



St Barnabas Jericho

Timeless beauty | Encouragement | Compassion

THE PARISH MASS

*with didactic commentaries on the meaning and symbolism
of the Liturgy.*

Welcome to this Teaching Mass at St Barnabas Oxford

In a tradition such as ours, where our liturgy and music are so rooted in that significant period of history called *The Oxford Movement*, it can be taken for granted that we automatically understand everything of what happens during our worship. But in our contemporary world, this is no longer the case. Whilst everyone has ritual and routine in life (that is how human beings survive in the most part), the deeper and transformative meanings of our rituals and traditions have become occluded over time. It is therefore vital that a Church like ours, which is a national and international beacon of Anglican Catholic worship in the twenty first century must take on the mantle of teaching and formation, which in fact our founding mothers and fathers did in the 19th century.

Everything that we sing and say, and the actions that we perform in the liturgy all have biblical and historical roots and beautiful theological meaning. This teaching mass is one way of unlocking the meaning of the rite for us all. During the Mass we will have short commentaries throughout, which will give some explanation and background to why we *do what we do* and *say what we say*.

An example of one of the most profound and symbolic meanings of a particular gesture in the Mass is this: *“when the priest raises the Bread and the Cup high above his head for all to see, this is to symbolize the Lord Jesus bursting from the tomb and being resurrected from the dead by the Father’s love.”* This leads us then to realize that the Altar, the Holy Table itself, is a representation not only of the table of the Last Supper in the Upper Room, but also of the sepulchre, the tomb, the grave, in which Our Lord rested until the third day. We have such a valuable and attractive tradition, let us not be afraid of celebrating it, of asking questions about it and discovering much more about it!

Father Christopher

All remain seated as the choir enters to sit in the choir stalls. The celebrant (priest) will enter in silence, unvested, and stand facing towards the Altar, beside the vestments. A spoken introduction will follow which will set the scene for the liturgy which is to follow. Once the spoken introduction is finished, the celebrant will put on the vestments in front of the congregation, saying the vesting prayers aloud. Normally this is done in the sacristy before the Mass begins.

The First Commentary on the Mass: Preparation

Coming together, assembling, is at the heart of our Sunday worship. So much of our particular tradition relies upon the depth of meaning behind symbols which can often go un-noticed or unseen. Part of the reason to offer a Teaching Mass is so that some of what might not be obvious or evident at first glance, can be unlocked. The reason behind each of the ritual actions of the first part of the Eucharist can be found in this word: gathering. The purpose of the Preparation or the Gathering, is to get us ready. The Mass is a series of mysteries that build upon each other, beginning with the Procession, which reflects the very creation of the universe. Just as in the beginning creatures and beings were called forth by God's own Word, we are called forth into participation. Creatures come forward, culminating in the appearance of a humanity created in God's own image. Finally the priest or bishop, *in persona Christi*, enters. There is music—voices united in praise, not for the creatures, but for the “the Lord, the King of Creation.” We step out of the ordinary concerns of our lives and gain access to the Divine Realities that are opening up before us. The encounter begins, and our participation is required.

The choir vests, the servers light candles and prepare the incense, and the clergy also get dressed in special clothes. In sacred garments, called vestments. Usually here in St Barnabas, as in other churches of the Catholic tradition, we have three sacred ministers: the subdeacon, who can be a lay person, the deacon, and the celebrant, who is a priest. The symbol of having three sacred ministers is of course related to the Trinity, three persons in one God. However, today, we have one sacred minister, the celebrant, the priest. And today the celebrant is Father Matthew. In a moment, Fr Matthew will put on the sacred vestments, which we do every time we prepare for a service. But today, he will do it in our sight, and will say prayers at each stage of the vesting process. Listen carefully to the prayers he says, because each prayer reveals what each item of clothing symbolises. The clothing is to remind us of the Levitical Priesthood in the Old Testament. And of the armour of God in the New Testament. Let us *'Put on the whole armour of God, so that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil...fasten the belt of truth around your waist...put on the breastplate of righteousness...shoes ready to proclaim the gospel of peace...the shield of Faith...able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one...take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.'* (Ephesians 6)

The celebrant will then return to the vestry, briefly, and after a further short commentary, the bell is rung.

