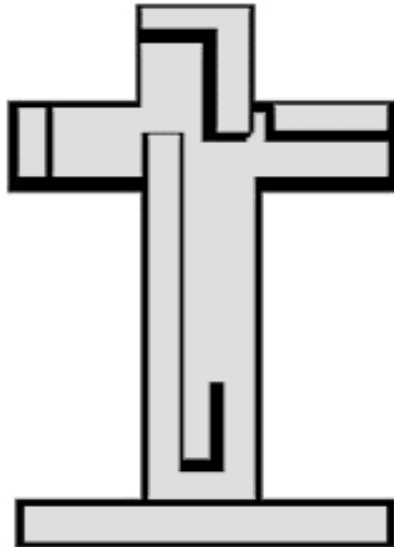


DRAFT

Prototype example of a yearly theme booklet

OUR PILGRIM JOURNEY TO THE HOLY



**We Witness with Love
Through Worship & Welcoming
2010-2011**

*Our Mother of Sorrows
Pastoral Plan*

INTRODUCTION

This booklet is your travel guidebook to the many ways in which Our Mother of Sorrows Parish can grow in holiness and love this year together as Pilgrims guided by our Pastoral Plan.

To Worship and Welcome

We envision a reverent and welcoming Eucharistic community in our common call to holiness, aware of its role as a priestly people in relationship with God and with one another, and actively involved in liturgical and sacramental celebrations as Ministers of the Assembly.

- Through the Eucharistic celebration and its 'sending forth,' those who worship here demonstrate that liturgy is the source and summit of the life of the Church.
- Each person and family who enters the church for liturgy are to be respected as full, conscious, active participants, essential to the Eucharistic celebration.
- A spirit of welcoming and hospitality is extended to all who participate in the liturgy.
- All liturgical ministers are afforded opportunities through formation, workshops and other venues to deepen their understanding and participation in the roles to which they have been called.
- Inspiring, challenging, and thought-provoking homilies are a crucial source of ongoing faith formation through the liturgy.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WITNESS WITH LOVE THROUGH WORSHIP & WELCOMING?

The following thoughts were shared by Sr. Pearl Cesar during the 2011 Parish Mission on the overarching theme of the Pastoral Plan: "To Witness with Love."

The inspiration underlying Our Mother of Sorrows Pastoral Plan "**Our Pilgrim Journey to the Holy**" is based on the words spoken at the end of each Mass, "*Go, you are sent forth.*" These words take particular meaning in our call, commitment and vocation "*to witness with love*" as lay people in the world. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states,

"Holy Mass, the liturgy in which the mystery of salvation is accomplished, concludes with the sending forth commission (mission) of the faithful, so that they may fulfill God's will in their daily lives."

The focus for the implementation of this year's Pastoral Plan is "**To Worship and Welcome.**" Our goal is, "We envision a reverent and welcoming Eucharistic community in our common baptism and call to holiness, aware of its role as a priestly people in relationship with God and with one another, and actively involved in liturgical and sacramental celebrations as Ministers of the Assembly."



The Eucharist is the essence of our Christianity, the fulfillment of our Baptism, a saying yes to Jesus' life, death and resurrection. It is the act that incorporates us into community to build the kingdom of God. St. Paul writes ". . . *the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."* 1 Cor 11:24.

"When Jesus said, '*Do this in remembrance of me,*' what was the **THIS** he had in mind?" Is the "this" the action of Jesus alone or is it Christ's action *in us* as a community of believers? St. Augustine said, "*We eat the body of Christ to become the body of Christ.*" **What does that mean today?**

Eucharist means gratitude, thanksgiving. Jesus' last meeting with his disciples was a meal of thanksgiving and blessing that commemorated the Passover of the Israelites from slavery. However, Jesus changed the blessing before he broke the bread, saying, "*This is my body.*" In effect he was saying, "*This bread is not only a reminder of the Passover bread our ancestors ate, this bread is me.*" Likewise, "*this wine was his blood, the blood of the new covenant.*" The participants in the new covenant became blood relatives, not only of Jesus but of one another; that means taking responsibility for each other as one does in a family.

Paul is explicit about this aspect of Eucharist in his Letter to the Corinthians (1Cor 11:17-34), the main text in the New Testament that deals with the celebration of Eucharist. In this passage, Paul is calling the Corinthians to task because of the way they act when they come together for the Eucharist. Within that context he teaches what the Church community is to be.

