

12-1-1971

The Service Conducted Facing the People

Charles McClean

Valparaiso University, Valparaiso

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McClean, Charles (1971) "The Service Conducted Facing the People," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 42, Article 72.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol42/iss1/72>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

The Service Conducted Facing the People*

CHARLES MCCLEAN

The author was formerly assistant to the dean of the chapel at Valparaiso University.

* THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE A REVISION OF SEVERAL SECTIONS OF "THE CONDUCT OF THE SERVICES," a manual prepared in cooperation with the members of the worship division of the department of practical theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis: George W. Hoyer (chairman), Mark P. Bangert, Robert R. Bergt, John S. Damm. Moreover, Carl Bergen and David C. Yagow assisted with editorial details in the production of the manual. Readers familiar with *The Conduct of the Service* by Arthur Carl Piepkorn will recognize the dependence of these pages on that work.

The practice of ceremonial worship is closely related to the heart of the Christian faith. The Scriptures teach and the church confesses that Christ redeemed the whole man. Our bodies, too, share in the redemption accomplished by the Son of God, who Himself took flesh and blood of His virgin mother. Christ chose earthly, tangible elements—water, bread, and wine—to impart to men the salvation He accomplished. It is impossible to use these material elements without some basic ceremonial action. This basic ceremonial might be called functional or utilitarian ceremonial. There is also interpretative ceremonial—actions and the use of objects to express the meaning of the actions Christ Himself instituted. For example, a crucifix is usually placed at the altar to remind the congregation that the Eucharist is the memorial of the sacrifice which was offered once for all on Golgotha. People usually kneel to receive Holy Communion to express adoration in the presence of the living Christ, who gives His body and blood with the blessed bread and wine.

Bodily, external action in worship is a sign of God's creation of the material and

of His all-embracing redemptive work. It is a sign of the hope that in the resurrection—in a way we cannot imagine—"the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8:21)

While ceremonial worship is closely connected with the heart of the Christian faith, the precise form worship takes is not divinely ordained, apart from the actions and elements involved in Christ's institution. There is, therefore, no one "right" way of celebrating the Eucharist. We can speak of "right" and "wrong" only when faithfulness to Christ's institution is involved. Lutheran pastors will be guided in their conduct of worship by the doctrine of the Sacred Scriptures and the symbolical books to which they have been obligated at the time of their ordination.

Beyond this, what is said and done in church is, strictly speaking, a matter of Christian liberty.¹ But since liberty is not

¹ "We believe, teach, and confess, that no church should condemn another because it has fewer or more external ceremonies not commanded by God, as long as there is mutual agreement in doctrine and in all its articles as

license, we will be guided in what we say and do by certain sound principles. We will be guided by the rites and rubrics of the church body to which we belong.² These rites and rubrics constitute the *use* of our church. They exist for the sake of decency and order and reflect a long history of Christian experience. The following directions try to be faithful to the authorized service books of our synod — *The Lutheran Liturgy, The Lutheran Lectionary, The Lutheran Agenda, The Lutheran Hymnal, The*

well as in the right use of the holy sacraments, according to the familiar axiom, 'Disagreement in fasting does not destroy agreement in faith.'" Formula of Concord, Epitome X 7.

² See Augsburg Confession XV 1, XXVIII 53—56; Apology of the Augsburg Confession XV 38, XXVIII 7; Formula of Concord, Epitome X 4; Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration X 9. Note Article III 5 and Article VI 4 of the "Constitution of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod." "The objects of Synod are . . . 5. The endeavor to bring about the largest possible uniformity in church practice, church customs, and, in general, in congregational affairs" (*Handbook of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod*, 1969 Edition, p. 16). "Conditions for acquiring and holding membership in Synod are . . . 4. Exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymnbooks, and catechism in church and school" (*ibid.*, p. 17). Note also that the General Rubrics of *The Lutheran Hymnal* state: "Congregations are urged to let the basic structure of the Service remain intact. The wide choice permitted in the Rubrics makes it possible to have the Service as simple or as elaborate as the circumstances of each Congregation may indicate" (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 4). The General Rubrics of *The Lutheran Liturgy* state: "The word 'shall' in the rubrics makes that part of the Service obligatory, while the word 'may' leaves it optional" (*The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 417). "On and after Easter Day, 1955, in any case of a contradiction between these General Rubrics as they are here printed and other rubrics published elsewhere in the official service books of the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, these General Rubrics shall govern" (*The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 427).

Music for the Liturgy. Reference is also made to the *Worship Supplement*.

In addition to the rites and rubrics of our authorized service books, three principles have shaped the following directions: historic precedent, ecumenical consensus, and contemporary need.

In an age that seems to have little sense of historic continuity, the appeal to historic precedent may seem pointless. Besides, some of the ceremonial described in the following pages may not be immediately intelligible to every worshiper. Yet while the historic ceremonial is not always immediately intelligible, it can be made meaningful. But why, some will ask, should we burden ourselves with ceremonial that requires explanation, ceremonial from the dim past? The answer to that question can partially be suggested by referring to the words of St. Paul: "What! Did the Word of God originate with you, or are you the only ones it has reached?" (1 Cor. 14:36). The *ceremonial* of the liturgy, no less than the *rite*, reminds us of our continuity with that host of believers who have gathered to "do this" in remembrance of the Lord ever since the night when He was betrayed. Unthinking bondage to historic precedent is, of course, deadening. Besides, a reading of the numerous rites of Christendom would quickly show that one could find precedent for almost anything he would want to do. This, then, implies that in appealing to historic precedent, one must also consider historic consensus — insofar as that exists — and the intrinsic meaningfulness of a usage. Lutherans will in most cases give greatest weight to Lutheran precedent, in this way visibly asserting Lutheran confessional identity.

The appeal to ecumenical consensus springs from the conviction that we are, in spite of our divisions, one with all who have been baptized into our Lord's death and resurrection. While Lutheran pastors must not introduce or abolish ceremonies with the intention of suggesting that there is no essential difference between the Church of the Augsburg Confession and churches adhering to a different confessional position, it is also true that Lutheran liturgical usage has not been sectarian. The symbolical books themselves appeal to non-Lutheran usage in cases where such usage is not contrary to the Gospel and where it furthers the devotion and piety of the people (Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXIV 6, 93). Therefore, where there is a growing consensus among Christians regarding the fitness of a given procedure in worship, we may well follow it, provided we do not follow blindly.

The third principle for these guidelines for ceremonial is contemporary need. Historic precedent and ecumenical consensus can be approximately established without too much difficulty. But here there is more difficulty. We can, perhaps, begin by noting a strong contemporary reaction to a purely intellectualized approach to reality—an approach to reality reflected in a strongly intellectualized approach to worship. There is a grasping for more than the purely rational, an awareness that reality is something more than can be grasped by words addressed to the intellect. "The communications revolution has provided a type of perception radically different from that provided by the spoken or written word, one in which perception of reality is achieved by direct participation,

by involvement."³ Historic Christian ceremonial probably helps in some measure to meet this situation. The appeal of ceremonial worship is not merely to the intellect via verbal communication, but its appeal is to the total person via all the senses. This does not mean that the received tradition, or the ceremonial described in the following pages, is a wholly adequate solution to our contemporary liturgical problems, but it does mean that in the received tradition there are resources for contemporary need, and that the tradition may be used as a point of departure and helpful pattern for future developments.⁴

The foregoing principles — historic precedent and ecumenical consensus — themselves relate to contemporary need. We have already spoken of the apparent lack of historic consciousness in our time. And yet a consciousness of being rooted in the long history of the people of God should be an integral part of a Christian's experience of the church. For this reason a historically rooted ceremonial is helpful. A historically rooted ceremonial speaks to more or less rootless contemporary man of his share in the ongoing life of the community of believers across the centuries. While not a phenomenon unique to our time, contemporary man seems to be afflicted by a sense of isolation from his fellowman. A ceremonial guided by ecumenical consensus speaks to him of oneness with the whole people of God. There-

³ James F. White, "Worship in an Age of Immediacy," *The Christian Century*, LXXXV (Feb. 21, 1958), 227.

⁴ Eugene Brand, "Ceremonial Forms and Contemporary Life," *Response*, VIII (St. Michael and All Angels, 1966), 91—99.

fore, what initially may appear to be the irrelevance of historic ceremonial to contemporary man is finally, in part, its actual relevance.

But we live in a time of rapid change. We cannot expect our worship to remain unaffected by the nature of the times in which we live. There will, therefore, be some tension between faithfulness to the authorized use of the church and responsible experimentation. Responsible experimentation takes place when a pastor carefully studies the problems involved, adequately prepares his people for the experiment, and provides opportunity for evaluation of what has been done.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST FACING THE PEOPLE

I. Introduction

In his *German Mass* of 1526 Martin Luther wrote: "In the true mass, however, of real Christians, the altar should not remain where it is, and the priest should always face the people as Christ undoubtedly did at the Last Supper."⁵ The practice to which Luther here alludes was common in Christian antiquity.⁶ The celebration of the

⁵ Martin Luther, "Deutsche Messe," in *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1897), XIX, 80. (Hereafter this edition of Luther's works will be referred to as *WA*.) Martin Luther, "German Mass and Order of Service," in *Luther's Works*, 53 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 25. (Hereafter this edition of Luther's works will be referred to as *LW*.)

