can begin to give thanks and praise “always and for everything.”

Repetition is not synonymous with boredom. In fact, boring liturgy is usually the result of not doing fully and well what the Church asks us to do. Read the *Praenotanda* of the ritual books. Let the symbols speak loudly and robustly. Do not water them down. Do not settle for scrupulous rubricism and legalistic minimalism. Develop a good model of celebration and stick to it week after week. Let this great wave of grace do its sacred work for yet another generation.

In this issue of the *Liturgy Newsletter*, Matthew Hysell in his article *Mystagogy in the Catholic Deaf Community* presents us with powerful insights that offer serious challenges to the way liturgy is celebrated in the “hearing” community as well.



Father Bill Burke  
Director, National Liturgy Office

## MYSTAGOGY IN THE CATHOLIC DEAF COMMUNITY ( Part I )

M. G. Hysell

*Matthew Hysell studied in New York City and Berkeley before coming to Canada to work for the Archdiocese of Edmonton Advisory Board for Deaf Ministry. He recently graduated with an M.Th. from Newman Theological College. His thesis was titled “The Sacramental Validity of the Eucharistic Form in Sign Language.”*

### INTRODUCTION

This past Easter, St Mark’s Catholic Community of the Deaf twinned with St Charles Parish in the Archdiocese of Edmonton for the celebration of the Paschal Vigil. Since the summer of 2008, St Mark’s had been preparing a Deaf person for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation; after ten months of evangelization, catechesis, and illumination, our candidate was immersed in the waters of baptism, wiped away the Chrism trickling down her face, and feasted at the Lord’s table. It was a sensuous experience for one who lives in a world of silence.

Deaf culture is defined principally by its language of manual signs; in Canada, two such languages exist side-by-side, American Sign Language (ASL) and Quebec Sign Language (*Langue des signes québécoise*, LSQ). Since sign language is spatial, it does not carry with it the features of spoken language which makes possible for a written form. To complicate matters, sign language carries with it not only vocabulary made with the hands, but facial expressions that modify these manual signs to indicate size and shape as well as emotions. Traditional writing forms have not yet been able to accommodate the complexities of sign language although there are various transcription systems that attempt to do so. It is for this

reason that Deaf culture, keeping in mind that it is defined principally by its language, is pre-literary, not unlike the Mosuo language of northern China or the Slavic language prior to the missionary endeavours of Sts Cyril and Methodius. Deaf people who read, therefore, are considered bilingual, because they are reading in a language other than sign language. Due to stubborn anomalies in educational theory, the bilingualism of Deaf people often means they are deprived of fluency in their secondary language. For this reason, the literary aspects of the sacred liturgy, especially sacred music, is usually superfluous for Deaf people. Accent on the non-literary elements of the liturgy are thus necessary in order to enculturate the dialogue between God and his People when they take place within a Deaf milieu. The foundational principle of this is the Incarnation, which was nothing less than the enculturation of God in humanity. This is precisely the basis of the sacramental economy.

### WHAT IS MYSTAGOGY?

'Mystagogy'<sup>1</sup> or 'liturgy as a source of catechesis' operates on the saying of St Prosper of Aquitaine, "the law of prayer establishes the law of belief."<sup>2</sup> It is in the sacred liturgy, more than any handbook of doctrine, that the Church's confession of faith is rediscovered.<sup>3</sup> It follows, then, that a deliberate *ars celebrandi* of the sacred liturgy, especially of the sacramental symbols, is necessary for authentic mystagogy. Sr. Kathleen Hughes R.C.S.J. has said, "...we need less catechesis and more profound mystagogia. That means a new commitment to doing the rites well – the best form of teaching. The difference between catechesis and mystagogia is that catechesis is prose and mystagogia is poetry. Mystagogia deals less with teaching but rather unfolds the symbols of our celebration in a more poetic mode, gradually forming the deeper affections of our heart."<sup>4</sup>

