

# **Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy** **(*Sacrosanctum Concilium*)** **4 December 1963**

## **Liturgical Changes Specified in the *Constitution***

### **Sacramental Celebrations in General**

Use of the vernacular language

Local (national) adaptations, as approved by the body of bishops

Concelebration by all priests present

Presiders should not say responses that are the congregation's responsibility

### **The Eucharist**

Liturgy of Word and Liturgy of Eucharist form a single act of worship – the faithful should take part in the entire Mass (Liturgy of the Eucharist had sufficed for Sunday obligation)

More Scripture readings and a greater selection of them

Homilies based on scriptural or liturgical sources; not to be omitted on Sundays without serious reason

Prayer of the Faithful

People's reception of bread consecrated at that Mass (not just "reserved" hosts)

Communion under both species (specific events, later extended more widely)

On Sundays, feasts, or weekdays of Advent or Lent, Bible services led by a deacon (or a layperson approved by the bishop), especially when no priest is available

### **Baptism and Confirmation**

Restoration of the adult catechumenate (RCIA)

Rite developed for receiving baptized persons into full communion with the Church

Revision of baptismal rite for infants to bring out more sharply the roles and duties of parents and godparents

Outside of Eastertime, blessing of baptismal water within the rite of baptism itself

Revision of Confirmation rite to show its connection to the whole of Christian initiation, including a renewal of baptismal promises before Confirmation is received

## **Other Rites**

Baptismal features proper to the Lenten liturgies restored

Rite and formula for sacrament of penance revised to give more luminous expression to the nature and effect of the sacrament

“Extreme Unction,” renamed “Anointing of the Sick,” is not just for those at the point of death. When anyone begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the appropriate time to receive this sacrament has already arrived.

Ordination rites revised. When a bishop is consecrated, all bishops present may impose hands.

Marriage rite revised and enriched to more clearly express the grace of the sacrament and the duties of the spouses

Burial Rite revised to show the paschal character of Christian death – use of white vestments, pall, Easter candle, uplifting music, etc., were resulting changes

Revision of rite for burial of infants

## **Changes in the Mass Resulting from the *Constitution's* Implementation**

The principle of “pruning” unnecessary elements led to the elimination of:

- Certain prayers “at the foot of the altar” at the beginning of Mass
- “Epistle” and “Gospel” sides of the altar (all Scriptures are read from one place)
- Movement of the Missal from one side of the altar to the other
- Longer “Lavabo” prayer when presider washes his hands
- Altar rails
- Server holding a paten below the communicant’s chin
- The “Last Gospel”
- Prayers after Mass

Changes resulting from (but not mentioned in) the *Constitution*:

- Freestanding altar, with presider facing the people
- Tabernacles placed on a side altar or in a side chapel
- Female altar servers
- Lay lectors
- Presentation of the Gifts
- Multitude of Preface texts
- Multiple Eucharistic Prayers
- Memorial Acclamation (“Mystery of Faith”)
- Exchange of the Sign of Peace
- “Body of Christ / Blood of Christ” dialogue with each communicant
- Reception of Communion in the hand, while standing
- Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist
- Various texts for Blessing and Dismissal