⁶ Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, trans. Francis A. Brunner (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1951), I, 274 ff. Basil Minchin, *The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist Facing the People* (n. p., n. d.), pp. 3—12, 19—27.

Eucharist facing the people should not, however, be regarded as a kind of liturgical "orthodoxy." The celebration in the so-called eastward position—the celebrant turning his back to the people so that he faces the (liturgical) east—also has a venerable history. It is still the most common practice among Lutherans, has not ceased to be the usage of the Eastern Orthodox communion, and probably is still the use of the majority of Anglican congregations.⁷

The celebration of the Eucharist facing the people serves to emphasize that the altar is a *table* and that the Holy Eucharist is a *meal*.⁸ The family of God gathers around the Lord's table for the family meal. This way of celebrating the Eucharist provides for a kind of involvement of the people with the action of the presiding minister which is not possible when the Holy Eucharist is celebrated by a minister with his back to the people.

The following directions distinguish sharply between the service of the Word and the service of the sacrament. The first

⁷ "To pray to the East is a Christian custom that has its roots in apostolic worship since the primitive church celebrated the Eucharist in expectation of the Lord's return. (I Cor. xi. 26) It was believed that the *parousia* would be heralded by the sign of the cross in the Eastern sky, as mentioned in Matt. xxiv. 30. Hence to turn to the East was an acknowledgment that the Eucharist was being celebrated in expectation of the second Advent." Cyril E. Pocknee, *The Parson's Handbook*, 13th edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 21. See Jungmann, I, 70 f.

⁸ In Christian tradition the altar is also the symbol of Christ in the church and, therefore, of the presence of God with His people. The altar is by definition a place of sacrifice and therefore stands in the church as the symbol of the one perfect sacrifice of Christ on the cross, of which the Eucharist is the memorial.

part of the great service centers in the holy Word, the second centers in the holy food. The Lord of the church comes through the Word and through the bread and wine of the holy meal. A *book* is the focus of the service of the Word; *bread and wine on a table* are the focus of the service of the sacrament. To emphasize this distinction *no part of the service prior to the eucharistic meal itself is conducted at the altar*. There is no need for the altar, that is, the table, before the meal is to be prepared and eaten. A table is necessary neither for the prayers and hymns nor for the reading of the lessons in the service of the Word: for this a book is sufficient. Also to emphasize the table character of the altar and the meal character of the Eucharist, the corporal (the linen cloth on which the vessels for the bread and wine are placed) is not spread on the altar nor are the sacred vessels themselves placed on the altar until the eucharistic meal itself is about to begin, that is, at the offertory.

Celebrating the Eucharist facing the people reflects an approach to the liturgy, common to the pre-medieval period, which emphasizes the involvement of the whole church in the eucharistic action. In the pre-medieval period the bishop, seated behind the altar and facing the people, preached and offered the great eucharistic prayer, but the remaining portions of the liturgy were almost wholly conducted by others. The celebration of the Eucharist was understood as the action of the whole church of God in a given place, an action in which each member functioned "in his vocation and ministry." This idea was given form by assigning various parts of the liturgy to various persons or groups of persons. Even during the Middle Ages—and for many

years after the Reformation in some parts of the Lutheran Church—the normal Sunday and festival service of at least the large city churches was the "high mass," a Eucharist celebrated by a priest assisted by deacon and subdeacon, servers, choir and congregation. But with the passage of time many Christians have come to look on this full type of service involving many participants as extraordinary, and to regard a service conducted by a solitary clergyman as normal. This development is probably regrettable, since it has unduly clericalized worship and has given the impression that the Eucharist is a rite to be read by the minister rather than an action in which the whole church participates. A return to the ancient ideal would give concrete expression to the thought that the Eucharist is the action of the body of Christ, an action in which the several members of the body of Christ have various functions to carry out.⁹ For this reason these ceremonial directions encourage the participation of as many people as possible: reading the lessons, bringing the gifts of bread and wine to the altar, and so on.

In terms of the rationale of this type of eucharistic celebration, the use of the term "celebrant" for the minister who presides at the celebration is misleading. For the whole church celebrates the Eucharist; the minister only presides at the Eucharist according to his vocation. But while the term "celebrant" is misleading, the term has been retained in the following directions for the sake of convenience. More accurately one should speak of "the minister who pre-

⁹ On this whole matter see Jungmann, I, 22 ff., 67 ff., 195 ff. See also Basil Minchin, *Every Man in His Ministry* (London: Darton, Longmans and Todd, 1960), pp. 188 ff.

sides at the celebration of the sacrament," or of "the president of the eucharistic assembly." But while these phrases are more accurate, they are also quite awkward.

The following directions provide for two kinds of eucharistic service: first, a simple way of celebrating the Holy Eucharist facing the people; second, a way of celebration involving greater use of traditional ceremonial features.

Except in cases where the prescriptive "shall" rubrics of our synod's authorized service books are cited, the following directions should be regarded merely as suggestions rather than normative prescriptions. These directions suggest *a way*—not the only way—of celebrating the Eucharist facing the people, a way which reflects the long history of how this has been done among the people of God, which is sensitive to ecumenical consensus, and which may prove to be an orderly and helpful way of doing the liturgy at the present time.

Celebrating facing the people is much more demanding on the officiating clergy than celebrating in the "eastward" position. The officiants are continually in full view of the people. This makes it absolutely necessary to avoid all nervous habits. The officiants must be conscious of facial expression. They should not stare at the congregation, since the members of the congregation would in this way be made most uncomfortable. The minister should look at the people when addressing them, for example, during the salutation. To grin or grimace or wink the eyes or roll them around is intolerable. (This does not, however, imply that the celebrant should look grim or unhappy.) When one person is carrying out his function, for example,

reading a lesson, the other persons in the chancel should not stare or look around, but rather look at the person who is carrying out the assigned function. When the celebrant is offering prayers he may, if he is sure of the text of the prayer, lift his eyes "to heaven."¹⁰ When reading a lesson, one should keep his eyes on the book as a sign that he is reading the words of another. Gestures should be bold and deliberate, without being either mechanical or theatrical. For example, when the celebrant lifts the chalice from the altar at the words, "He took the cup," he should do this deliberately and lift the chalice high enough above the mensa of the altar so that the people can clearly see what is being done.

In general, the less "liturgically minded" pastor may find it necessary to employ more ceremonial actions than he has been accustomed to use when celebrating in the "eastward" position. The more "liturgically minded" pastor may find that some ceremonial observances possible in the "eastward" position tend to be distracting when done in full view of the people.¹¹

¹⁰ The ancient posture of prayer was that of hands uplifted, eyes raised "to heaven." (Cf. 1 Kings 8:22, 1 Tim. 2:8.) "The hands are raised level with the head, the palms of the hands are half-way between facing forwards and facing together, the wrists slightly bent back, and, unless reading from the book is necessary, the eyes are raised 'to heaven.' . . . In medieval times this position was modified first to the position of one crucified, and then reduced to a position easier to hold, where the hands are level with the shoulders" (Basil Minchin, *The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist Facing the People*, p. 33). By convention this gesture is used only for the prayers that belong to the oldest strata of the eucharistic liturgy, for example, the preface.

¹¹ For example, the celebrant probably should not kneel behind the altar as it may appear ludicrous to see only the celebrant's head protruding above the altar.

II. *The Arrangement of the Altar and Chancel*

The altar is the one absolutely essential piece of furniture in the church building. If there is to be a meal, there must necessarily be a table on which to prepare it. The altar should indicate by its size and dignity and position its role as the table for the eucharistic meal and the symbol of the presence of the exalted Christ among His people.

The altar is placed away from the wall of the chancel. If at all possible, the altar should be placed at some distance from the wall so that the chairs for the officiating clergy can be placed behind it.¹² The chairs should be placed as far as possible from the altar so that the clergy when viewed by the congregation do not, when at the chairs, appear to be already at the altar.

The chair of the celebrant should indicate his function of presiding over the worship of the community. Yet the chair should not have the appearance of a throne. It may, however, be placed a step higher than the altar step so that more than the celebrant's head can be seen when the celebrant is seated. If eucharistic vestments are worn, the chair should have a low back so that when the celebrant is seated the chasuble may hang down behind it.

