

Catechism on the Liturgy II, 5

Common of the Mass

This refers to the parts of the Mass that remain the same in every celebration of the Mass.

Communion Antiphon

This is a verse from the Bible that was a refrain for a Psalm to be sung during the communion of the faithful. Originally the singing during communion was quite long, and now only the antiphon is retained. It is proper however, to sing some other hymn or sacred music during the time of communion.

Communion Cloth

This is a long, linen cloth attached to the altar rail in such a way as to catch any particles from the ciborium during the distribution of Holy Communion. A paten held by an acolyte is now used in place of the cloth, though the cloth and paten are still used in some churches according to custom.

Communion, Holy

This refers to the act of receiving worthily the Holy Eucharist. In Communion, we receive the glorified (resurrected and ascended) Body and Blood, soul and divinity of Christ. All the faithful are obliged to receive Holy Communion after the age of reason, at least once a year sometime between the First Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday. To receive Holy Communion worthily, we should be 1) Free from all mortal sins. 2) Sorry for all venial sins and be striving to overcome them. 3) Fasting from foods and liquids (except water) for at least one hour before receiving, preferably three hours. 4) Striving to be recollected and participating in the Holy Mass in which the Communion is received.

Compline

The last hour of the Divine Office which completes the day, and which

is sung at night.

Confessional

Originally the confessor sat on a chair or bench between the altar and communion rail, with the penitent next to him. By the 16c it became a large box-like structure of wood, intended to guarantee anonymity to the penitent, and separate penitent and confessor, to protect the confessor from any accusation. It was moved to the side of the church near the ambulatory, or at the back of the church for greater privacy.

Confirmation

Ordinarily conferred by a bishop, this sacrament is giving by the laying on of the hand, anointing with chrism, and saying "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Ghost." It perfects Baptism and orients the confirmed toward the Holy Eucharist. It consecrates the person in two ways: a) priestly, enabling the person to take part more intensely in the Paschal Mystery; b) prophetic, fortifying the Christian to bear witness to the world of Christ, the only way to the Father.

Confiteor

Literally from the Latin "I confess." It is an integral part of the beginning of the Mass, where contrition is expressed for the sins of omission and commission we have done. Individual prayers in the Roman Rite are often named for the first, or first and second words of the prayer in Latin, such as the *Pater Noster*, or *Ave*.

Conopaeum

This is a veil that adorns the tabernacle where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. Its color is of the feast of the day. Sometimes it is simply called the tabernacle veil.

Consecration Candle

A single candle lit at the beginning of the Roman Canon that is placed on the altar; it signifies the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. It is symbolic of Christ appearing to the Apostles on the road to Emmaus, as they recognized Him in the breaking of bread.

Consecration of the Mass

This refers to the time of the Mass when the priest says the words of institution over the bread and wine, so that these elements change into the body, blood, soul and divinity of Christ. The Consecration also includes the Major Elevation.

Contemplation

From the Latin meaning “to be with the temple.” One of the highest states of prayer, it is a mystical state of awareness of the being of God. The Gregorian Rite favors this prayer, which needs a great deal of silence to practice.

Contrition

Heartfelt sorrow and aversion for sins committed, including the intention of sinning no more. To be sorry for sins for human reasons – such as shame or financial loss – is called natural contrition, and does not suffice for forgiveness from God. Supernatural contrition is based on motives of faith, that the goodness of God was offended. Supernatural contrition is perfect when the motive of sorrow is true love of God as our highest good. This is expressed well in the traditional act of contrition: “... because they offend Thee my God, Who are all-good and deserving of all my love.” Supernatural contrition is imperfect when it is based on motives of faith, but not love of God for His own sake (“...because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell.”) Imperfect contrition (also called attrition where the penitent at least wishes that they could be sorry for their sins) suffices for absolution in the confessional.