

# THEOLOGIA PRIMA

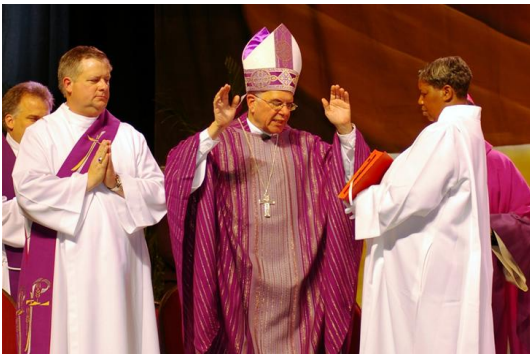
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## #28 GO IN PEACE: A SUMMARY OF THE CONCLUDING RITES

This week we conclude our discussion on the Eucharistic liturgy by briefly examining the Concluding Rites.

The Concluding Rites begin immediately after the Prayer After Communion. This part of the liturgy is very simple and succinct. *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal* §90 provides the structure of the Concluding Rites. First, brief announcements may be made if they are necessary (*Order of Mass* 140). The two key words here are *brief* and *necessary*. After sharing in Eucharist, the high point of our life together, the ritual should not be delayed by lengthy announcements. As we prepare for the new Missal, parishes may need to assess their current practice of delivering announcements, and also the content of the announcements.

Next, the priest greets the community as in the beginning of the Mass and we respond, “And with your Spirit.” Immediately after the liturgical greeting, the priest continues with the blessing. This blessing can be in the simple form, “May almighty God bless you . . .,” or on certain occasions a more



formal blessing may be given from the Prayers over the People or a Solemn Blessing. All of these texts have been retranslated so you will notice the more formal language. One thing to be attentive to is the peoples’ response in the Solemn Blessings. Many communities are caught off-guard during Advent and Christmas, for example, when it is their turn to say “Amen” at the conclusion of the three parts. Before these more formal blessings, the priest or deacon will invite you to bow your heads in prayer. During this blessing, the priest will

make the Sign of the Cross over the assembly as a gesture to signify God’s blessing. At pontifical Masses, where the Bishop presides, this blessing is a little different and I encourage you to learn this form of blessing and its unique responses.

After the blessing, the deacon or priest offers the dismissal. The new translation offers us some new options here. Here are two examples: 1). Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life, 2). Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord. The dismissal is the conclusion of the Eucharistic Liturgy. It is a statement that sends the community, who have been nourished by word and sacrament, to live out what they have become. It calls us to task and sends us into the world with the mission to share light of Christ, which we received in baptism. It demands that we “do good works, praising and blessing God” (*GIRM* 90c). Our response to this command is, “Thanks be to God.”

Finally, the priest venerates the altar with a kiss, just like in the beginning of Mass, and exits. The closing song is optional since Mass has already concluded.

Next time, we will discuss the role of music in the liturgy.