

2. Let us prepare ourselves to celebrate

Introductory Rites

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.



In spirit and in truth
material for small groups

Leader

In spirit and in truth



Welcome & Prayer

Listen to Scripture

As God's chosen one, the holy people whom he loves, you are to be clothed in heartfelt compassion, in generosity and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another, forgive each other if one of you has a complaint against another. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, put on love, the perfect bond. And may the peace of Christ reign in our hearts, because it is for this that you were called together in one body. Always be thankful.

Colossians 3: 12-17



Our Experience

- How does this scripture speak to us as a community – the ‘Body of Christ’?
- What is it like to come to Mass, called by God to gather with our brothers and sisters in Christ? Do we recognise ourselves as ‘called’, and as ‘brothers and sisters in Christ’?
- How do I prepare for Mass?
- What is the beginning of Mass like for me?

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Listen to Scripture
How does this scripture speak... ?

- Possible responses*
- the same yesterday and today
 - in spite of all our differences and diversity we form a community
 - God is calling us to love more

Possible supplementary questions:

- next question

What is it like to come to Mass...?

- Possible responses*
- I have never thought of it like that.
 - Each day we respond to God
 - It is hard to think of people as your brothers and sisters when you only know a handful of people

Possible supplementary questions:

- next question

How do I prepare for Mass?

- Possible responses*
- look at the readings,
 - greet one another,
 - prepare for any ministry/role,
 - pray to be open

Possible Supplementary Questions

- How does this help?

What is the beginning of Mass like for me?

- Possible responses*
- a time to settle down
 - Noisy, I hate people being late

Possible Supplementary Questions

- How am I involved?
- What does it say about us? And God?



Read & Reflect

The group may choose which part of the Introductory Rites they wish to explore in the limited time available the Greeting and the Confiteor and/or the Gloria



Use BOBOSC

The following video excerpts may be helpful:

Celebrating the Eucharist > About the Introductory Rite (4:28)

Exploring the Mass . Theological Reflections section – We go to God Together (3:11)

Crafting the Art of Liturgy > Act of the Whole Church (2.12)

Crafting the Art of Liturgy > The Liturgical Assembly (3:19)

Read & Reflect 1

GREETING & PENITENTIAL ACT

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

Or:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Or:

The Lord be with you.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

Then follows the Penitential Act, to which the Priest invites the faithful, saying:

Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins,
and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

A brief pause for silence follows. Then all recite together the formula of general confession:

I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

And, striking their breast, they say:

through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;

Then they continue:

therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The absolution by the Priest follows:

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

The people reply:

Amen.

For Discussion 1

- Which of the three greetings do you prefer and why?
- How does it feel to respond 'And with your spirit'?
- What strikes you about the Penitential Act?

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Which of the three greetings...?

Possible responses

- Grace, love and communion — beautiful
- It comes from the heart.
- I like the simplicity

Possible supplementary questions:

- What helps?
- What hinders?

How does it feel to respond 'And with your spirit'?

Possible responses

- It seems to have more meaning than 'And also with you'
- It feels strange and I find it hard to remember.
- I am not sure what I am saying.

Possible supplementary questions:

- Why are the connections to scripture important? (You may like to look up some of these references. 2 Timothy 4:22, Galatians 6:18, Philippians 4:23, Philemon 25)
- How do they say 'and with your spirit' in other languages – French, Spanish, German, Italian?

What strikes you about the Penitential Act?

Possible responses

- Though it starts off personal it involves everyone.
- People have forgotten about sin.

Possible supplementary questions:

- Is this a good starting point for Mass?



Read & Reflect 2

Read & Reflect 2

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,
we bless you,
we adore you,
we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,

 have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
 receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
 have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

For Discussion

- What does it mean for us as a community to pray/sing the Gloria at this point in the Mass?
- What was new to me? What have I heard afresh?

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2. Introductory Rites

What does it mean...?

Possible responses

- It is good to raise our voices.
- It is never quite the same when it is said.
- The focus is on God

Possible supplementary questions:

- Is it easier for us to be penitential rather than joyful?

What was new...?

Possible responses

- The pile up of praise.
- The balance between glory and God's mercy
- It reminds of the Latin

Possible supplementary questions:

- What difference does it make to pray the Gloria in a different format?



Act

See Notes



Prayer

See Notes.

Gather

- Light a candle(s) and/or time of silence:
In the name of the Father...
Let us begin our time of prayer with a few moments silence.
- Pray the Collect prayer

Listen

- to Colossians reading again

Respond

- Time of silent reflection
- Have a litany of God's mercy — sing a Kyrie

Sending Forth

- Leader:
The Lord bless us, and keep us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.
- All: *Amen*

Act

- This week, pray the texts slowly over and over, and allow silence afterwards. 'The Lord be with you' 'And with your spirit'. Do you believe what you are praying?
- What do I want to be sorry for?
- If you have time, pray the Gloria in the same way.
- What do you want to give God glory for?
- Come to Mass early and notice how the community gathers. What is the atmosphere like? Is there a sense of welcome for all? How could we improve on our welcome?

Prayer

Prompt our actions with your inspiration,
we pray, O Lord,
and further them with your constant help,
that all we do may always begin from you
and by you be brought to completion.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Collect: Thursday after Ash Wednesday