

Historical Perspective on Change & Growth in the Church

Don't know much about history....

We are a historical people. God chose a people to make His own and from which would come a Savior. The Church was born not only out of the Jewish world of Pentecost but also out of the Greco-Roman world which believed that the Pax Romana was the final chapter. We, the Church, have been given the call to reveal the true Kingdom of Peace to a world still confident in its own power. The History of the Liturgy is the only way to glimpse the power of that Kingdom alive in each epoch, including our own.

Jewish Roots—Meal and Word

- **Passover and Seder Elements**
 - Berakoth—classic blessings for food, land and Jerusalem
 - Todah—an account of God's works and a petition that the prayers of Israel be heard
 - Tefillah—great intercessions
 - Kiddush—Holy is God
 - Haggadah—great narrative of salvation
 - Hallel—Psalms 113-118 recited at Passover
- **Synagogue Elements**
 - Readings from Torah, Prophets and Wisdom
 - Teachings
 - Singing of Cantor, mainly psalms

Early Greco-Roman Elements—from home meal to House Church

- **Paul and problem of agape in I Cor 11, from the 50's**
 - Divisions among you
 - Every one in haste to eat their supper, one goes hungry while another gets drunk
 - Institution Narrative
 - Whoever eats or drinks unworthily sins against the body and blood of the Lord
 - One should examine himself first, then eat and drink
 - Whoever eats or drinks without recognizing the body eats and drinks a judgment on himself
 - That is why so many are sick and dying
 - Therefore when you assemble, wait for one another
 - If anyone is hungry let him eat at home
- **Justin Martyr's First Apology, 150, chapters 65-67**
 - Sunday, the day named after the sun

- Memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read
 - President gives thanks to the best of his ability
 - Eucharist is not ordinary food
- Apostolic Tradition, 3rd century
 - Preface Dialogue
 - No Sanctus
 - Institution Narrative
 - Epiclesis
- Ambrose, 4th century
 - Quotes passages from Roman Canon
 - Still uses neo-platonic terms like figura for the Eucharist

Roman Developments—From House Church to Basilica

- Byzantine court influence in 7th century
- Movement from assembly to clergy
- Altar and Chair become separate area
- Ceremonies, vestments and vessels reflect court life

Developments from Middle-Ages to Trent

- Language issues, only educated knew Latin
- Germanic influence, different sense of miracle bordering on magic, emphasis on forgiveness of sin and changes in penance, masses celebrated for the dead, different legal understanding of family bonds, restitution and marriage, feudal system
- Decline of participation, cessation of offering the Cup, few received Communion, Easter Duty of Lateran IV in 1215
- Private Masses, multiplication of Masses, Dry Masses
- All books—lectionary, antiphonary, sacramentary—were put into one book as the priest read all the texts for low Masses
- Music done by clerics for sung Masses
- Devotions, processions, pilgrimages become more popular
- Ocular Communion, seeing the Host, and Spiritual Communion become more important than receiving Communion
 - Elevation of both the Host and, later, the Chalice
 - Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with feast of Corpus Christi and processions with the Monstrance
- Polyphony and Motets become popular

Developments from Trent to 19th century

- Uniformity of rituals, but France was last to use Tridentine Missal

- Called for simplification of rituals and musical texts based on scripture and official liturgical texts
- Brought about a return to Gregorian chant and polyphony in the style of Palestrina.
- Spain received an exception for unique traditions of Toledo
- Virtually eliminated all vernacular music in the Mass
- Motets were to be taken from official texts
- Council of Cambrai, 1565, stated that what was to be sung is to instruct the faithful, thus it must be understood by them
- Baroque period with order and style of baroque princely courts
- Cult of the Blessed Sacrament and high altars which were thrones for the Blessed Sacrament
 - Tabernacle replaces altar as center of attention
 - Reredos had niche or ledge for monstrance
- Choir lofts developed at other end of church
- Baroque concert Masses developed
 - Dialogue between clergy and choir
 - People were spectators in-between
 - Creed becomes a musical dialogue
- Roman Canon was prayed silently
 - Choir sang Sanctus until consecration
 - Then continued with Benedictus after consecration
- Before the French Revolution liturgy was a baroque ritual echoing the Royal Court. In the royal chapel at Versailles, a court mass was similar to a soirée, often including a divertissement by Lully, and the congregation sometimes faced the orchestra and not the altar. French piety greeted Christ as a divine king within the monstrance or visited him as the suffering prisoner of the tabernacle. The mass-liturgy was understood as a collection of rubrics, compulsory ceremonial for proper reception of a heavenly monarch. (Franklin, *Nineteenth Century Churches*, p. 361)

