



### Does *Sacrosanctum Concilium* say anything about children?

- Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (SC)
- No specific mention of celebrating liturgy with children
- Reference to revising the rite of baptism of infants (SC67) & the rite of burial of infants (SC82)
- No other specific references...
- Did the church just not care about kids?

### Children in SC

- Baptised children are members of 'the faithful'
- Thus they are included wherever the 'Christian people' are mentioned
- **Key principle:** when children celebrate liturgy they do so as members of the faithful, the body of Christ at worship – not just as children
- The same principles for celebrating any liturgy well pertain to celebrating liturgy with children

### Who are children? – Defining children

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) "everyone under the age of 18"
- Australian law: a child is someone under 12 years
- Developmental psychology: childhood begins at birth and continues through until the onset of puberty (usually around 12 for girls; slightly later for boys)

### Who are children? – Defining children

- Canon law
- Latin (*infans*): infant – one who cannot speak
- Anyone under the age of 7 or who is developmentally delayed is considered to be an infant for legal purposes
- 7 = age of reason (medieval legal definition)
- Age at which one could be contracted for marriage
- Directory for Masses with Children: children are 'pre-adolescent' (more on this later)

### In church teaching, the child is...

- A person from the moment of conception forward, created immediately by God & open to God, in relationship with God in a way known only to God
- A canonical person upon the demonstration of rationality CCL 889 §2
- Baptised & therefore possessed of the right to worship God according to his/her condition & ability

### Defining liturgy

- Privileged place of encounter between God & the people of God (CCC 1074-5)
- Official public worship of God by the Church
- Two Greek root words: λαος (people) and εργον (work)
- Liturgy (λειτουργια): work of the people or work on behalf of the people
- Divine service done for the sake of others (Jesus' life)
- Work of God, work of the people of God in the presence of God, in service of the world
- 'Work' is both that of God (what God does for us) & of us (what we do for God & for the world)

### What liturgy is not...

- Liturgy is not religious education
- Liturgy is not catechetical instruction
- Liturgy is not a concert, performance or school assembly
- Liturgy is not a time to show parents what their kids have learned in school or in RE classes
- Liturgy is not an equal-opportunity exercise in inclusivity
- Liturgy is not a spectator-sport
- We need to learn to think about liturgy differently from all of these other important activities

There is liturgy and there is unofficial prayer – there is no 'paraliturgy' (para = alongside, subsidiary, secondary)

### Basic shape of all liturgical action

- We gather
  - We re-identify ourselves as the Body of Christ
  - We focus on the purpose for the gathering
- We listen in silence to the Word of God
- We respond
- We enact our beliefs ritually (sometimes sacramentally)
- We go forth to live what we have celebrated

### Liturgy is...

- **Official** = book with an official decree of promulgation from the CDWDS
- **Authorised** by & in communion with the local bishop
- **Public** = activity of an assembly of believers
- **Worship** = prayer in praise of God

### How can we celebrate liturgy well?

- Start with the official liturgical books
- Know them & celebrate according to them
- *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 22 :
  - 22.1 Regulation of the liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See and, accordingly as the law determines, on the bishop.
  - 22.2 In virtue of the power conceded by the law, the regulation of the liturgy within certain defined limits belongs also to various kinds of competent territorial bodies of bishops lawfully established.
  - 22.3 Therefore, no other person, not even if he is a priest, may on his own add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy.

## How can we celebrate liturgy well?

- By being very careful in choice of music for use in liturgy – ensure that it is liturgical rather than devotional or catechetical
- By choosing music & texts that focus on the Paschal Mystery; use both vertical & horizontal language; are corporately focused rather than individually focused; are scripturally based, etc.
- By first singing the liturgical texts (acclamations, responses, psalms; everything else is secondary)
- By placing the Full, Conscious and Active Participation of the assembly in worship before all other considerations
- By having homilies that actually have something to say to this assembly at this time, in this place, on this occasion

## Who is the focus of this liturgy?

- Problem with calling liturgical celebrations the “Children’s Mass” or the “Grade 3 Eucharist”
- Why is this a problem?
- Liturgy is not all about the kids (education is, but liturgy is not the same as education)
- The focus of this liturgy is not the children or the grade 3 class
- The focus of this liturgy is: GOD
- The purpose of liturgy is not education, but worship
- Children are not the centre of the universe – God is!
- Teachers’ job in liturgy is to pray & to help the children to pray & focus their attention on God

## Be clear on why you are worshipping

- The purpose of all liturgical worship is two-fold: the glorification of God & the sanctification of humankind (SC#10)
- Worship space needs to be distinctly different from classroom space (as focus is God, not learning)
- Worship behaviour needs to be distinctly different from classroom behaviour
- Liturgy is not the time to conduct other school business
- Have a clear distinction between worship & other events – i.e., don’t give out school awards during liturgy; these are best done during an assembly
- Don’t encourage applause during liturgy as children need to learn they are not an audience in liturgy