The Second Commentary on the Mass: Gathering

In a moment the entrance will begin. When the bell rings we are invited to consider Israel's Exodus from Egypt. The Thurifer leads the procession as God's pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. Leading Israel through the wilderness reaching Mount Sinai, the High Altar. The censuring of the Altar is like God's presence descending onto the Mountain to meet with Moses. The Crucifer locks the Cross in place for all to see. You may recall the story in Numbers of the Israelites being bitten by snakes and Moses erected a bronze serpent and *'when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.'* (Numbers 21) After the moment to confess our sins and receive God's forgiveness, we acclaim the majesty and Glory of God in the hymn called *Gloria in Excelsis*. Following this, The final element of the introductory rites is the Collect. The priest calls us to pray in silence before "collecting" our prayer and voicing it aloud to God in our name.

All then stand to sing the Processional Hymn. The hymns are found in the green hymn books. The Processional Hymn is 52

The Mass proceeds as normal with the censuring of the altar and the singing of the introit.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

The Lord be with you;

All **And with thy spirit.**

All remain standing to say the

COLLECT FOR PURITY

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The celebrant welcomes the congregation and introduces the

PENITENTIAL ACT

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against thee and against our neighbour, in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are heartily sorry and repent of all our sins. For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may serve thee in newness of life to the glory of thy name. Amen.

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The choir sings the Kyrie eleison

[Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.]

All stand to sing the Gloria in Excelsis

**Glory be to God on high,
and in earth peace, good will towards men.
We praise thee, we bless thee,
we worship thee,
we glorify thee,
we give thanks to thee for thy great glory;
O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father almighty.
O Lord, the only-begotten Son,
Jesu Christ: O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.
Thou that takest away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer.**

**Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,
have mercy upon us.
For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord;
thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost,
art the Most High, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

The celebrant prays

THE COLLECT

The Third Commentary on the Mass: The Liturgy of the Word

When we gather at a friend's home for a meal, we always begin with conversation, telling our stories. At Mass, after the preparation, we sit down and listen as readings from the Word of God are proclaimed. They are the stories of God's people. On Sundays there are three readings from the Bible. The first reading will be from the Hebrew Scriptures. We recall the origins of our relationship with God. We will sing or recite a psalm—a song from God's own inspired hymnal, the Book of Psalms of the Hebrew Bible. The second reading will usually be from one of the letters of Paul or another apostolic writing. The third reading will be taken from one of the four Gospels.

Because of the unique presence of Christ in the proclamation of the Gospel, it has long been the custom to stand in attentive reverence to hear these words. The Gospel is commonly read at the west end of the Church or in the middle of the congregation, to denote the Light of Christ dwelling in the world, amidst men and women everywhere. In former times, the Gospel was read at the North side of the church, because the North side of the compass is the darkest part, with the rising Sun in the East. We believe that Christ "is present in his word, since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the church" (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, #7). The priest will again greet us with "The Lord be with you." He then introduces the Gospel reading while marking a small cross on his forehead, lips and heart with his thumb while praying silently that God cleans his mind and his heart so that his lips may worthily proclaim the Gospel. In many places, the congregation performs this ritual action along with the priest. The Gospel reading concludes with the ritual formula "The Gospel of the Lord" and we respond, "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ," again proclaiming our faith in the presence of Christ in the word. After the Gospel is read the Crucifer leads the procession just as Christ carries his cross to the Altar to be sacrificed. Back to another mountain - Calvary, the Hill of the Skull 'to give His life as a ransom for many.' (Mark 10) The Cross again is set in full view for all to see. Here we have a connection between the Testaments.

Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.' (John 3) Thus, it is fitting that after this procession we profess the Creed together and intercede for our world. The words of the Creed are agreed ancient formulas that sum up the essential doctrines of Christian believers. The Apostles Creed is the older and shorter form; the Nicene Creed is a fuller version forged in the doctrinal controversies of the early ecumenical councils. One of these was the first council of Nicaea – in modern day Turkey – in 325 AD and which gives its name to the Creed.

The final element of the Liturgy of the Word is the Universal Prayer, also called the General Intercessions or the Prayer of the Faithful. The priest opens and closes the Prayer, but the petitions themselves (usually numbering about half a dozen) are led by one of the faithful. They address the present needs of the church and the world in the light of the day's readings. Each petition finishes with an invitation to all to join in a response.

Then follow the readings from Holy Scripture. There are usually three readings and a psalm (Old Testament, New Testament and Gospel).