In Paul's day, most "churches," were communities that met in houses—not large public buildings. In Acts 2:46, we read, *"They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts."* They probably gathered at the largest



house in order to accommodate everyone. However, archaeological ruins in Greece show that most dining rooms were not big enough to accommodate large groups. Probably no more than 9-12 people could have reclined around the standard dining room table. The rest of the church would have eaten in a larger adjoining courtyard, holding 30-50 people.

The centerpiece of most Christian worship at that time was the context of the Passover meal--the Lord's Supper. Thus the early church probably carried on the tradition of celebrating the Lord's Supper in the context of a meal. One would assume that gathering in homes, having close table fellowship, would have guaranteed tight relationships. In the case of the Corinthians, this was not the case:

"In giving this instruction, I do not praise the fact that your meetings are doing more harm than good. First of all, I hear that when you meet as a church, there are divisions among you, and to a degree I believe it; there have to be factions among you in order that those who are approved among you may become known. When you meet in one place, then, it is not to eat the Lord's supper, for in eating, each one goes ahead with his own supper, and one goes hungry while another gets drunk. Do you not have houses in which you can eat and drink? Or do you show contempt for the church of God and make those who have nothing feel ashamed? What can I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this matter I do not praise you." 1 Cor 11: 17-22:

Paul was angry with the community and clearly communicated that anger. The scene Paul describes is fairly self-explanatory. You can picture it. The church gathered for communal worship which involved a celebration to nourish and strengthen the community. But apparently the rich and well-to-do Christians who probably hosted the church meeting invited their closest friends to eat with them in the dining room. They came early and ate, drank, and got drunk. The poorer Christians, who worked and came late, were left to eat in the atrium, the courtyard, had nothing to eat and were humiliated.

Why is Paul so angry at the Corinthians? In simple terms, the Corinthian church just didn't "get it." What didn't they get? They did not understand that **coming together for Eucharist united them as one body, as one entity.** Paul understood Eucharist as the knitting together of individuals into a new reality--that reality being Jesus. Instead, the Corinthian church understood Jesus as a private personal presence who came at no cost. They did not have to change. They could have their divisions, they could leave each other out, they could humiliate each other. Paul describes how the rich had become exclusive and hurried to finish so that they did not have to share. They had developed cliques, there was favoritism. The meal exaggerated these differences and Paul rebukes them for this.

Paul understood that within the Church there were to be no barriers. There was to be no social or class distinctions. Paul created a church of rich and poor; free and slave; Jew and Gentile – people who ordinarily did not associate with each other. But in the Church, they were to relate as brothers and sisters. In effect, Paul created a new understanding of what it means to be human: to be rooted in a faith community that witnesses with love to one another and to the surrounding community to change it. In the Church, all are united in Christ. The Lord's supper is where this happens.

Paul understood that the Church was not the Church if the art of sharing was forgotten. If people kept in their own circle, then they were not followers of Christ. Paul says, "When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat." In other words, yes, you eat. You break bread. You drink the cup. But because your interpersonal relationships are in shambles, because you are not really sharing life together, because your behavior proves you despise what the Church is really all about, you are not eating the Lord's Supper. You are better off eating at home.

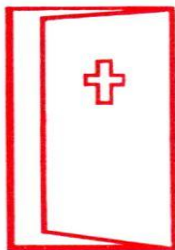
So what does this mean for us? Paul sees the relationship between Jesus and the community who shares in the Eucharist as one. The person of Jesus is present in the community. Jesus lives, moves, and has his being only if the community is drawn into Christ's mystery. For Paul, the Eucharistic assembly is a community of individuals fused with a new reality. The celebration is about individuals becoming members of each other and thereby becoming Christ.

THIS IS WHAT IT MEANS TO WORSHIP & WELCOME!

If this does not happen, it is only a ritual,
not a celebration of who we are in Christ.

The next section will take you on a step-by-step journey through the Mass, accompanied by reflections on what it means to worship the Lord and welcome the person of Jesus in those around us in church, in our parish, in our larger community, and in the world.

TO WORSHIP & WELCOME: SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE MASS



THE ENTRANCE RITE. We, as parishioners, enter the Church and slowly begin to assemble for Mass. Our church building is a constant reminder that what people don't have in their own homes they do have here in God's house. It provides shelter, a prayerful place, a place of peace and fellowship. This holy place is a challenge to recognize the sacredness of each parishioner's home and the lack of housing of so many.

People enter and sit where they may. Different ethnic and economic groups sit side by side in the same pew. In God's eyes we are all equal as human beings. We all have a place at the table of the Lord and are called to a common sense of awe and worship that for a brief moment transcends economic and ethnic differences.