It is precisely in bypassing the prosaic of wordiness – which scarcely has a home in Deaf culture – that the poeticism of symbols holds promise to hand on the faith to Deaf believers, because they are not heard but seen, the primary sense employed by people who have hearing loss.<sup>5</sup> It is, in other words, more feasible to unpack the meanings of bread, wine, oil, water, and gestures when they are palpable, than to explain what the text of the liturgy means.<sup>6</sup> Mystagogy presupposes richness of liturgical symbols; weak symbols, on the other hand, prevents mystagogy altogether.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jeffery P. Baerwald, "Mystagogy", in PETER E. FINK, *The New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 881-883.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *Denzinger*, 246: *Lex orandi, lex credendi*.

<sup>3</sup> I say rediscovered because it was first discovered in Divine Revelation, in God's self-disclosure in the life of Jesus Christ. The liturgy is a reiteration of what was revealed in the Incarnate Word.

<sup>4</sup> Quoted in P.C. FINN and JAMES M. SCHELLMAN, ed., *Shaping English Liturgy* (Washington, D.C.: Pastoral Press, 1990), 104.

<sup>5</sup> The question of enculturation becomes even more acute with the participation of Deaf-Blind people in the sacred liturgy.

<sup>6</sup> What is often overlooked is that (1) the liturgical texts are often too idiomatic to be conveyed in sign language and (2) demands a leapfrogging from the Latin typical edition, to approved vernacular translations, to 'on the spot' interpretation. Much of what the prayers mean are, quite literally, lost in translation.

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## DOCTRINAL BACKGROUND TO LITURGICAL AND SACRAMENTAL SYMBOLS

"People who really live by the liturgy will continue to learn that the bodily movements, the actions and the material objects which it employs are all of the highest significance. It offers great opportunities of expression, of knowledge and of spiritual experience; it is emancipating in its action, and capable of presenting a truth far more strongly and convincingly than can the mere word of mouth."

Romano Guardini; found in *"The Essential Guardini" An Anthology of the Writings of Romano Guardini*. Selected and with an Introduction by Heinz R. Kuehn, Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1997.

The basic attitude of active participation in the Mass demands also that we take the threefold salvation historical dimension of the liturgical signs and symbols (past, present, future) seriously. The divine action of the past becomes present in the present time, so that we may here and now enjoy it; and it points also to the future, where we long to go. We ought to include this longing in the Mass, just as the early Christians did when they insistently asked for the coming of the Lord in their acclamation: *Marantha! Come Lord Jesus*.

("The Eucharistic Prayer: Summit of the Summit", Bishop Attila Mikloshazy, *National Bulletin on Liturgy*, vol. 33 no. 162, Fall 2000, p. 141.)

Is there a theological justification for such use of liturgical and sacramental symbols? Indeed there is, and such justification emerged during the high middle ages in the teachings of the Scholastics, especially St Thomas Aquinas.<sup>7</sup> It goes like this. The make-up of sacraments is really threefold: the sacrament only, being the symbol ('matter and form' as well as action), the sacrament and what it signifies (the immediate graces derived from the sacrament) and what it is apart from the sacrament (what graces it anticipates).<sup>8</sup> In the case of the Eucharist, the 'sacrament itself' would be the appearances of bread and wine; the 'sacrament and what it signifies' is the Sacred Body and Precious Blood; the 'thing apart from the sacrament' is the Church's unity and charity. What is important here is that the first two distinctions make use of tangible elements that are geared towards heightening our sense for the divine. In older parlance, Catholics would speak of the 'veil' of the sacraments. St Thomas tells us that these "veils" serve a purpose: to instruct. To minimize the symbols is to diminish its divine intention to instruct, and thus weaken the liturgy's capacity to be a moment of contemplation and encounter. Equal emphasis is to be given to all three aspects of the sacrament.