## **Teachers as liturgical leaders**

- Teachers need to know, understand & model how to celebrate the Church’s official liturgy
- It is not OK to model something other than what the Church wants done in its liturgy
- We are not free to experiment in liturgy
- Good news! Liturgy is already planned
- All you have to do is prepare it, pray it & do all you can to facilitate the full, conscious and active participation of the celebrating community

## The Lectionary & The Ordo

- Lectionary is an ordered collection of readings for proclamation within Catholic liturgies
- The Lectionary is comprised of 4 volumes:
  - Sundays and Major Feast Days
  - Weekdays, Year I
  - Weekdays, Year II
  - Common of Saints, Rituals, Votives, Various Needs
- Ordo = annual calendar containing details for how Mass is to be celebrated for each day of the Liturgical Year
- Published by Liturgy Brisbane
- MUST HAVE resource!

## The Missal (*Missale Romanum* 2010)

- Accompanied by the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (Latin, 2002) (Aust. version 2011)
- MUST HAVE resource for all those preparing liturgy

### 3 crucial doc's: GIRM, ILM, UNLY

- General Instruction of the Roman Missal (2010)
- Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass (1969)
- Universal Norms for the Liturgical Year and Calendar (1969)
- These three documents are the most important sources of liturgical law governing the celebration of the Eucharist
- They have the same level of authority as Canon Law – which means they must be taken seriously

### General Instruction of the Roman Missal

- 2002, Pope John Paul II, 5<sup>th</sup> GIRM since Vatican II
- Updated version of the official rules, rubrics and expectations for proper celebration of the Eucharist
- Sets forth clearly the Church's current approach to celebrating the Eucharist
- Touchstone for measuring liturgies against
- Guidebook for celebrating the liturgy properly
- Diagnostic tool

### Lectionary for Mass: Introduction

- Reading must be audible, clear and intelligent
- It is the first means of transmitting the Word of God properly to the assembly (#14)
- Readings must be proclaimed at the ambo
- Psalmist is a minister of the Word; psalm should be sung (#22)
- Readers must be qualified, trained, spiritually prepared (which requires biblical and liturgical formation) (#55).
- Readers must grasp the meaning & structure of the liturgy of the Word & its connection with the liturgy of the Eucharist

### Lectors at Mass

- As bearers of the Word of God lectors must have accepted the Word of God & made it their own
- They must understand its meaning & importance, and must have faith in what they proclaim
- Such gifts generally have not yet developed in young children
- Adults/older children can serve as models (See GIRM#38, 59, 101)

### Directory for Masses with Children

- Administrative text; does not have equal legal weight to the GIRM, the ILM or the UNLY
- Must be used in concert with the GIRM
- Acknowledges that there are some adaptations that can & should be made for celebrations where the majority of the assembly is made up of young children....

### Directory for Masses with Children

- Used with "children who have not yet entered the period of pre-adolescence" (DMC#6)
- Pre-adolescence is "the period preceding adolescence which is usually designated as the years from 10 to 13."
- Those who have not yet reached pre-adolescence are: those **under the age of 10**.
- The point about this directory is to help very young children to participate in the liturgy
- Children are to be encouraged and taught to grow up into their position and their rightful participation in the church's liturgy

## Lectionary for Masses with Children

- Scripture must never be omitted from liturgical celebrations with children
- A homily should always be given (LMC#10)
- LMC adheres closely to the Lectionary for Mass while adapted to the needs & capacities of children. (LMC#11)
- “The liturgy has the power to form children and all believers in the paschal mystery. The worthy celebration of the liturgy itself is the best introduction to liturgy.” (LMC#21)
- “The liturgy of the word is neither a catechetical session nor an introduction to biblical history.” (LMC#24)

## Lectionary for Masses with Children

“Care should be taken not to give the impression that the liturgy of the word is a play...readings may at times be divided into parts distributed among the children.” (LMC#52)

- No costumes/props in liturgy
- Do not stage Christmas or Holy Week or Triduum liturgies as plays
- Christmas Mass should not be presented as a birthday party for Jesus
- Santa Claus should not be introduced into the Christmas liturgy.

## Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with Children

- Texts adapted for children in order to help them to participate with greater benefit in the Masses celebrated for adults
- More acclamations have been included
- Use is strictly limited to Masses where preadolescent children are majority of participants
- Words of the Lord in the Canon remain the same in all Eucharistic Prayers
- All basic elements of EP's are present but with a simpler style of language
- Catechesis is to precede & follow Eucharist

## Using the MR3 with children

- Liturgical language operates in a different register from everyday language – it is more akin to poetry than newspaper reporting
- Learning how to engage with the rhythms of liturgical text is something children must learn over time
- They will be confused at first (this is normal!)
- Repetition, explanation, enabling them to read & speak the words for themselves (when capable) will help
- There are many other entry points to liturgy than its text – for younger children, these entry points need to be emphasised more (gesture, posture, music, symbol, etc.)

## Liturgy needs to be adapted to young children because they...

1. Have a different mentality than adults
  2. Need simple language and concepts
  3. Need clearly defined structures & relationships
  4. Respond to the attitudes of adults
  5. Have short attention spans
  6. Need to be taught the ways & words of worship
  7. Need repetition to learn the ways & words of worship fully
  8. Need interaction to be fully engaged in worship
  9. Respond very well to music which helps to engage them in worship
  10. Are essentially self-focused
- See Johnson, Clare V. “The Children's Eucharistic Prayers: A Model of Liturgical Inculturation.” Worship 75:3 (May 2001): 209-227.

## Full, conscious & active participation

- How are children to participate fully, consciously, actively in liturgical celebration?
- “Children do not understand all of the words & symbols used, or understand them only imperfectly.”
- This belief confines children's ‘participation’ to cognitive participation
- There is more to it than that
- Gestures, postures, processions, song, dialogue, silence, and the use of symbols are integral to their experience of liturgy

### Full, conscious & active participation

- Children simply being present at liturgy enables:
- **Socialisation** into the ways of being a member of the Christian community
- **Stimulation** through music, sounds, motion, colours, rhythms, candles, smells, clothing, etc.
- Exposure to the presence & work of the Holy Spirit

### FCAP does not mean everyone has to do a job!

- Not everyone gets a 'job' in liturgy & some may never be invited to take on a ministerial task/role
- Everyone's 'job' in liturgy is to praise & thank God!
- Everyone's 'job' in liturgy is to join the body of Christ in the worship of God:
  - responding, singing, listening, processing, gesturing, posturing, praying, etc.
- Children learn by witness, mimicry, osmosis, trialling, direct instruction, etc.
- Witnessing & mimicking in liturgy eventually lead to doing for oneself, to understanding, to FCAP

### The 'job' of children in liturgy is...

- To participate as members of the worshipping assembly
- To offer their inner intentions
- To express their faith
- To raise their minds to God
- To offer God their worship as intelligent beings & to receive his grace more abundantly (SC33)
- To bring forward the gifts
- To sing one or other of the songs of the Mass (not a performance!) (DMC#18)

### What can young children do in liturgy?

- Prepare the place & the altar
- Serve at the altar (but only if properly trained!!)
- Cantor, sing in a choir, play musical instruments (if skilled!)
- Proclaim the readings in some instances (but see LMC#23)
- Respond during the homily
- Recite general intercessions (if capable; cute ≠ capable)
- Bring the gifts to the altar
- Participate in processions
- Be silent together in the presence of God (DMC#22, 34)
- Witness adults & older children receiving the Eucharist (experience desire)
- Witness adults & older children taking on leadership roles (experience aspiration)

### Introduction to the LMC#23

"Children imitate the behaviours and attitudes of adults. For this reason, adults who serve as ministers at liturgical celebrations where children are present should conduct the entire range of liturgical actions, gestures, and songs with dignity and care, yet without becoming distant or mechanical. All liturgical ministries are exercised for the sake of the prayer of the assembly..."

### Introduction to the LMC#23...cont'd

...Therefore, ministers should be selected on the basis of liturgical competence. It should not be presumed that children should proclaim the word of God in celebrations in which this Lectionary is used. Some younger children are able to read the Scriptures competently, but the witness of older children, teenagers, or adults, ministering graciously and reverently to young children engaged in liturgical prayer, is more conducive to the children's growing reverence for the word of God, than the peer ministry of embarrassed or ill-prepared children."

### Helping children to grow into full participation in the Church's liturgy

- Children's religious experience is complete & whole in itself & is not determined simply by their potential for adulthood. (LMC#54)
- The fullest reality of the liturgical assembly is children and adults together
- Celebrating Masses with children according to the DMC "must lead children toward the celebration of Mass with adults, especially the Masses at which the Christian community must come together on Sundays." (DMC#21)

### Growing up into the church

- We do not want children to stay as children forever
- The church expects that they will grow up & grow into being full members of the body of Christ
- Educators' role is to help children to transition from being children to being adults within the church
- "Some rites and texts should never be adapted for children lest the difference between Masses with children and the Masses with adults become too pronounced."
  - the acclamations & responses to the priest's greeting
  - the Lord's Prayer
  - the Trinitarian formulary at the end of the blessing (DMC39)