Would that it were that way outside of our church? When we leave the building are we equal? Only in the church can we all come and find rest and refuge. In our city, many are homeless and without a place to stay warm. In our state, many are not welcome.



Would that our city and state could be more welcoming to those who find themselves on the streets and live as strangers in our midst. Our Church might be the only place where people are truly welcomed. Do I participate in that welcoming?

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS & PENITENTIAL RITE. Mass begins in the usual way. In the name of the Trinity we are welcomed and confess that we are all sinners and in need of God's forgiveness. We begin this celebration with an admission of our common humanity. In words and gestures and song, we proclaim our humanity and God's divinity, our frailty and God's mercy. Once again, we are all leveled by our own admission of our common humanity.



THE TABLE OF THE WORD. The readings and homily in the Liturgy of the Word are the common education that we all share. Our parish is diverse. For many of us what we hear at Mass is the only real education we will have. It is not enough. We want more both as children and as adults.



We look at the children. In the parish, we are blessed to have our school and religious education program. But we think about those children who are in the public school system and who will be seriously affected by the budget cuts at the State level. Will our children be properly prepared for their future? Will our young adults who are the future of our church and country be well educated because of the state budget cuts at the college and University level?

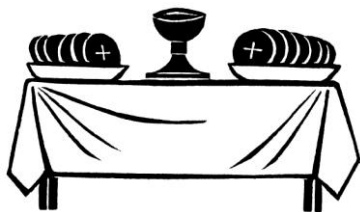
THE PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL. After our common profession of faith, we lift up our petitions to the Lord. We are invited to speak out our needs. Where else can all of us be heard? People are often not listened to. They are shunned. But here in this church, at this moment, people are ready to listen and to pray for everyone's concerns. For a brief moment, we listen, and we all pray for each other. I am grateful to be part of a universal Church because we always pray not only for those in our community, but for those throughout the world. What a privilege to be reminded of the larger world I am part of. Outside of the church, who is there to listen to us, especially the poor?



THE OFFERING OF GIFTS. Mass continues. We take up the collection and bring up the gifts. Each gives according to their conscience and ability. While the collection is a public act, there is no public embarrassment of those who give little or undue attention to those who give a lot.

Outside the church there is no such consideration of personal dignity. Our society values people who earn the highest salaries. We judge a person's worth by their income. The cost of living escalates and families fall further and further behind. Where is their dignity? I think of the families our parish. Many with two and three paychecks continue to live in poverty because of lack of skills and low wages. Who creates an economy that responds to their need?

THE TABLE OF THE EUCHARIST. The gifts that are presented to the priest are the gifts of bread and wine. Bread and wine do not occur in nature; they are the fruit of human hands. The families that represent our community are proud to present the gifts in our name. When they are presented to the celebrant, the celebrant prays that they may become the body and the blood of Christ - that those whom the gifts of bread and wine represent--all of us-- may become the body and blood of Christ.



THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER. We proceed to the central part of our Mass. The great prayer of thanksgiving reminds us of those simple words uttered by Jesus to his Father. Is there any way to comprehend the mystery of the gift of life freely given for the sake of others? Who are we that God cares so much that He would send his son Jesus to die for us? Who are we that God loves us infinitely more than any other love we have experienced?

I try to understand this in the lives I see around me. Where does that come from, the willingness to give one's life for others? A woman spends her youth caring for her children; a man sacrifices his wants that his family might have a better future; and we, as children and adults, can only say "thank you" in profound gratitude for their love and sacrifice. A young soldier in war saves the life of his friends. Why does he do that? He does not know them that well. What I experience here is so different than what the world teaches and how it lives. I reflect on the narcissism and greed, the selfishness and cold indifference to the needs of others that I see around me during the week. We see the poor of the world die on television and change the channel.



The Mass reminds me that Christ is neither a painting nor plaster nor wood, but flesh and blood and lives in our midst though us. He calls us to community, to care for others. Once more I am grateful for the example that Jesus has set for all of us in how we are to live where we are to find our salvation.

THE LORD'S PRAYER & THE SIGN OF PEACE. Mass continues with the Lord's Prayer--that bold proclamation that summarizes the whole of the good news and the challenge of Jesus to proclaim our loyalty to the God of heaven and our commitment to make his will be done on earth. The congregation stands together and proclaims as a community that they accept the invitation to be the body and the blood of Christ, i.e., the historical continuation of the mission of Jesus, which is the Kingdom of God.