Still the objection is raised that "the grace of the sacraments is all that matters" implying that the symbols or the 'sacrament only' are of minimal importance.<sup>9</sup> The error here is that it reduces participation in the liturgy to 'presuming' that the sacramental graces are present; it also ignores the fact that reflecting on what the liturgical symbols mean is, too, something Christ intended when he instituted the sacraments. For instance, many Deaf Catholics have asked me what that "white round thing" they ate at Mass was, and many are astonished when I try to tell them that it was bread! The reductionism of the symbol of bread to paper-thin wafers inhibits a mystagogy on Christ as the "Bread of Life."<sup>10</sup> We have here, clearly, a paradigm instance of the suppression of sacramental symbols that impoverishes mystagogy. For how can Deaf Catholics, who depend so much on visual media, draw a connection between the liturgical-sacramental symbols and what they mean when there is only a weak symbolism to unpack?<sup>11</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Note that 'liturgy' and 'sacraments' would not have been carefully differentiated among the Scholastics; today we would understand 'liturgy' as the context for sacraments. The Scholastics, on the other hand, would have used 'rite' in place of 'liturgy.'

<sup>8</sup> See BERNARD LEEING, *Principles of Sacramental Theology* (London, UK: Longmans, Green, and Co., Ltd., 1957), 251-257. These three distinctions are technically called *sacramentum tantum*, *sacramentum et res*, and the *res tantum*.

<sup>9</sup> One wonders if Catholicism's old foe is at work here – Gnosticism.

<sup>10</sup> It seems easily forgotten (or suppressed) that the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*, n. 321 reads: "The meaning of the sign demands that the material for Eucharistic celebration truly have the appearance of food."

<sup>11</sup> For a good analysis on the 'bodiliness' of the sacred liturgy, see MICHAEL KUNZLER, *The Church's Liturgy* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2001), 128-154; see also Claude Duchesneau, "The World of Rites and Symbols," in PHILIPPE BÉGUERIE and CLAUDE DUCHESNEAU, *How to Understand the Sacraments* (New York, NY: Crossroad, 1991), 45-52; JEAN CRITCHON, "The World of Symbols," in his *Christian Celebration* (London, UK: Geoffrey Chapman, 1981), 16-30.

## MYSTAGOGY AND ENCULTURATION

As a culture that depends primarily on the visual medium, it follows that the visibility (and, by extension, the tangibility) of the liturgical and sacramental symbols is of paramount importance for a fruitful mystagogy. It is patently insufficient to provide catechesis 'in tandem' with the sacred liturgy, or worse, to provide instructions that 'fill in the gap' of what is missing from the liturgical symbols on account of a few drops of water for baptism, refusing to display icons corresponding to the feasts, or a hasty sign of the cross. Rather, mystagogical catechesis in the Catholic Deaf community ought to consist of an hermeneutic of symbols that are obvious and ought to arise from hindsight of the believer's own experience of a sensuous liturgy. 'Being told' what the symbols are supposed to mean because they are already impoverished defeats the purpose of mystagogical catechesis. With the absence of the more 'intelligible' symbols such as sacred music and sung prayer, the accent upon the visible and tangible liturgical symbols becomes even more imperative in the Deaf Catholic community because of its accent on knowing by seeing rather than by hearing.

## CONCLUSION

We have only discussed here the meaning of 'mystagogy' without too much reflection on its specific applicability to Deaf culture. In the next installment of this article, I wish to propose three broad areas of reflection when considering mystagogy in the Deaf Catholic community. First, we will revisit briefly our discussion on liturgical symbols and how their palpability provides a springboard of experience for catechesis. Second, given the priority of visual media among Deaf people, art and environment in the liturgical space needs to be considerably rethought, especially the role of light and the suppression of gaudy décor. Third, drawing on the patrimony of the Eastern Churches and on our own roots in the Seventh Ecumenical Council (787), we will look at the use of icons in worship and how they can be recovered in a special way as a means of non-literary catechesis.