If architectural limitations make it impossible to place the chair of the presid-

¹² On the history of the position of the altar see the helpful summary in Basil Minchin, *The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist Facing the People*, pp. 3—12. See also Cyril E. Pocknee, *The Christian Altar* (London: A. R. Mowbray and Co., 1963), pp. 88 ff. See also Joseph A. Braun, *Der Christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung* (München: Alte Mesiter Guenther Koch and Co., 1924), I, 421 ff.

ing minister behind the altar, it may be placed (together with other chairs for officiating clergy) against the side wall of the chancel. Chairs for lay servers may be placed at convenient locations in the chancel.

The altar should be vested in a frontal of the color of the day or season; it may also be vested in a frontlet.¹³ In many places today there is a tendency to dispense with the frontal, but this is contrary to the bulk of tradition.¹⁴ People normally clothe their tables at mealtime. Vesting the altar in a frontal is a mark of reverence for the Lord whom the altar represents and serves to make the altar the focus of attention. The use of the frontal in the proper liturgical color also prevents the monotony of the altar appearing the same throughout the year. There may, of course, be circumstances in which one may feel free—or be compelled—to omit the frontal. This might happen when the altar is itself an extraordinary work of art or where its shape unfortunately makes impossible its vesting in the customary way. A free-standing altar should, if possible, be vested both front and back, or one may use a throw-over type of frontal, hanging down on all sides.¹⁵

¹³ The frontlet — the short cloth hanging down from the mensa a few inches—may be dispensed with. Historically it served only as a convenience to conceal the means by which the frontal was suspended.

¹⁴ Cyril Pocknee writes: "The altar symbolizes Christ in the midst of his church; and if his ministers are arrayed in costly vesture, why is the Table of the Lord to be treated in this"—that is, omitting the frontal—"manner?" (Cyril E. Pocknee, *The Christian Altar*, p. 14)

¹⁵ In church goods catalogs this type is generally called "Jacobean" or "Laudean." For illustrations of this type of frontal see Pocknee, *The Parson's Handbook*, p. 12.

The altar must be vested in a fair linen cloth.¹⁶ At the narrow ends of the altar the fair linen cloth should reach the floor.

It is customary to place a crucifix somewhere in the church in full view of the people.¹⁷ The crucifix must not be placed on the altar used for celebration facing the people since the crucifix would then obscure the action of the minister. For the same reason a processional crucifix should not be placed in front of the altar. A processional crucifix may be placed behind the celebrant's chair (if the celebrant's chair is behind the altar) or a large crucifix may be hung over the altar, or on the east wall of the chancel, or at the entrance to the chancel.

A candle may be placed on the altar step at either end of the altar, thus leaving the altar free of everything not really essential to the holy meal. (These candles may be brought to the altar in procession at the beginning of the service. See below, Part V.) If this is not possible, a candle may be placed on the mensa at each end of the altar.¹⁸

A missal stand or book rest is by no means necessary. The service book may rest directly on the altar. If a missal stand is used, it must be low and inconspicuous,

¹⁶ *The Lutheran Liturgy* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, n. d.), p. 426.

¹⁷ Pictures of Lutheran churches show that since the 16th century the crucifix rather than the plain cross has been used in the majority of Lutheran churches.

¹⁸ See Jungmann, I, 67 ff., and D. R. Dendy, *The Use of Lights in Christian Worship*, Alcuin Club Collections (London: SPCK, 1959), XL. Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (London: Dacre Press, 1945), pp. 416 ff.

lest it detract by its size and proportion from the vessels of bread and wine. Some may wish to follow the old custom of using a cushion for a book rest.¹⁹ If a missal stand or cushion is used, it is brought to the altar only when the service book which rests on it is needed at the altar; that is, it is brought to the altar at the offertory.

There should be a credence table somewhere in the chancel, and another credence table near the entrance of the church building. Each should be decently covered with a linen cloth. The credence table in the chancel should probably be placed in such a way that it is at the celebrant's right when the celebrant faces the people.

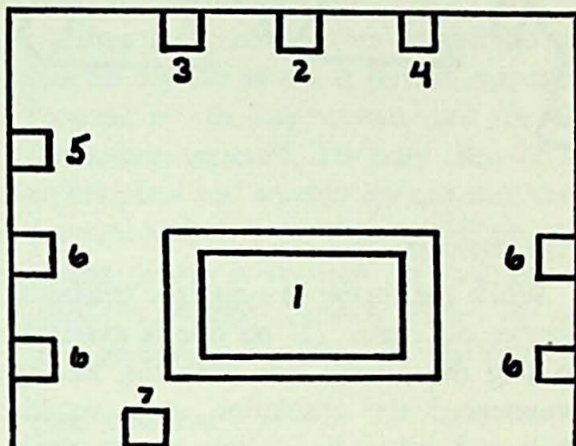
The lectern for reading the lessons may be placed at any convenient place in the chancel or at the place where the nave and chancel meet. In ancient times two ambos, elevated reading desks, were in use in some places. This is still possible. In that case one could be reserved for reading the Holy Gospel and the other for reading all other lessons. (The usual arrangement of pulpit and lectern is, perhaps, analogous to the two ambos.) The point of using an ambo to read the lessons was to provide a place where the lessons could be read so as to be easily heard, and to provide a place to rest the rather unwieldy texts of the Scriptures.²⁰

Diagrams indicating how the chancel might be arranged when the Holy Eucharist is celebrated facing the people:

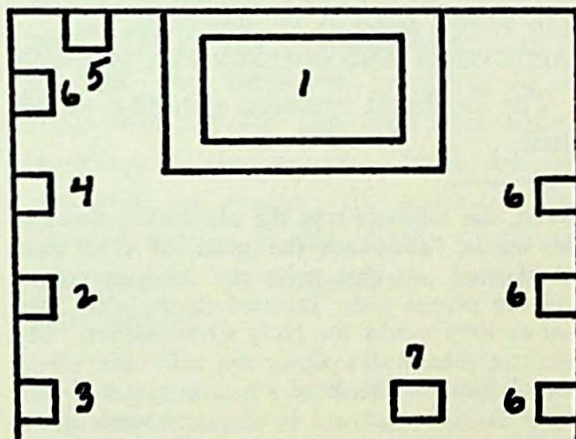
¹⁹ Pocknee, *The Parson's Handbook*, p. 28.

²⁰ See Jungmann, I, 411—19.

A. When it is feasible to place the celebrant's chair behind the altar



B. When the celebrant's chair must be placed elsewhere



- 1 — Altar
- 2 — Celebrant's chair
- 3 — Deacon's chair
- 4 — Subdeacon's chair
- 5 — Credence
- 6 — Server's chair
- 7 — Possible position for lectern

III. Preparations for the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist Facing the People

The chalice and paten are prepared in the customary way. First, a purificator is placed over the mouth of the chalice (A). Then the paten is placed on top of the purificator (B). Then the pall is placed on top of the paten (C). Then the chalice

veil is placed over the chalice and paten, and adjusted to form a trapezoid when viewed from the front (D). Then the burse, containing the corporal and additional purificators, is placed on top of the veiled chalice (E). The veiled chalice and paten, with the burse resting on top of them, are placed on the credence in the chancel.²¹

The bread box or ciborium and the cruet or flagon are placed on the credence near the entrance of the church.²²

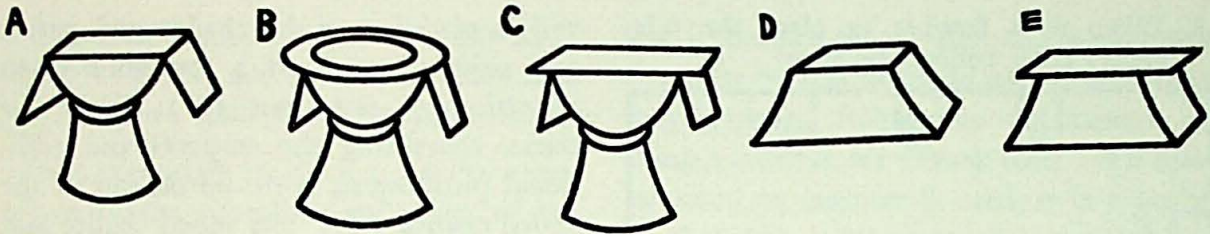
The lectionary is placed on the lectern. If there is no lectern, the lectionary is placed on the credence.

The service book is placed on the credence, or if the celebrant has no server to assist him, it is placed on the celebrant's chair.

²¹ There is some sentiment at present against the use of hosts or wafers for Holy Communion. Some feel that the hosts are so unlike the bread ordinarily eaten that people have difficulty in realizing that they are bread. If, however, a loaf of bread is used, a larger paten becomes a necessity. For this purpose a good silver alms-bason, perfectly plain, or any decent silver vessel may be used. When such a paten is used for the bread, it is obviously impossible to veil the chalice and paten in the usual way. In this case the unveiled chalice—perhaps covered with a pall or folded corporal—and the large paten will simply be placed on the credence. They may be covered with some large veil, but this is not necessary. If the loaf of bread is brought forward by representatives of the people at the offertory, an additional vessel—to hold the bread while it rests on the credence near the entrance of the church and while it is carried to the altar—may be necessary. For this purpose a bread basket may serve.