His will is our sustenance (our daily bread), our peace with each other (forgiveness) and our freedom from evil and all that tempts us to egoism. We say "Our Father" reminding us that we are brothers and sisters. For one brief moment, unlike what happens outside of the Eucharist, we hold hands and say yes we really are a family. What a prophetic testimony to the rest of the world! Together with the sign of peace, this brief moment dares to proclaim a common humanity acknowledging a common creator.

THE COMMUNION RITE. We see people line up to receive communion. As the Eucharistic ministers gather, we are reminded that we are not alone in this work of the Lord's Supper. Many ministers bring this celebration into a new reality. We think about several of them. The lector has been out of work for several months. Every Sunday he puts on his coat and tie and has a job. There is work for everyone at the Lord's table. We pray that this atmosphere could exist in the rest of our society. In Arizona many are out of work, many more don't have the skills for the jobs that do exist. Do we take the same care to help people get the education and skills they need for work outside the church?

We receive the body of Christ, the blood of Christ. No one goes away hungry. To receive Holy Communion we simply stand up, get in line and come to the minister. We think about the poor and those in need who are subjected to a host of questions to determine if they are needy enough to receive food, clothing or assistance. We thank God that He does not judge us in the same way. We thank God that our parish ministers to their physical, emotional, economic, and spiritual needs.

WE ARE SENT FORTH. We end the Mass, being sent forth to "love and serve the Lord." To love and serve the Lord is to celebrate the Eucharist outside of Mass with the same fervor and intensity as we do inside of church. The Eucharist is a prophetic challenge to us to care for our people and their needs not just within our community, but throughout the world. We are sent forth to care for their spiritual needs, their housing needs, their educational needs, their economic needs, and their physical and social needs.

The community is "sent forth" to live the Eucharist so that the reign of God may be realized in our community, our nation and our world.

We are sent forth . . . To Witness with Love.



To Witness with Love . . . to Love is to Serve

In what ways are we called to serve by worshiping and welcoming before, during and after our liturgical celebrations?

THE LITURGY & WORSHIP COMMISSION

Description of the purpose and mission of the Liturgy and Worship Commission . . .

Brief section on the **Ministry of the Assembly**, i.e. everyone who participates at Mass is a Minister of the Assembly!

Brief sections on each of the other Liturgical Ministries; include the qualities needed to serve, how to become one, etc.

- Altar Servers
- Lectors
- Choir / Music Ministers
- Eucharistic Ministers
- Hospitality Ministers
- Liturgical Environment
- Deacons

Could also include info and quotes from references such as:

Assembly by Daniel Connors (2001) *I Like Being in Parish Ministry* series Twenty-Third Publications

Guide for the Assembly by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin (1997) Liturgy Training Publications

Collegette series of booklets on each of the following liturgical ministries:

Lectors, Ushers, Eucharistic, Musicians, Environment, Cantor, Deacon, Sacristan, Hospitality

THE NEW ROMAN MISSAL

The Roman Missal is the book containing the prescribed prayers, chants, and instructions for the celebration of Mass in the Roman Catholic Church. Published first in Latin, it is then translated into modern languages for use in local churches throughout the world. Beginning on the first Sunday of Advent (27 November 2011) churches in the United States will begin using the new missal. There will be some changes in the phrases said by the people during Mass. The Liturgy and Worship Commission will be explaining these details. You can find out more in this *Catholic Update* article: "The Roman Missal: Embracing the New Translation" <http://www.americancatholic.org/Newsletters/CU/preview.aspx?id=248>

Additional information

etc.

etc.

USEFUL LINKS

Include various websites on liturgical year, etc.

Today's Scripture Reading, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
<http://www.usccb.org/nab/today.shtml>

Saint of the Day
<http://www.usccb.org/nab/saints/todaysaint.shtml>

The Catholic Calendar Page
<http://www.easterbrooks.com/personal/calendar/index.php>

etc.

etc.

REFERENCES

Sr. Pearl Cesar's talk on the Eucharist, was based on the following sources:

Ernesto Cortes, Jr. Unpublished talks and writings.

John Haughey, SJ., "Eucharist at Corinth: You are the Christ," in Thomas E. Clarke, SJ, ed., Above Every Name, Paulist Press, 1980.

John Hogan, "Eucharist and Globalization."

Rosendo Urrbazo, "Pastoral Ministry in a Multicultural Society," ORIGINS, Vol. 22, Issue 23, January 11, 1992.

Include additional info or references

etc.

etc.