

3. God speaks through the Word: We Listen and Respond

The Liturgy of the Word

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



In spirit and in truth
material for small groups

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ENGLAND
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Listen to Scripture

Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.' Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'

John 6:62-69

Our Experience

- How does God speak to us through this Word today?
- What 'light' does the Word bring into our lives?

Prayer

Do you believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth?

I do.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered death and was buried,
rose again from the dead
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

I do.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting?

I do.

For Discussion 3

- Why do we have the Prayer of the Faithful to conclude the Liturgy of the Word?
 - Why is it important to connect the community with the wider Church and the world and pray for these needs at this point?
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Act

- Prepare for next Sunday by taking time to read and open your heart quietly to the Gospel. Reflect afterwards: What difference does this make? Could you do this every week? Is there any one or any group with whom you could prepare the Sunday Readings?
- Pray the new translation of the Nicene Creed slowly and carefully this week. Notice: What difference, if any, does this make to praying the Creed with your community at Sunday Mass?
- Consider who in the community and the wider world needs our prayer – given the guidelines above, try writing 4 short petitions for a Sunday coming up as the Parish 'Prayer of the Faithful'

Read & Reflect 1

ACCLAMATION AT THE END OF THE READINGS

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

CELEBRATING THE MASS

152 The chosen people entered into a special covenant with God at Sinai, a covenant that was renewed and fulfilled on Calvary. By hearing the word proclaimed in worship, the faithful again enter into the unending dialogue between God and the covenant people, a dialogue sealed in the sharing of the Eucharistic food. The mean of Communion is proclaimed in the word; the message of Scripture is made actual once again in the Communion banquet. The proclamation of the word is thus integral to the Mass and at its very heart.

153 ...For in the readings God speaks with his people, opening up to them the mystery of redemption and salvation and nourishing their spirit – Christ himself is present in the midst of the faithful through his Word'....

154 The Lectionary for Mass, revised at the direction of the Second Vatican Council, has opened up the treasures of the Bible, so that richer fare might be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word. The Introduction to the Lectionary speaks extensively of the place of the word of God in the plan of salvation and in the life of the Church. All who share in the ministry of the word will want to study this introduction and take its teachings to heart.

For Discussion 1

- Liturgy of the Word – how do we take part?
- How do you experience Christ's present in our midst in the different elements of the Liturgy of the Word: Proclamation from Sacred Scripture, chants in between, the homily, the Profession of Faith (Creed), and Prayer of the Faithful?

Read & Reflect 2

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

At the words that follow up to and including *and became man*, all bow.

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

For Discussion 2

- What strikes you about the new translation?
- What does it mean to you 'to profess faith'?
- With whom are you united or connected when you say the Creed?

Read & Reflect 3

THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

Celebrating the Mass

171. Enlightened and moved by God's word, the assembly exercises its priestly function by interceding for all humanity. Because "the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of the people of this age and especially of the poor and those suffering in any way are the joy and hope, the struggle and anguish of Christ's disciples," the Church prays not just for its own needs but for the salvation of the world, for civil authorities, for those oppressed by any burden, and for the local community, particularly those who are sick or who have died.
172. Thus, even though the intercessions may be quite concrete or particular in content, they should always look beyond the concerns of the local assembly to the needs of the whole Church and of the wider world. They are a sign of the communion of the particular assembly with all other assemblies and with the universal Church.
173. The priest celebrant directs the prayer from the chair. He briefly invites the people to pray, and at the end he draws their intercessions together in a brief concluding prayer with a short doxology. The intentions are proposed by a deacon, a cantor, reader, other minister, or members of the assembly at the ambo or another suitable place. After each intention, the faithful respond by silent prayer or a common response or both. They affirm the concluding prayer of the priest with their Amen.