Instead of a loaf of bread, whole-wheat wafers may be used. These are usually somewhat larger and thicker than the wafers now in use and have a consistency more like the bread eaten at table today.

²² The bread and wine are then brought to the altar at the offertory by representatives of the people.



IV. A Simple Way of Celebrating the Holy Eucharist Facing the People

THE CONFESSION OF SINS

During the opening hymn — in silence if the opening hymn is omitted — the celebrant goes to the entrance of the chancel or to the foot of the altar steps. There he leads the congregation in the confession of sins.²³

²³ The desirability of separating the confession of sins from the service proper has been recognized in a number of ways in our authorized service books. "Since the Preparation is not a part of the Service proper, it is preferable that the Officiant and the Congregation speak the entire Preparatory Service" (*The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 419). "Good usage permits speaking the Preparatory Service" (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, p. 4). "If the Confessional Service immediately precedes the Communion Service, the latter shall begin with the Introit" (*The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 420). The thrust of all of these rubrics is that it is desirable to distinguish the confession of sins as an action preparatory to the service of Holy Communion itself.

There are genuine problems involved in pronouncing holy absolution over an entire congregation. Unbaptized persons may be present. But confession and holy absolution, as a return to baptism, are obviously meant only for those who have been baptized. There is also the possibility that persons may be present who, although they have been baptized, should not be absolved, for example, excommunicated persons. The ideal solution to such problems is a return to the regular use of private confession and absolution (Augsburg Confession XI, XXV 13; Apology of the Augsburg Confession XI). A partial solution, where the number of worshippers is small, is to pronounce absolution individually at the altar rail. If this practice is fol-

THE INTROIT

While the introit is sung, the celebrant goes to his chair. (If no one is available to sing the introit, the celebrant, having pronounced the absolution, goes to his chair and, when he arrives at the chair, reads the introit.)

THE KYRIE, GLORIA IN EXCELSIS, SALUTATION AND COLLECT FOR THE DAY

The celebrant remains standing at his chair.

lowed, the minister says the absolution through the words, "announce the grace of God unto all of you." At that point the minister pauses and the people come forward to the altar rail, just as they would for Holy Communion. The minister then walks along the rail. He places both hands on the head of each penitent and says: "In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." At the words, "and of the Son," he makes the sign of the cross with his right hand, his left hand still resting on the head of the penitent.

If the confession of sins is separated from the order of the Holy Communion, the minister will come into the church in advance of the hour appointed for the celebration of the Eucharist. He will conduct the confession of sins in the usual way and then return to the sacristy. At the hour appointed for the celebration of Holy Communion the introit is sung by the choir. While the introit is sung, the minister enters the church and goes to his chair. (If no one is available to sing the introit, the minister enters the church in silence, goes to his chair, and, when he arrives at his chair, reads the introit.)

THE SERVICE CONDUCTED FACING THE PEOPLE

741

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON
AND THE EPISTLE

After the celebrant has prayed the collect for the day he sits. A layman may come forward to the lectern and read the Old Testament lesson.²⁴ He may then return to his place and another layman may come forward and read the Epistle. (If no competent person is available to read the lessons, the celebrant, having prayed the collect, goes to the lectern and reads them.)

THE GRADUAL

While the gradual is sung, the celebrant goes to the lectern or goes into the midst of the congregation to read the Holy Gospel.²⁵ (If no one is available to sing the gradual, the celebrant, standing at his chair—or, if he has read the Epistle, standing at the lectern—leads the congregation in reading the gradual. Then he may remain at the lectern or go into the midst of the congregation to read the Holy Gospel.)

²⁴ Laymen who read lessons in public worship should prepare to read the lessons intelligibly. For this reason the minister should under no circumstances ask a member of the congregation to read a lesson after the service has begun. To do so may prove embarrassing both to the reader and to the congregation. When a layman is appointed to read a lesson in church, the pastor may first discuss the meaning of the lesson with him. Good reading presupposes understanding of what is read. Then the reader may silently read the lesson to himself. He may then read it aloud until the pastor is satisfied that the lesson will be understood by the congregation. The reader may read the lesson at least once prior to the service in the church building, so that he may have some idea of the volume needed if the lesson is to be heard.

²⁵ At the present time there is considerable feeling that the Gospel should be read in the midst of the people as a symbol of bringing the Gospel of Christ to all men.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

The celebrant reads the Holy Gospel at the lectern or in the midst of the congregation. After the celebrant has read the Gospel, he returns to his chair.

THE NICENE CREED

Standing at his chair, the celebrant leads the people in the creed.

THE HYMN

The celebrant remains at his chair. If his chair is behind the altar, he may preach from his chair. If he preaches from the pulpit, he may go into the pulpit after the hymn has been sung.²⁶

THE SERMON

After the celebrant has pronounced the votum ("The peace of God which passeth . . ."), he procures the service book, goes to the altar, and places the service book at his left on the altar.²⁷

THE OFFERTORY

The celebrant, standing behind and at the midst of the altar, sings or reads the offertory with the people.²⁸

²⁶ Note that if "The Holy Eucharist I" (*Worship Supplement*, pp. 19 ff.) is the rite being used for the service, the sermon immediately follows the Holy Gospel. After the sermon the celebrant, standing at his chair, leads the people in the creed. Then the hymn is sung and the liturgy continues with the offertory action.

²⁷ This is the first time the celebrant goes to the altar.

²⁸ If "The Holy Eucharist I" is used, the offertory chant is not sung at this point. Rather, it is sung *while* the bread, wine, and money are presented and placed on the altar. The offerings of the people are first gathered. Then, while the bread, wine, and money are brought forward by the representatives of the people and placed on the altar by the celebrant, the offertory chant is sung. If the liturgy is spoken, the congregation may read the offertory sentences while these things are done, or the celebrant and people may read the offertory sentences after these actions have been completed.

The celebrant goes to the credence. He takes the veiled chalice with the burse resting on top of it and carries them to the altar. He places the veiled chalice and burse at his right on the altar. He takes the corporal from the burse, places the folded corporal in the midst of the altar, and lays the burse on the altar behind the service book. Then he unfolds the corporal. Then the celebrant takes hold of the back part of the chalice veil with both hands and removes it from the chalice. He folds it on the altar to the right of the corporal, then places it close to the back of the altar near the corporal. The celebrant removes the pall from the chalice and places the pall on the right side of the outspread corporal.

Then the celebrant places the paten slightly to the left of the center of the corporal. He removes the purificator from the chalice and places the purificator on the altar to the right of the corporal. He places the chalice slightly to the right of the center of the corporal.²⁹

Meanwhile, the offerings of the people are gathered. Representatives of the congregation then bring forward the offerings and the vessels of bread and wine which

²⁹ The arrangement of the vessels described here is somewhat different from the arrangement in use in most parts of the Western church since the close of the middle ages, that is, the paten in front of the chalice. Apparently, the more primitive practice was to place the chalice to the right and the paten to the left on the altar. (This is still the custom of the churches of the Byzantine rite.) "The practice of placing the chalice to the right, the host to the left, continued into the later Middle Ages." (Jungmann, II, 53) In the celebration of the Eucharist facing the people the older practice is desirable. The paten can more readily be seen by the people if it is placed *beside* rather than — from the congregation's perspective — *behind* the chalice.

had been placed on the credence near the entrance to the church building before the service began.

The celebrant meets the representatives of the people at the rail.

Note: In the directions immediately following, it is assumed that for the sake of convenience the celebrant does not go behind the altar but remains on the side of the altar nearest the congregation when he places the offerings and the vessels of bread and wine on the altar.

The celebrant receives the alms basons, takes them to the altar, and places them toward the end of the altar.

The celebrant returns to the rail, receives the ciborium or bread box, takes the ciborium or bread box to the altar, and places it to the right of the paten. He uncovers the ciborium or bread box, places a large host or several hosts on the paten, covers the ciborium or bread box, and returns to the rail.

He receives the flagon or cruet of wine. He takes the flagon or cruet to the altar, pours wine into the chalice, places the flagon or cruet to the left of the chalice, and covers the chalice with the pall. Then the celebrant returns to his place behind the altar.³⁰

THE GENERAL PRAYER

Standing behind the altar, the celebrant prays the general prayer.