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING: Ezekiel 18.1–4, 25–end

THE PSALM: 25. 1-8

(The Psalm is sung by the choir)

THE EPISTLE READING: Philippians 2.1–13

At the end of the first and second readings:

This is the word of the Lord.

All **Thanks be to God.**

All stand for the

GRADUAL & ALLELUIA

sung by the cantor. Then remain standing and face the West End of the Church for

THE HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 21.23–32

There is no sermon today. After the Gospel reading, all stand to join in the singing of the Creed.

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God the Father Almighty,
**Maker of heaven and earth,
And of all things visible and invisible:
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
Begotten of his Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
Very God of very God,
Begotten, not made,
Being of one substance with the Father,
By whom all things were made;
Who for us men, and for our salvation
came down from heaven,
And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary,
And was made man,
And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried,
And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,
And ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of the Father.
And he shall come again with glory to judge
both the quick and the dead:
Whose kingdom shall have no end.
And I believe in the Holy Ghost,
The Lord and giver of life,
Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son,
Who with the Father and the Son together
is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets.
And I believe one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins.
And I look for the Resurrection of the dead,
And the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Kneel for

THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

ending with

Merciful Father,
**accept these prayers, for the sake of thy Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Fourth Commentary on the Mass: The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The sharing of the peace is the fulcrum when we move from listening and reflecting on Holy Scripture to re-enacting the Last Supper and focussing on Christ's sacrifice made for us.

The servers and sacred ministers then prepare the Altar, rather like we would lay the table at an important meal. The cloths are laid on the table, the chalice and paten (the cup and plate) are filled with wine and bread and they are blessed with prayers, gestures and incense. The deacon and priest recite special prayers quietly whilst the altar is prepared. One of the now unusual features of our service is that the altar, or Lord's table is against the eastern wall of the Church, and therefore the priest and other ministers face in the same direction as everyone else during the prayers. Many Christian Churches replaced the 'east facing' Mass with an altar further into the church, with people gathered around it. This was part of the reforms made in the western church in the 1960s, as a result of the Second Vatican Council. But some churches, including in this parish, favoured a more traditional approach. The eastward direction of prayer among early Christians is a custom inherited from the Jews.^{[17][18]} At the time of the formation of Christianity, Jews commonly prayed towards the Temple of Solomon, where the "presence of the transcendent God (*shekinah*) [resided] in the Holy of Holies of the Temple". But also, praying towards the east was praying towards the rising Sun. The latin term for praying facing east is AD ORIENTEM. Towards the Orient, towards the sunrising. An early Church father of the 9th century, St John of Damascus wrote *God is spiritual light, and Christ is called in the Scriptures Sun of Righteousness and Dayspring, and so the East is the direction that must be assigned to His worship.*

In preparing for the summit of our Christian life, it is good to ponder a very beautiful and profound resurrection story in Luke's Gospel, in Chapter 22. Jesus meets two disciples walking on the Emmaus Road and *he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.* They didn't recognise it was Jesus and they invited him to spend the night and *'when he (Jesus) was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them, and they recognised him.'* *The disciples 'said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us... while he was opening the scriptures to us?'* (Luke 24) So, we see the elements of our service interlinked. The disciples Jesus met on the Emmaus Road had heard the Word and then took bread and recognised Him and only then did they recognise the Spirit's work in both Word and Sacrament.

Their hearts burning within them. So it is with us. *'In the Eucharist, as in his earthly life, Christ comes to be with us and, through his presence unites us to God and to one another.'* ...

...The celebrant performs the same four actions that Christ did.

'Bread and wine are **TAKEN**, physically by the hands as a sign that they shall be made holy by God's Spirit.'¹ The wine and water symbolises when Christ was pierced by the spear in John's Gospel and 'blood and water flowed.' But also St Cyprian says that "*The water is a symbol of the Christian people. 'As the water is lost in the wine, becoming one with it, so inseparably are we united to Him'* The prayer is *By the mystery of the water and wine, may we come to share in Christ's divinity, as he humbled himself to take on our humanity.* We believe that Jesus is both God and Man, and in the simple earthly gifts of bread and wine, made my human hands, Jesus offers himself to us, to feed us on our daily pilgrimage. The food of the world, becomes the food of the soul. So we can see why the Eucharist or the Mass so central to our faith.