At the end of the Paschal Vigil at St Charles Parish, our Deaf members were astonished at the richness of what they saw and experienced: a drenching baptism, glistening Chrism, and a hearty Eucharistic banquet. It has made for conversation ever since. That is mystagogy.

*Part 2 of Mr. M. G. Hysell's article Mystagogy in the Catholic Deaf Community will be presented in the winter edition of the Liturgy Newsletter.*

## FUNERALS AND SUCH

The following extended quotation is by Rev. Austin Fleming, a pastor and a liturgist, in his blog *A Concord Pastor Comments*. It is part of a series of reflections and reader reactions to his musings about recent high profile funerals in the United States. Used with Fr. Fleming's permission.

So, throughout the process of formation, children along with all the baptized, must be systematically led to an understanding of their experience of the liturgy of the word, the celebration of the sacraments, the liturgical year, and the Church's liturgy of the hours. The catechist, the liturgical ministers and those responsible for preparing celebrations must recognize the basic and essential catechetical power of the sacramental celebrations themselves. This power rests not in the words we speak, but in the ritual action itself. Nothing we say or add to the liturgy can unleash this power, but it certainly can stifle it. The power of the liturgy is fully released only when the signs are freed from all that inhibits their ability to touch and transform: minimalism, didacticism, and convenience. (NBL, Vol. 33, no.161, Summer 2000, pp. 105-106)

The liturgical year is not simply a series of Sundays and feasts, or even a series of seasons; it is a unity. The ebb and flow of the year shapes the lives of Christians and nuances the meaning of the individual moments. The pacing of life from one Advent to the next provides a healthy, though often tenuous, counter-balance to the rhythm of the January-December and school year calendars of life in the society we are called to transform.

(*NBL*, vol. 33, no. 163, p.196)

The Church year is not limited to a tourist's view of history: it remembers God's wonderful works shown in the past, and celebrates them as continuing to take place among us. At the same time, we look forward to their complete fulfillment in the messianic banquet in the age to come. To fully engage the power of the Church's year of grace, however, each parish and community needs to take a careful look at each season and feast, and to understand what is being celebrated and why.

(*NBL*, vol. 33, no.163, p.196)

“Whenever possible, ministers should involve the family (of the deceased) in planning the funeral rites: in the choice of texts and rites provided in the ritual, in the selection of music for the rites, and in the designation of liturgical ministers.” (*Order of Christian Funerals*, no. 17)

...Then, there are those who evidently believe that at the time of a funeral the Church and her ministers should abandon just about all liturgical principles and guidelines and accede to whatever the family of the deceased may want to do. Some have hinted that this is what Jesus would do. Well, I can't speak for Jesus on that matter but I believe that the Church's prayer has a well-deserved integrity and that in almost every instance, celebrating the liturgy as the Church intends will yield a prayerful, meaningful, spiritual, healing experience for at least all believers and also, often, for those who do not share our faith in the risen Christ.

That's what 36 years of celebrating funeral liturgies has taught me.

The quote at the head of this post is from the introduction to the *Order of Christian Funerals (OCF)*. Clearly, it's the mind of the Church that the family have the opportunity to be personally involved in preparing the funeral liturgy. And that's just how it should be: nothing less than this – not too much more than this, either. The Church's invitation to families here is to participate in preparing the celebration of the rite, not to rewrite the rite. Unfortunately and for various reasons, some have come to expect that they have a right to fashion the Church's prayer according to their own tastes and inclinations. The invitation to families in the *OCF* does not share that vision and it's often the work of parish ministers to help families understand this.

Every sacramental celebration is marked by the warm finger-prints of those who celebrate it. In the liturgy, we are human beings sharing in the eternal and divine liturgy of Christ's paschal mystery. While it's appropriate and inevitable that the liturgy bear the traces of our holding it in our hands, the liturgy's first purpose is to glorify God with thanks and praise and for us to become more like Christ through, with and in whom we pray.