THE PREFACE, SANCTUS, AND

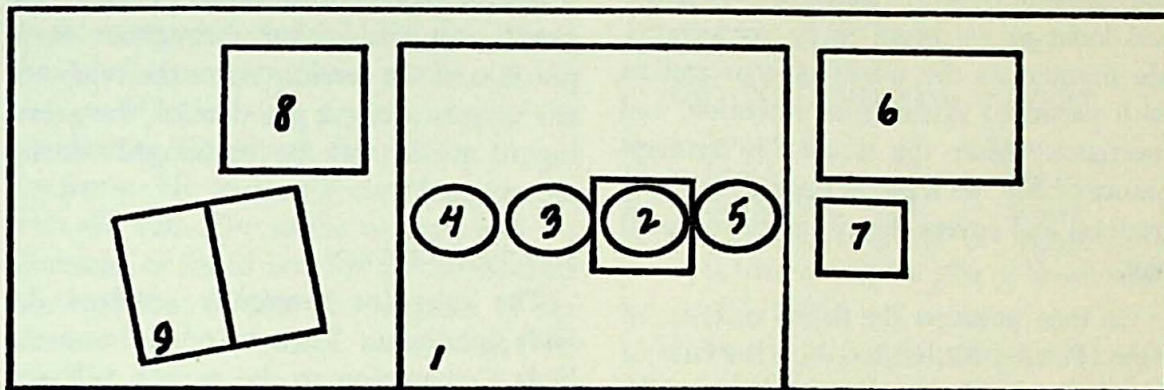
THE LORD'S PRAYER

The celebrant continues to face the people throughout these parts of the service.

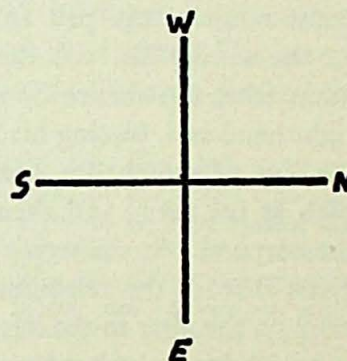
³⁰ The representatives of the people may remain at the altar rail, returning to their places after they have received the sacrament.

THE SERVICE CONDUCTED FACING THE PEOPLE

Diagram showing the position of the sacred vessels and linens on the altar



- 1 — Outspread corporal
- 2 — Chalice covered with the pall
- 3 — Paten
- 4 — Ciborium or bread box
- 5 — Cruet or flagon
- 6 — Folded chalice veil
- 7 — Purificators
- 8 — Burse
- 9 — Service book



THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION ³¹

The celebrant removes the cover from the ciborium or bread box. With hands joined he begins the words of institution. At the words "took bread" he takes the paten in both hands and lifts it as high

³¹ The words of institution are not only a rehearsal of the institution of the Eucharist for the benefit of the congregation, but are also a consecration of the elements (Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration VII, 75—82). The words of institution are, therefore, to be spoken over the bread and the wine and *under no circumstances should hosts or wine that have not been previously consecrated be administered to communicants.* The General Rubrics reflect the doctrine of the Lutheran Church when the rubrics prescribe that "if the consecrated bread and wine be spent before all have communed, the celebrant shall consecrate more, saying aloud so much of the Words of Institution as pertains to the elements to be consecrated" (*The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 421).

as his chest. He then replaces the paten on the altar. At the words "when He had given thanks" the celebrant places his left hand on the altar to the left of the corporal and with his right hand makes the sign of the cross over the paten and over any other vessel in which there is bread to be consecrated.³² At the words "He brake it" the celebrant may take a large host in both hands, break it into two pieces, and replace the pieces on the paten. While he says the words of consecration, "Take, eat;

³² The custom has become general in Lutheran churches for the celebrant to make the sign of the cross over the hosts at the words "This is My body." In view of the connection between "giving thanks" and "blessing," both of which reproduce the Latin *benedicere*, it would be more appropriate to make the sign of the cross over the bread at the words "when He had given thanks."

this is My body which is given for you," the celebrant holds the paten in both hands and looks at the bread to be consecrated. He pronounces the words of consecration with particular distinctness, attention, and reverence. After the words "in remembrance of Me" he replaces the paten on the corporal and covers the ciborium or bread box.

He then uncovers the flagon or cruet of wine. Placing his left hand on the base of the chalice, with his right hand the celebrant removes the pall from the chalice. At the words "He took the cup" the celebrant takes the chalice by the knob in his right hand and, placing his left hand under the foot of the chalice, lifts the chalice as high as his chest, and then replaces it on the corporal. At the words "when He had given thanks" the celebrant places his left hand on the altar to the left of the corporal and with his right hand makes the sign of the cross over the chalice and over any other vessel in which there is wine to be consecrated.³³ While he says the words of consecration, "Drink ye all of it; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins," the celebrant again lifts the chalice from the altar. Looking at the wine to be consecrated, he pronounces the words of consecration with particular distinctness, attention, and reverence. After the words "in remembrance of Me" he places the chalice on the corporal. Placing his left hand on the foot of the chalice—to avoid the possibility of accidentally causing the chalice to be overturned—with his right hand he covers the chalice with the pall. Then he covers the flagon or cruet.

³³ See footnote 32.

THE PAX DOMINI AND AGNUS DEI

The celebrant continues to face the people across the altar throughout these portions of the service. After the celebrant has sung or said the pax domini, the greeting of peace may be exchanged among the people.³⁴

THE DISTRIBUTION

The celebrant reverently receives the Holy Sacrament. Then he administers the Holy Communion to the people. (If the representatives of the people have remained at the altar rail since bringing forward the bread, wine, and money at the offertory, they return to their places after they have received the Holy Communion.)

If another minister assists in the distribution, the *celebrant* administers the consecrated bread and the assisting minister administers the chalice.³⁵

³⁴ The simplest procedure for "passing" the greeting of peace throughout the congregation is this: At the appointed time the worshipers simply start exchanging the greeting of peace with fellow worshipers around them. A more elaborate procedure is this: The celebrant greets the representatives of the people who have been standing at the rail since the offertory. Two of the representatives of the people then go down to the nave. Beginning at the first pew on either side of the main aisle, each greets the person nearest the main aisle on one side of the main aisle. That person then greets the person next to him and so on. After the two have greeted the person nearest the main aisle in each pew on both sides of the aisle, the two representatives of the people return to the rail and there receive the Holy Communion. In connection with the greeting of peace see the *Worship Supplement*, p. 52.

³⁵ In the very earliest times, it appears that the deacons, who were full-time assistants to the bishop, distributed both the body and blood of our Lord. It was not long, however, before the celebrant assumed the responsibility of administering the host and the deacon administered the chalice. This arrangement has unde-

When all have received the sacrament, the celebrant places the chalice in the midst of the outspread corporal. He then places the purificator over the mouth of the chalice. He places the paten on top of the purificator. He places the pall on top of the paten. He covers the chalice and paten with the veil. The flagon or cruet and the ciborium or bread box are placed in their usual positions. (See the diagram of the position of the sacred vessels on the altar.)³⁶

THE NUNC DIMITTIS, THANKSGIVING,
SALUTATION, BENEDICAMUS, AND
BENEDICTION

The celebrant stands behind the altar, facing the people. After pronouncing the benediction, the celebrant may pause for silent prayer. Then he goes around to the front of the altar, reverences the altar, and returns to the sacristy.³⁷

niable pastoral advantages. In most cases the celebrant will be the pastor of the parish, that is, the individual who has the *potestas jurisdictionis* in the parish (Apology of the Augsburg Confession XXVIII, 12-14). While it is very rare that a pastor must repel a person from the altar, this may happen on occasion. In such a case the embarrassment will be much greater if the assistant has already communicated the individual in question with our Lord's body.

³⁶ The sacred vessels may be returned to the credence at this point. The celebrant takes the flagon or cruet and the ciborium or bread box to the credence. Then he removes the veiled chalice from the corporal, folds the corporal, places the corporal in the burse, and places the burse on top of the veiled chalice. Then he removes the veiled chalice and paten with the burse resting on top of them to the credence. He then returns to his place behind and at the midst of the altar.

³⁷ "When the Service has been completed, the Celebrant or a deacon shall remove the sacramental vessels from the altar to the sacristy and dispose of that part of the bread and wine

V. *The Celebration of the Holy Eucharist Facing the People: Celebrant, Deacon, Subdeacon, and Acolytes*³⁸

KEY TO DIAGRAMS IN PART V

C — Celebrant S — Server
D — Deacon T — Taperer
SD — Subdeacon L — Layman
R — Representatives of the people who bring forward the gifts of bread, wine, and money

While the opening hymn is sung—in silence, if the opening hymn is omitted—the ministers and acolytes go in procession to the entrance of the chancel. The server carrying the processional cross, flanked by

which remains as follows: He shall carefully remove the bread from the paten and ciborium to a fit receptacle, there to be kept against the next Communion. He shall pour what remains of the consecrated wine into the piscina or upon the ground at a proper and convenient place outside the church" (*The Lutheran Liturgy*, p. 421). On the history of the disposition of the consecrated elements, the cleansing of the vessels, and the like, see William Lockton, *The Treatment of the Remains at the Eucharist after Holy Communion and the Time of the Ablutions* (Cambridge: University Press, 1920). See also Hermann Sasse, *This Is My Body: Luther's Contention for the Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1959), pp. 174 f. See also Edward Frederick Peters, *The Origin and Meaning of the Axiom: "Nothing Has the Character of a Sacrament Outside of the Use," in Sixteenth-Century and Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Theology*, unpublished doctoral thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, pp. 188 ff., 316 ff., 328 f., 418, 504 ff., and his article on that subject in the *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, XLII, 10 (Nov. 1971), 643—52.