Then God is **BLESSED** not only because of His gift to us of the bread from His creation. But also for the Father's gift of His Son, the 'Bread of Life.' We are reminded that 'our soul needs Him, as constantly as our body needs food.'¹

The bread is **BROKEN** to symbolise Christ's body broken. Calling to mind his sacrifice and healing of all that is broken in our world.

Finally, this gift of bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ is **SHARED** with all who come to receive. '*The breaking of the bread and the sharing of it amongst all of us associates us with this sacrifice and commits us to a way of life which can be costly for it means a readiness on our part to be broken for love's sake.*' And just as the Roman Centurion came to plead for his servant to be healed we too come with that same humility and faith for 'our souls to be healed.'

All stand for

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you;
All **And with thy spirit.**

Remain standing for the

OFFERTORY HYMN: 383

During the hymn the altar is prepared with the gifts and the altar, celebrant, other clergy and people are censed.

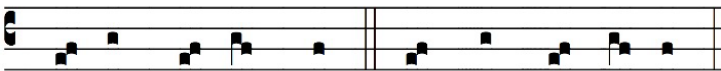
The celebrant then says

Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

All **May the Lord receive the sacrifice at thy hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and for the good of all his Holy Church.**

The celebrant prays the Prayer over the Gifts and begins

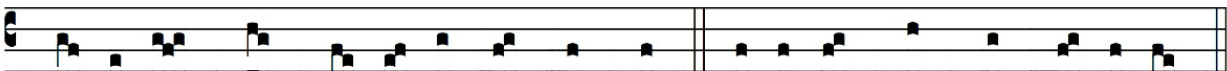
THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER



The Lord be with you: **and with thy spi-rit.**



Lift up your hearts: **we lift them up un-to the Lord.**



Let us give thanks un- to the Lord our God: **It is meet and right so to do.**

The celebrant praises God for his mighty acts and then the choir sings the Sanctus and Benedictus

[Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full of thy glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord most high.
Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.]

All kneel. The celebrant continues with the Eucharistic Prayer, which concludes with

...through Jesus Christ our Lord,
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be unto thee,
O Father almighty, world without end.

All **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Sung Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

THE FRACTION

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body because we all share in one bread.**

The choir sings the Agnus Dei

[O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant us thy peace.]

The celebrant says

Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.
Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb.

All **Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof,
but speak the word only and my soul shall be healed.**

The choir sings the

COMMUNION SENTENCE

During the distribution of Holy Communion there may be a motet and then the Communion Hymn. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the Sacrament. If you would prefer to receive a blessing instead of Holy Communion, then please bring this order of service with you to indicate to the celebrant that you would like a blessing. Communion is administered, kneeling, at the altar rail. The Communion Hymn is number 374

After communion, the celebrant prays the

POST COMMUNION

At the end of the prayer

All **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

All **Almighty God,
we thank thee for feeding us
with the body and blood of thy Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer thee our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of thy Spirit
to live and work to thy praise and glory.
Amen.**

The Fifth Commentary: Going into the world in peace

Every Sunday was for the early Church a mini Easter. The elevation of the bread and the chalice during the Eucharistic prayer is a symbol of Christ bursting from the depths of the tomb. Christ is resurrected and ascended! And as we give thanks to God for the gift of his life brought to us under the form of bread and wine, the final procession *into the world* is about to begin. As is our great commission to *go...and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that Christ has commanded us.* (Matthew 28).

The Crucifer carrying the cross leads the way for we *'preach Christ and Him crucified.'* *'For what we have received we pass on as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.'* (1 Corinthians 15)

We go in the power of the Spirit seeking to love God and our neighbour day after day.

All stand for

THE DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

The Lord be with you;

All **and with thy spirit.**

The celebrant prays the blessing

... and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

Remain standing for the

FINAL HYMN: 384

The Mass concludes with the singing of

THE ANGELUS

which is sung from the Statue of Our Lady of Walsingham.

Place turn to face the statue.

The Angel of the Lord brought tidings to Mary,
And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

*Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.
Blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.*

Behold the handmaid of the Lord;
Be it unto me according to thy word...

And the Word was made flesh
And dwelt among us...

Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.
That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Commentaries written by The Revd Philip McKenning and The Revd Christopher Woods.

References

Andrew Davison, *Why Sacraments?*, (SPCK, London, 2013), p.30

Hubert McEvoy, S.J., *The Sacrifice We Offer*, (Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1951), p.42