

### **The Homily**

In the homily, the Priest (sometimes the Deacon) gives nourishment to our lives by explaining some aspect of the readings we have heard, the particular mystery we are celebrating, or one of the parts of the Mass.

### **Creed**

- We respond to God's Word by professing our belief in the great mysteries of our faith .
- The Apostles' Creed was once attributed to the Apostles themselves and has its origins in the professions of the Rite of Baptism. It is particularly appropriate during the Easter season, when we recall our Baptism.
- The Nicene Creed has its origins with the Council of Nicaea in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. It contains the most succinct summary of what we believe as Catholics.

### **Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful**

After the Priest has called everyone to prayer, intentions are announced and responded to for the Church, civil authorities, those in need, and for the salvation of the whole world. The prayers are concluded with a prayer by the priest, asking God to look on the needs that have been proclaimed.

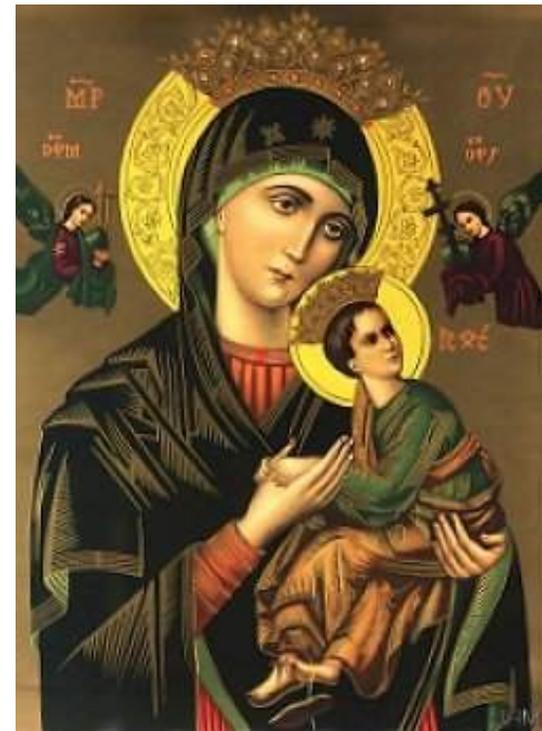
### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Discuss the acclamation at the end of the readings: "The Word of the Lord."
2. What does it mean that the New Testament can help us to understand the Old Testament?
3. What does it mean that the altar and the ambo are two tables?
4. How is the proclamation of the Gospel different from the proclamation of the other biblical readings?
5. When is it usually more appropriate to use the Apostles' Creed rather than the Nicene Creed?
6. How is the Prayer of the Faithful a "universal prayer"?

## The Mass Deconstructed

### A Liturgical Catechesis

# *THE LITURGY OF THE WORD*



**Our Lady of Perpetual Help**  
**Roman Catholic Parish**  
**Scottsdale**

We come to Mass to be fed, first from the table of God's Word, and then from the table of sacrifice from which we receive the Body and Blood of Christ.

### **What Happens in the Liturgy of the Word**

- The 1<sup>st</sup> part is made up of readings from Sacred Scripture, interspersed with chants.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> part is the Homily, the Creed and the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful).

### **“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing”**

The Lector or Deacon walks to the ambo, opens the Lectionary and begins to read the scriptures to us. When they conclude the readings, they announce that what we have heard is God speaking to us.

### **The Ambo**

The ambo is slightly raised platform on which a lectern, or reading desk, is placed so that all can hear the Lector, Deacon, or Priest proclaims the Word of God. Only the Word of God and certain prayers may be prayed from the ambo.

### **The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Readings**

- The 1<sup>st</sup> Reading is usually taken from the Old Testament (These readings foreshadow the birth of Jesus and are fully understood in light of his Gospel).
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading is usually taken from the New Testament epistles, Acts of the Apostles, or Book of revelation

### ***The Word of the Lord***

- After each reading the Lector announces, “The Word of the Lord!” and we respond, “Thanks be to God!”
- The Lord is present and active and speaking to us in his word proclaimed. Christ is standing in our midst, and we can clearly hear him as the disciples did when he walked with them.

### **The Responsorial Psalm**

A sung response of a psalm was not uncommon in the synagogues of Jesus' day. In the earliest days, the Psalm was often sung from the first step (*gradus*) of the ambo, rather than from the reading table. Thus did the name come to be known simply as the *Gradual*.

### **The Gospel**

- At the high point of the Liturgy of the Word, the Gospels, containing the very words of Christ are proclaimed.
- The Book of the Gospels is, along with the altar, a primary sign of the presence of Christ in the liturgical assembly. This is why we kiss the Book of the Gospels, and why it is carried in procession from the altar to the ambo.

### **The Gospel Procession and Acclamation**

The proclamation of the Gospel begins with a procession accompanied by our most joyous chant, the *Alleluia*. We sing Alleluias to welcome the King of Glory as he comes to speak to us in the words of his Holy Gospel.

### **The Proclamation of the Gospel**

- The Deacon (or the Priest) greets the people, “The Lord be with you.” As the people respond, “And with your spirit,” he makes the Sign of the Cross on the Gospel and proclaims, “A reading from the Holy Gospel According to (Evangelist).”
- As all respond, “Glory to you, O Lord!” all make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, their lips and their heart in a silent prayer “that the Word might enlighten their minds, cleanse their hearts, and open their lips, to proclaim the praise of the Lord.”