³⁸ The ceremonial here described follows the broad outline of eucharistic ceremonial generally followed in the Western church since about the seventh/eighth century. Certain medieval developments retained in some places at the Reformation are included. But these directions are obviously a contemporary adaptation and reflect the actual practice of some of our parish churches.

two taperers, leads the procession.³⁹ The subdeacon, carrying the gospel book, follows them. The deacon follows the subdeacon. The celebrant follows the deacon. The servers with cross and lights stop at the entrance of the chancel. The subdeacon steps to the left, the deacon steps to the right, and the celebrant stands between them.

THE CONFESSION OF SINS

The celebrant leads the people in the confession of sins. (The servers with cross and lights do not kneel.)

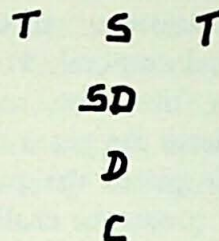
THE INTROIT⁴⁰

While the introit is sung, the servers with cross and lights lead the procession into the chancel. The subdeacon follows them; the deacon follows the subdeacon;

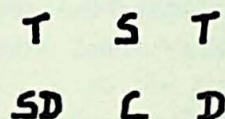
³⁹ If incense is used, the thurifer precedes the servers with cross and lights. According to historical evidence, lights and incense were carried before the celebrant as a mark of honor for Christ, whom the celebrant represents. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession says: "Ministers do not represent their own persons but the person of Christ, because of the church's call, as Christ testifies (Luke 10:16), 'He who hears you, hears me.' When they offer the Word of God or the sacraments they do so in Christ's place and stead" (Apology of the Augsburg Confession VII, 28). Some historical evidence suggests that the lights and incense were more closely related to the gospel book which was carried in procession: the gospel book represented Christ (Jungmann, I, 446). We might wish at the present time to relate the lights (and incense) to the processional cross, which is also a symbol of Christ. On the use of incense in general, see Horace D. Hummel, "On the Use of Incense," *Una Sancta*, 24 (Resurrection 1967), 76—80.

⁴⁰ If the confession of sins is omitted or held at some hour prior to the celebration of the Eucharist, the eucharistic liturgy begins with the introit. The servers and ministers enter the church and go in procession to the altar while the introit is sung.

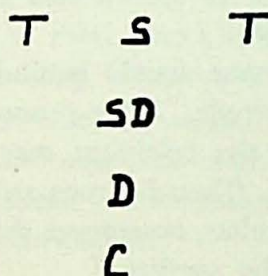
PROCESSION



AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE CHANCEL



PROCESSION INTO THE CHANCEL



the celebrant follows the deacon. When the servers arrive at the foot of the altar steps, they pause, take their ornaments to the appointed place, and then take their places in the chancel.⁴¹ The subdeacon places the gospel book on the altar and goes to his chair.⁴² The deacon reverences

⁴¹ As noted above (see Part II), the candles carried by the servers may be the candles placed on the floor at either end of the altar. They are carried into the church by the servers and placed at either end of the altar at this point.

⁴² The gospel book was placed on the altar before the beginning of the Eucharist according to *Ordo Romanus Primus*, ca. seventh-eighth century. (Cf. "Ordo Romanus Primus," *Patrologiae Latinae*, ed. J. P. Migne [Paris: Garnier Brothers, 1895] LXXVIII, 940. Hereafter Migne's edition will be referred to as *MPL*.) The usage is, however, probably much older. "The Lord's Board was too holy (too 'awful' is another view) to bear anything but the Mystic Oblation itself, and such objects, the cup, the

THE SERVICE CONDUCTED FACING THE PEOPLE

the altar and goes to his chair. The celebrant reverences the altar and goes to his chair. The celebrant stands before the chair in the midst; the deacon stands at his right; the subdeacon stands at his left.⁴⁸

THE KYRIE AND GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

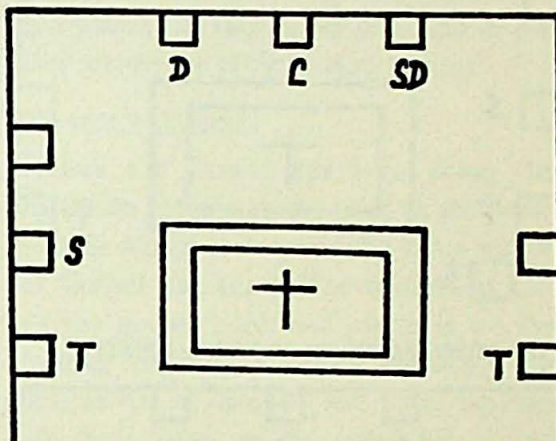
Everyone remains standing in his place.

THE SALUTATION AND THE COLLECT FOR THE DAY

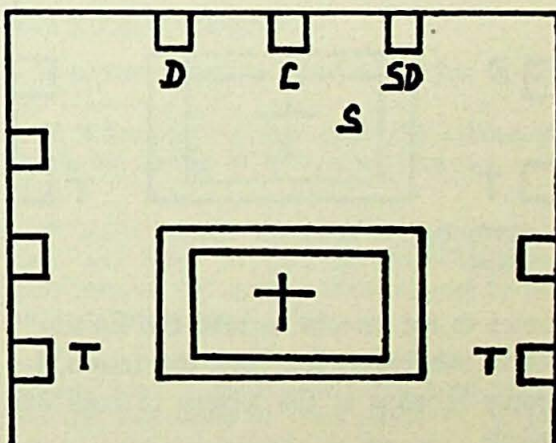
While the people sing the response to the salutation, the server brings the service book from the credence. He stands before the celebrant, slightly to the celebrant's left, holding the service book open at the

collect. After the collect for the day has been sung, the server returns the service book to the credence.

KYRIE AND GLORIA IN EXCELSIS



COLLECT FOR THE DAY



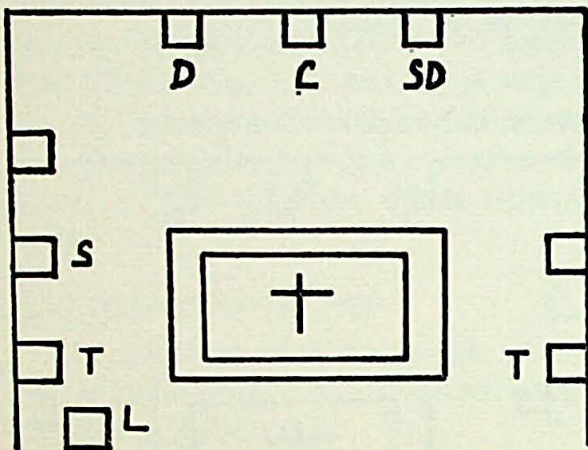
paten, the linen cloth, as were necessary for the offering of the sacrifice. If indeed the Book of the Gospels lay on the Altar from the beginning of Mass until the Gospel was read, it is to be remembered that the Gospel Book was regarded as representing our Lord Himself, just as the Altar came to be conceived of as the throne of the Great King" (Edmund Bishop, *Liturgica Historica: papers on the liturgy and religious life of the Western Church* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945], p. 412. In the rite of the Eastern Church to this very day the gospel book rests on the altar (Archdale A. King, *The Rites of Eastern Christendom* [Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1947], II, 113). "In the Middle Ages it was the rule (to a great extent) to place the Gospel Book on the altar at the beginning of Mass. . . . When in the present day high Mass the deacon lays the Gospel Book on the altar after the Epistle, it is doubtless a reminiscence of the ancient symbolic ritual. The older, fuller ceremony was probably omitted from the Missal of Pius V (Rit. serv. vi. 5) because the Gospel is contained in the Missal and the latter is on the altar from the start" (Jungmann, I, 444). The rite of the Roman Church now directs that the gospel book, which has been carried in procession, is to be placed on the altar at the beginning of mass.

THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON AND THE EPISTLE

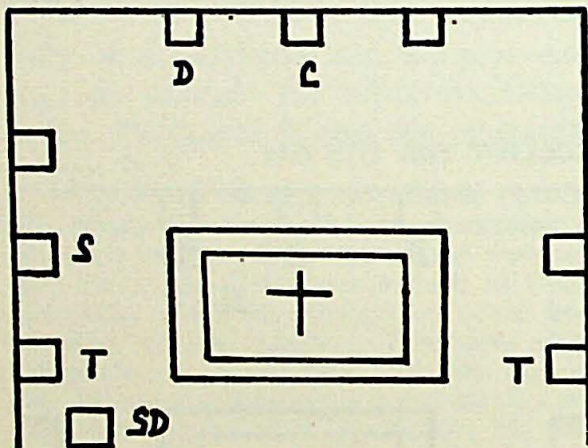
Everyone sits. A layman may come forward from the congregation to read the Old Testament lesson, or the Old Testament lesson may be read by the server or the subdeacon. At the conclusion of the Old Testament lesson, the layman or server returns to his place and the subdeacon

⁴⁸ The deacon, as the "first assistant" to the celebrant, occupies the "place of honor" at the celebrant's right.

A LAYMAN READS THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON



THE SUBDEACON READS THE EPISTLE



comes to the lectern to read the Epistle.⁴⁴ If the subdeacon has read the lesson, he simply remains at the lectern to read the Epistle.

After the subdeacon has read the Epistle, he goes to the foot of the altar steps.

⁴⁴ The reading of the Epistle was originally the work of a lector. In the seventh/eighth century the reading of the Epistle became at Rome the work of the subdeacon ("Ordo Romanus Primus," *MPL*, LXXVIII, 942). As early as the time of Saint Justin Martyr (ca. A. D. 150) we hear that someone other than the presiding minister read the liturgical lessons (Jungmann I, 23). For a discussion of who read the liturgical lessons, see Jungmann, I, 410 ff.

THE GRADUAL⁴⁵

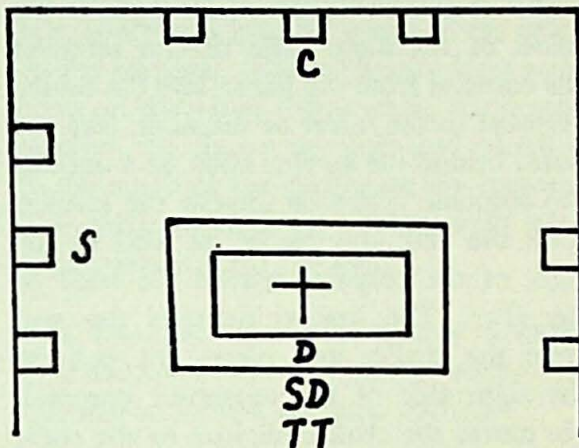
Everyone stands. The deacon may ask for and receive the celebrant's blessing.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Incense may be used in connection with the reading of the Holy Gospel. Lights (and incense) are used at the Gospel as a mark of honor for the written Word of God. Martin Luther in his *Formula Missae et Communionis* of 1523 wrote: "Sixth, the Gospel lesson follows, for which we neither prohibit nor prescribe candles or incense. Let these things be free" (Martin Luther, "An Order of Mass and Communion," *LW* 53, 25. "Formula Missae et Communionis," *WA* XII, 211). Saint Jerome, writing from Bethlehem in A. D. 378, says: "Throughout all the churches of the East when the Gospel is to be read lights are kindled . . . not to dispel the darkness but to exhibit a token of joy . . . and that under the symbol of corporeal light that light may be set forth of which we read in the psalter, 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path!'" (Jerome, "Contra Vigilantium," *MPL*, XXIII, 346)

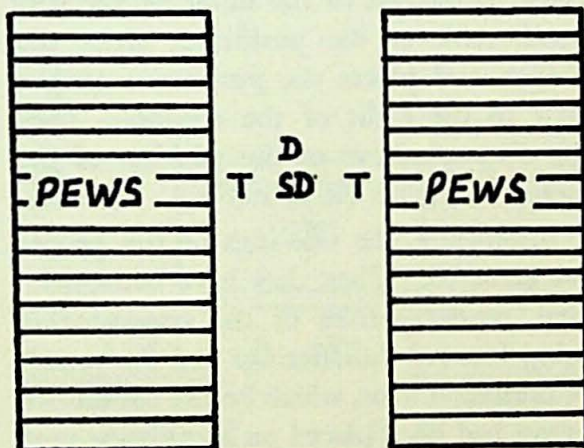
If incense is used in connection with the reading of the Holy Gospel, the thurifer brings the censer and incense boat to the celebrant, and the celebrant puts some incense into the censer. Then the deacon asks for and receives the celebrant's blessing (see below, footnote 46). Then the deacon goes around to the front of the altar. Meanwhile, the thurifer goes to stand on chancel level a short distance behind the taperers, who stand on chancel level behind the subdeacon. The deacon takes the gospel book from the altar and turns to the people. When the deacon turns to the people, the thurifer, taperers, and subdeacon turn to the people, and the thurifer leads the procession to the place where the Gospel will be sung. After the deacon has announced the Gospel, he takes the censer from the thurifer and censes the gospel book. He swings the censer once to the center, then to the left, then to the right, and returns the censer to the thurifer. While the deacon sings the Gospel, the thurifer swings the censer. After the Gospel has been sung, the procession returns to the altar in the same order in which it came to the place where the Gospel was sung. The thurifer and taperers take the censer and lights to the usual places and return to their places in the chancel.

⁴⁶ The deacon turns to the celebrant and says in a low voice: "Give me your blessing."

THE GOSPEL PROCESSION FORMS AT THE ALTAR



HOLY GOSPEL



Then the deacon goes around to the front of the altar. The taperers get their lights and stand on chancel level behind the subdeacon. The deacon takes the gospel book from the altar and turns to the people. When the deacon turns, the subdeacon and taperers turn to the people and lead the deacon to the place where the Gospel will be read.

The celebrant answers in a low voice: "The Lord be in your heart and on your lips that you may worthily and competently proclaim His Holy Gospel in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit." At the words "and of the Son" the celebrant makes the sign of the cross over the deacon.

When they arrive at that place, the deacon, subdeacon, and taperers take the positions indicated in the diagram.⁴⁷ The deacon hands the book to the subdeacon, who holds the book for the deacon to read.⁴⁸ The celebrant and server remain at their places and face in the direction of the place where the Holy Gospel is read.

THE HOLY GOSPEL

After the Gospel has been sung, the procession returns to the altar in the same order in which it came to the place where the Gospel was sung. The subdeacon carries the gospel book and places it on the credence or lectern before resuming his place at the celebrant's left. The taperers take their lights to the usual places and resume their positions. The deacon resumes his place at the celebrant's right.

THE NICENE CREED⁴⁹

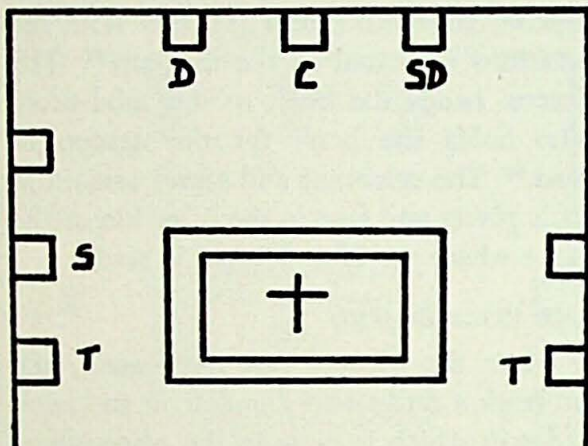
Everyone remains standing in his place.

⁴⁷ When the taperers flank the subdeacon during the reading of the Gospel, they face each other.

⁴⁸ The *Apostolic Constitutions* (fourth century) and Saint Jerome (ca. 342—420) already mention the reading of the Gospel by the deacon (Jungmann, I, 443).

⁴⁹ It is customary to bow the head at the name of Jesus in the Nicene Creed (and whenever the holy name of Jesus occurs in the liturgy), at the words "and was incarnate . . . was crucified also for us," and at the words "who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified." It is customary to bow at the *et incarnatus* in honor of our Lord's incarnation; the reverence at the words "who together with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified" is an outward sign of our confession of the deity of the Holy Spirit. The sign of the cross may be made at the words "and the life of the world to come" as a bodily gesture confessing the Christian hope that through the cross and resurrection of Christ we "look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come."

CREED



THE HYMN

At the end of the hymn the celebrant may go into the pulpit. If the celebrant's chair is behind the altar, he may preach from his chair.

THE SERMON⁵⁰

THE OFFERTORY

The offertory chant is sung.⁵¹

The server brings the service book (on its cushion or stand) to the altar and places it to the left of the midst of the altar at an angle convenient for reading.⁵²

⁵⁰ See footnote 26.

⁵¹ See footnote 28.