Some have the mistaken notion that a funeral Mass is “a celebration of the life of John Smith.” Not only is this not what a funeral Mass is about, but such a notion seriously misunderstands the liturgy in general and the Mass of Christian burial in particular. Every liturgical rite is a celebration of the Paschal Mystery: the salvation that is ours in the death and resurrection of Jesus. A funeral Mass celebrates the life of the risen Christ and the decedent's share in the Lord's Resurrection.

In the same way, a wedding Mass is not “a celebration of the love of Mary and John.” A nuptial Mass or ceremony is a celebration of the mystery of God's love revealed in Christ, in which love the bride and groom are about to seal a lifelong covenant of fidelity.

And all of this is not just pious fluff – this is how Catholics are called to understand their faith, their prayer and their Church.

Especially at a time of loss and sorrow, there is an understandable desire for personal recognition of the one being prayed for and opportunities for those close to the deceased to express their affection, their sorrow and their prayer that God will be mercifully

faithful to the promise of eternal life offered the deceased in baptism. Fortunately, the funeral rites of the Catholic Church offer many opportunities for all of this. In fact, at the time of a death there are a number of opportunities for personal expression within and outside of the Church's ritual. A problem arises, however, when there is a desire and an effort to have the funeral Mass bear the burden of all or most of that personal expression and emotion.

Fr. Fleming's blog is worth reading regularly. Here is the link.  
<http://concordpastor.blogspot.com/>

## R.C.I.A

If you are involved in the RCIA in your parish and have not already discovered this excellent on-line resource, check out TEAMRCIA.COM Their web address is <http://teamrcia.com/>

## UNFOLDING THE MYSTERIES

Fr. Bill Burke

*Director, National Liturgy Office*

We do not consume the Eucharistic bread and wine as if they were ordinary food and drink, for we have been taught that as Jesus Christ our Saviour became a man of flesh and blood by the power of the Word of God, so also the food that our flesh and blood assimilate for their nourishment becomes the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus by the power of his own words contained in the words of thanksgiving (1<sup>st</sup> Apology, Justin Martyr). These words were written about the year 165, and are part of one of the earliest and shortest commentaries on the Eucharist as it was celebrated and understood in those ancient days. Its brevity does not at all take away from its importance and from the wealth of information contained therein. In a few paragraphs, it speaks of the primacy of Sunday, the importance of the assembly, and the mission of the Church to the world. Its reference to what we today call the Eucharistic Prayer indicates that the presider proclaimed it in words that he composed "to the best of his ability." Alan Boulay OSB, in his book *From Freedom to Formula* uses this Apology of Justin as a starting point for a study of the development of the Eucharistic prayer.

In 1999, Sr. Kathleen Hughes RSCJ, in her work, *Saying Amen: A Mystagogy of Sacrament* wrote: "We come at last to the heart and centre of our lives as Christians, to the sacrament that constitutes the community, and has bound us together, one with another and with Christians of every age, of every place, race and tongue, of every way of life (p. 179)."

Two commentaries written nearly 2,000 years apart, and yet both are imbued with profound love for this sacrament which Vatican II calls the source and summit of our lives. In the nearly 20 centuries separating Justin Martyr and Kathleen Hughes, the style and structure of the Eucharistic celebration have changed often as it rolled like a "wave of grace" over the span of the ages. It has taken on the language

ADVENT: Instead of asking when the liturgical year begins, perhaps we should be more concerned with living it season by season. The main concern of Advent is to help the Christian community to banish preoccupations in order to prepare for a fuller celebration of Christmas and for a deeper awareness of the second coming of the Lord at the end of time, the Lord whose presence among us we continue to recognize when we meet for the breaking of the bread.

(*NBL*, vol. 8, no. 47, Jan-Feb. 1975. p. 19.)

