

Sunday and Feast Day Liturgical Notes for Priests and Deacons

Suggestions for Leading Worship



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RE: Liturgical Suggestions for the Third Sunday of Easter – Cycle A

Sunday date: April 5-6, 2008

Dear Fathers and Deacons,

An Overview...

The celebration of Christ's Resurrection continues with festivity and joy. Each year on the Third Sunday of Easter the Gospels proclaim a post-Resurrection appearance of Jesus in which He shares a meal with His disciples. The Eucharistic theme is obvious, and we celebrate the fact that through the Paschal Mystery, Christ found a way to remain with us through this mystery of our faith (see *Mane nobiscum Domine* [Stay With Us], Pope John Paul II, 2004)

Kevin Irwin in *Sunday Worship: A Planning Guide to Celebration* describes a shift in liturgical piety since the promulgation of Vatican II's *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. Father Irwin describes an "orientation away from rubrical perfection in the performance of a sacrament, to one that is concerned with an experience of the risen Lord through the community's celebration of thanksgiving and praise of the Father." Today's Gospel account describes how two disciples experience the risen Lord on the road to Emmaus in a primitive liturgical celebration. The very style of the gospel story shows that it is a special resurrection appearance story, for the references to their "hearts burning" when the Lord explained the word and their recognizing Him at the breaking of the bread indicate that the author refers here to the experience of Christ as the eucharist.

Questions for Faith Sharing...

1. In my faith journey, “on the road to Emmaus” how was Jesus a stranger to me?
2. What are some examples of when Jesus opened his risen presence in the Scripture or in the Breaking of the Bread?
3. As the two disciples, how have I made known to others what has been revealed to me in the Breaking of the Bread?

Some Considerations as you Prepare...

1. Continue with an Easter season pattern for the Introductory Rites, which best includes the Rite of Sprinkling of Holy Water and the singing of the Glory to God.
2. The alternate Opening Prayer has references to discipleship, asking God “to strengthen the Church to answer your call”; it seems the better choice.
3. For the Preface you may use any of the prefaces of Easter I-V (P21-P25). The Preface for Easter III (P23) has references to the Lamb and paschal sacrifice.
4. The Solemn Blessing for Easter Season (no. 7; in the Catholic Book edition of the *Sacramentary*, p. 572), or the Prayer over the People (p. 227) may conclude the liturgy.

Sample General Intercessions – Third Sunday of Easter

(adapted from *Prayers for Feasts and Seasons, Year A*, P. Scagnelli. Chicago, LTP, 1997)

Priest: With our faith and hope set on God, let us pray in the name of Jesus of Nazareth. .

Deacon (or other reader if there is no deacon):

1. For all who believe in the risen Lord: May our unity and humble service will proclaim Christ to the world, we pray to the Lord.
2. For peace in the world, especially in Iraq, Afghanistan and the rest of the Middle East: May all who serve in military and diplomatic service know God's protection, we pray to the Lord.
3. For those among us who are sick: May their health may be restored, as they are joined with us in prayer, we pray to the Lord.
4. [*If first communion is celebrated this Sunday:*] For the children who today celebrate First Holy Communion: May they always recognize God's gifts, especially the gift of Jesus, we pray to the Lord.
5. For the newly-baptized members of the Church, and for all those received into the fellowship of the Church: May the Spirit of God may now strengthen them in faith, we pray to the Lord.
6. For this assembly, to whom the Lord opens the scriptures: May we know the Lord in the breaking of bread and go forth from this table to serve Christ in others, we pray to the Lord.
7. For those whose lives were marked by faith and loving service (especially _____): May God lead them in the paths of eternal life, we pray to the Lord.

Priest: O God, stir up the faith,
that our hearts may burn within us at the sound of Jesus' Word,
that our eyes may be opened to recognize Him in the breaking of the bread.
We pray in the name of our Risen Lord, Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.