⁵² While the deacon and server are preparing the altar, the subdeacon may assist the celebrant in washing his hands. The subdeacon takes a lavabo bowl, towel, and water cruet to the celebrant. The subdeacon pours water over the celebrant's thumbs and forefingers, the celebrant dries his hands on the towel, and the subdeacon replaces the cruet, bowl, and towel on the credence. The "lavabo," or washing of the celebrant's hands, goes back at least to the fourth century since it is described in the catechetical lectures of Saint Cyril of Jerusalem. Its significance is obvious: purity of heart and mind and body as we approach the holy mysteries of Christ's body and blood. It also has an obvious utilitarian value: it is decent to wash one's hands

The deacon brings the veiled chalice with the burse on top of it and places the veiled chalice and burse to his right at the midst of the altar. The deacon removes the corporal from the burse, lays the folded corporal in the midst of the altar, lays the burse behind the service book, and unfolds the corporal. Then he unveils the chalice, folds the veil, and places the veil to the right of the corporal toward the back of the altar. The deacon removes the pall from the chalice and places the pall on the right side of the outspread corporal. He moves the chalice slightly to the right of the midst of the corporal, places the paten to the left of the midst of the corporal, removes the purificator from the chalice, and places the purificator on the altar to the right of the corporal. (See the diagram above of the position of the sacred vessels on the altar.)⁵³

Meanwhile, the offerings of the people are gathered. When they have been gathered, representatives of the congregation bring forward the offerings and the vessels of bread and wine, which before the service began had been placed on a credence near the entrance to the church building. The celebrant, deacon, and subdeacon come to the altar and stand behind it. (See diagram.)

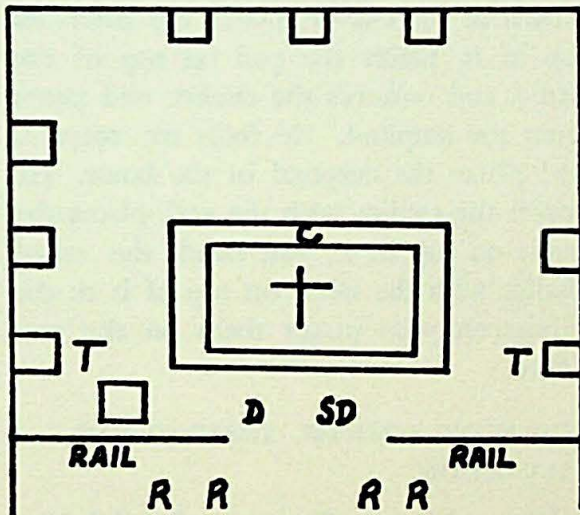
When the representatives of the people arrive at the altar rail, the subdeacon and deacon go to meet them. The subdeacon

before handling the food of the sacred meal, just as it is customary to wash one's hands before going to the table for an ordinary meal. See Jungmann, II, 76 ff.

⁵³ From ancient times the deacon has spread the corporal, thus preparing the Lord's table for the eucharistic meal. It has also been his office to assist in the preparation of the food for the meal. See Jungmann I, 71; II, 52 f.

receives the offerings and places them toward the end of the altar; he returns to the rail, receives the ciborium or bread box, and places it to the south of the paten on the corporal. The celebrant places some hosts on the paten. Meanwhile, the deacon receives the flagon or cruet and places it to the north of the chalice on the corporal. The celebrant fills the chalice with wine and covers it with the pall.

THE DEACON AND SUBDEACON RECEIVE THE BREAD, WINE AND MONEY FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE



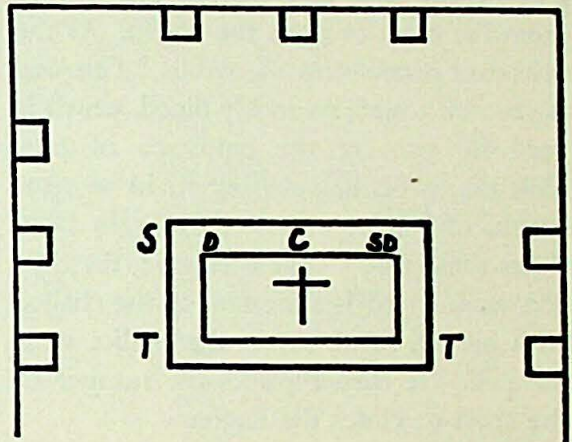
The deacon and subdeacon then resume their usual positions with the celebrant behind the altar.

The representatives of the people may remain at the rail until after they have received the Holy Communion. The servers may move closer to the altar. See diagram.

THE GENERAL PRAYER AND THE PREFACE

The celebrant remains standing in the midst behind the altar, facing the people, with the deacon at his right and the subdeacon at his left.

POSITIONS DURING THE SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT: GENERAL PRAYER THROUGH BENEDICTION



THE SANCTUS

Everyone may bow moderately from the waist as the words "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna in the highest" are sung.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

When the celebrant begins the words of institution, the subdeacon may uncover the ciborium or bread box. As the celebrant pronounces the words of consecration "This is My body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me," everyone may bow.⁵⁴ After these words have been said, the subdeacon may cover the bread box or ciborium. When the celebrant begins the second half of the words of institution, the deacon, placing

⁵⁴ Luther writes: "This is not the word and ordinance of a prince or emperor, but of the divine Majesty at whose feet every knee should bow and confess that it is as he says and should accept it with all reverence, fear, and humility." Large Catechism, Fifth Part: The Sacrament of the Altar, 11.

his left hand on the foot of the chalice, removes the pall from the chalice with his right hand and places the pall on the altar. The deacon may also remove the stopper from the cruet or open the flagon. As the celebrant pronounces the words, "This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me," everyone may again bow. After these words have been said, the deacon, again steadying the foot of the chalice with his left hand, covers the chalice with the pall. He then replaces the stopper in the cruet or closes the flagon.

THE PAX DOMINI⁵⁵

THE AGNUS DEI

THE DISTRIBUTION

During the celebrant's communion, the deacon and subdeacon should reverently bow their heads. Having received the sacrament himself, the celebrant administers the consecrated bread and cup to the deacon. The celebrant then administers the host to the subdeacon and to all who are in the chancel; the deacon follows and administers the chalice to the subdeacon and to all who are in the chancel. After the subdeacon has received the sacrament, he goes to a convenient place within the chancel and there stands or kneels during the communion of the people. After the taperers and server have received the sacrament, they stand or kneel in some convenient place. The representatives of the

⁵⁵ After the celebrant has sung the pax domini, the greeting of peace may be exchanged. The celebrant greets the deacon and subdeacon, who then greet the others in the chancel. The greeting is exchanged throughout the congregation. See footnote 34.

people return to their places in the congregation.

The celebrant administers our Lord's body to the congregation; the deacon administers our Lord's blood.⁵⁶

When the celebrant has administered the host to the congregation, he may place the paten or ciborium on the altar, go to his chair, and stand there in silent meditation.

When all have received the sacrament, the deacon hands the ciborium or bread box and the flagon or cruet to the subdeacon to be placed on the credence. Then the deacon places the purificator over the mouth of the chalice, places the paten on top of it, places the pall on top of the paten, and removes the chalice and paten from the corporal. He folds the corporal and places the corporal in the burse. He covers the chalice with the veil, places the burse on top of it, and hands the veiled chalice with the burse on top of it to the subdeacon who places them on the credence.

THE NUNC DIMITTIS, THANKSGIVING, SALUTATION

The celebrant, deacon, and subdeacon resume their usual places behind the altar.

THE BENEDICAMUS

The deacon sings the benedicamus.⁵⁷

THE BENEDICTION

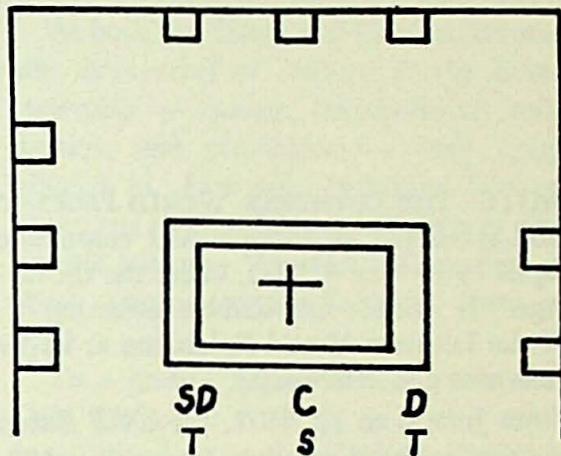
After the benediction, the server takes the processional cross and stands on chancel level flanked by the servers holding lights.

⁵⁶ See footnote 35.

⁵⁷ The singing of the benedicamus has been the duty of the deacon from ancient times. See Jungmann, II. 433 ff.

Followed by the deacon and the celebrant, the subdeacon comes around to the foot of the altar steps. The subdeacon steps to the left, the deacon steps to the right, and the celebrant stands between them. The three ministers reverence the altar. Then the servers with cross and lights lead the procession back to the sacristy in the same order in which it first came to the altar.⁵⁸

AFTER THE BENEDICTION THE PROCESSION FORMS AT THE FOOT OF THE ALTAR



⁵⁸ If incense is used, the thurifer precedes the servers with cross and lights.