"It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas." No this is not a promo for the shopping malls. But very soon, parish liturgy committees will begin the work of preparing the liturgies of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany. This year we celebrate with the readings of Year C. Why not prepare the celebrations of the season with a study of the Nativity narratives of Luke's Gospel. To assist the study, an excellent resource is available in the short and highly readable book called *The Firstborn of God: The Birth of Mary's Son, Jesus* by Eugene LaVerdiere, SSS. It is published by Liturgy Training Publications of Chicago. Preachers will also find treasures in this book.

CHRISTMAS: Throughout the Church year, we celebrate God's gift to us in Christ. The fact that Jesus is Saviour is always presented, for it is by his death and resurrection that he saved us. Some guidance in understanding the paschal dimension of the Christmas cycle is provided by the prefaces of the season for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany: Jesus is the pivotal point in God's eternal plan of salvation. The incarnation and birth of Christ prepared the way for the paschal mystery and made it possible. (NBL.vol33.no.163.p.232)

EPIPHANY: While the manifestation of Christ to the wise men is the most evident motif of the celebration now, a surprising number of other elements can be found in the texts of the mass and hours of this feast. Among these we could mention: Christ is king of peace and of the nations; he is born before all ages; he is the light and Saviour of the world; God's mystery is now revealed; we become God's people; Christ enlightens us through his gospel; all nations come to praise him and to adore God. Several texts link the Lord's baptism and the Cana event with this celebration, as in the first centuries of the church. (NBL vol.33, no.163. p.230)

and cultural expressions of every race and tongue into which it has brought its awesome gift. For those of us over 50, we are personally aware of the great liturgical reform launched by Vatican II. These changes, often painfully wrenching for many, and enthusiastically embraced by many more, were in some instances implemented without sufficient preparation. Perhaps it could not have been accomplished any other way. I don't know, but I do know we are still playing catch-up.

In June of 2002, over 100 scholars (mostly Jesuits), from 42 nations of the world gathered in Rome to deliberate on the role of the liturgy. In a keynote address, Cardinal Godfrey Daneels of Belgium (a consultor for the Congregation for Divine Worship) posed a challenging question. The changes in the liturgy are in place, but does this mean that "the profound intentions of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* have thereby been realized?"

In the past 5 years, I have heard many liturgical scholars say that it is time for reflective evaluation of the reform. I repeat "reflective evaluation" not "restoration." In his forward to Kathleen Hughes' book, Gabe Huck writes: "Where attention is paid to the rites and the assembly, faithful people are formed and they form others in Gospel living. Where the hard work of catechesis is done, where the assembly of the baptized is respected, where all ministers of liturgy are schooled in service, where the documents implementing Vatican II's renewal are heeded, there is hope and there are people who can be mystagogues for us who can unfold the mysteries we celebrate."

It is again time, in fact, it is always time to do the hard work of catechesis. The liturgical reform launched by Vatican II is at a crossroads as we prepare to implement the third typical edition of the *Roman Missal*. The National Liturgy Office is preparing materials that can be used for diocesan or parish based workshops to accompany this implementation. These resources are being designed to serve as tools for long-term catechesis on the great mystery of the Eucharist. The winter edition of the *Liturgy Newsletter* will have more detail about these materials.

## LECTIONARY UPDATE

Work is proceeding very well on the Ritual Lectionary. We hope to have it ready to be sent to Rome early in 2010 and once *recognitio* has been received, we will proceed immediately with the publication of the *Ritual Lectionary* and the *Book of the Gospels*. 2010 will also see the publication of a book containing the Passion narratives for Holy Week.

The first Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2009 begins the new liturgical year. This year we will be hearing the readings of Cycle C, the year of Luke. A tremendous resource for study during this year is the book *Dining in the Kingdom of God* by Eugene LaVerdiere, published by Liturgy Training Publications in Chicago. It would be a great resource for study with liturgical ministers, parish liturgy committees, or even a Lenten adult education programme.