Developments from 19th century to Vatican II

- Gueranger and the restoration of Solesmes
- Struggle between the chants published by Ratisbon and Solesmes
 - Ratisbon contained more recent chants
 - Solesmes searched more ancient chants
- Gueranger helped France to adopt the Roman Liturgy
- Pius X and his 1903 letter *Tra le Sollicitudini* which confirmed Gueranger's work, called for more Gregorian chant but also more active participation of the people
 - people to sing the ordinary of the mass
- The *Kyriale* of 1905 became typical for entire church and called for the removal of earlier books

- Lowering the age for First Communion in 1910
 - More frequent communion, but not connected to sacrifice
 - Mass was said silently or in a whisper. Communion was distributed before or after Mass, or in the middle of Mass, but never at communion time. Communion was distributed every 15 minutes. While Mass was going on, another priest would disturb the priest saying the Mass to retrieve the ciborium out of the tabernacle. Communion was a private affair with no link to the Mass. (Botte, *From Silence to Participation*, pp. 2-3)
- Liturgical Conferences and beginning of Liturgical Movement
- Dialogue Masses and more use of vernacular
- Pius XI and his *Divini cultus sanctitatem* of 1929
 - Called for praying the Divine Office, *digne, attente ac devote*
 - Said faithful should not be at divine worship as mere outsiders or mute spectators, but as worshippers thoroughly imbued with the beauty of the liturgy
- Pius XII and his *Mystici Corporis* of 1943 and *Mediator Dei* of 1947
 - *Mystici Corporis* called for the laity to offer in their own way, along with the priest, the divine victim to God
 - *Mediator Dei* stated it is not wise nor laudable to reduce everything to antiquity by every possible device
 - Mass must be regarded as the act of the whole Mystical Body of Christ and the Church desires that the people are present in great numbers and with devotion
 - The Reforms of Holy Week in 1951 and 1955

The context of Vatican II

- The decades after World War II saw a de-Christianization of Europe. Two world wars, economic crises, Nazism, Fascism and Communism, all pointed to a world without God.
- The church wanted to respond to this world with a liturgy which spoke to this age, thus the concept of *aggiornamento*, or a church that could speak to this age or day.
- The Tridentine Liturgy with its Latin and ritual duplications needed to be made more accessible to the people.

Vatican II and beyond

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (SC) of 1963

- Rationale for council: increase vigor of Christian life, adapt to our times, promote unity among Christians, and evangelize the whole of humanity (SC1)
- Definition of liturgy as the work of redemption (SC 2)

- Reinforced the role of the assembly as celebrant (SC 7)
- Full, conscious and active participation as right and duty (SC 14)
- Liturgy made of immutable elements and elements subject to change (SC 21)
- Liturgy not a private function (SC 26)
- Rites are to be simplified, noble simplicity (SC 34 & 50)
- Scripture readings are to be increased (SC 35 & 55)
- The homily (SC 52)
- Latin and the vernacular (SC 36)
- Theology of the Eucharist (SC 47)
- People offer the sacrifice along with the priest (SC 48)
- Receive communion from the same sacrifice (SC 55)
- Music and Gregorian chant, Pipe organs (SC 112-120)

Some Major Reforms since Vatican II

- Vernacular
- Expanded Lectionary
- New Eucharistic Prayers
- General Intercessions
- Rite of Peace
- Communion on the hand and under both species
- Lay Ministries
- Permanent Diaconate
- Development of RCIA