

ST TEILO'S CHURCH, ST FAGANS MUSEUM

TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2011  
THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 2011

PROCESSION AND MASS  
IN HONOUR OF  
THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS

FOLLOWING THE ORDER DRAWN UP AT  
SALISBURY CATHEDRAL AND USED IN  
CHURCHES IN WALES DURING THE LATE  
MIDDLE AGES



THE  
EXPERIENCE  
OF WORSHIP  
IN LATE MEDIEVAL  
CATHEDRAL AND  
PARISH CHURCH

The experience of medieval worship was different from modern practice. At the Mass the priest and his assistants were often distant, and what they did had an aura of mystery. The liturgy was said or sung in Latin which few understood (or could hear); and much was expressed in gesture or in unheard prayer – so solemn that it was shared only between the priest and God.

For all this remoteness in the worship, those attending the medieval Mass, in particular, had an expectation that Jesus Christ would be present among them; that his presence would be as real as it was to his disciples during his life in Galilee and Judea. The priest's vestments represented the garments worn by Christ at his Passion, or the objects by which he was bound and flogged. The priest stood in Christ's place offering the sacrifice on the altar.

When God offered his Son for sacrifice, he was not spared; and he died to save all peoples of the world. The medieval Mass symbolised that sacrifice; and in the consecration of the bread and the wine, Christ who died on the cross and Christ who rose on the third day was present. Medieval writers remind us that the risen Christ came among his disciples five times; and five times in the Mass the priest turns – as Christ's representative – to greet the people, saying 'Dominus vobiscum', 'The Lord be with you'.

The medieval Mass was conducted by the priest and his assistants – at this Mass, a parish clerk acting as server, singers and organ player. The people had no active part, and both prayer and praise were addressed eastwards towards the altar. Except very rarely (e.g. Easter Day), only the priest received communion. The same was true of the Procession that precedes the Mass in today's enactment, although here clergy and singers moved closer to the people as they processed around the church.

However, this did not mean that there was no expectation of engagement by the people. A number of medieval texts offer guidance as to how the people should behave, act and pray during the Mass. One of those texts is entitled *The Layfolks' Mass Book*, on which the notes which follow are based.

During the Mass you should feel free to take note of them, or to follow your own instincts. Do not feel bound to them – or to stay for the whole service. From contemporary accounts we know some people came late and (or) left early!

## PROCESSION FOR THE FEAST OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS: A SUMMARY OF THE ORDER

The procession assembles in the chancel. The prose *Salve festa dies* is begun (refrain and verses).

During the prose, the procession leaves the chancel, moves through the nave to the south aisle, and then turns back up the nave. It halts for the Station at the Rood, where the prose is concluded.

The procession enters the chancel with the singing of an antiphon of the saint of the church, St Teilo, followed by versicle and collect.

## JESUS MASS AS TYPICALLY CELEBRATED ON FRIDAY AT THE JESUS ALTAR: A SUMMARY OF THE ORDER

Introit

Kyrie eleison

Collect(s)

Lesson (from the Acts of the Apostles)

Gradual – Alleluya – Sequence

Gospel

Offertory antiphon

The invitation to the people to pray for the priest (silent)

Sursum Corda and Preface

Sanctus and Benedictus (organ)

The Canon of the Mass (recited privately by the priest)

The Elevation of the Host (signalled by the bell)

The concluding prayers of the Canon (private, except the last phrase)

The Lord's Prayer

Agnus Dei (organ)

The sharing of the Pax among clergy and people

Communion antiphon

Post-Communion prayer

Benedicamus Domino

The Last Gospel

*Indented items are recited by the priest, except for the Epistle (parish clerk).*

*The priest also recites prayers constantly throughout the Mass, sometimes assisted by the server.*

# AN INTRODUCTION TO MASS IN HONOUR OF THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS

The Mass in honour of the Holy Name of Jesus, popularly referred to as Jesus Mass, made its first appearance during the fourteenth century, but became increasingly widespread across England during the later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. This was in part thanks to the efforts of Lady Margaret Beaufort (1441/3–1509), mother of Henry VII, who managed to secure both a Papal Bull and an indulgence for the Feast of the Holy Name, thereby helping to establish it in 1489 as an official feast of the Church, to be celebrated on 7 August.

The devotion commemorates the Name of our Saviour, and all the divine gifts which pronouncement of that Name bestows, such as grace, goodness, health and power. It elicits devotion, as the Introit, ‘At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow’, commands at the beginning of the Mass; it also drives out demons, as mentioned in the Offertory chant. The appointed Gospel for the day, which relates Gabriel’s apparition to Joseph in a dream, recalls how the Name was given by none other than the Almighty. The devotion celebrates not a moment in the life of Christ but a feature of his humanity, and one in which we all share – the giving and the meaning of a name.

Jesus Mass came to be celebrated every Friday as a Votive Mass at a Jesus altar. Many reasons have been given for its huge popularity on the eve of the Reformation, and the strong Humanist emphasis on the importance of the Scriptures is thought to explain its appeal to the Lollards and other early reformers. It was celebrated with relatively simple ritual by one priest and an assistant (altar boy or parish clerk), but in some places the Mass was embellished with music, with a designated group of singers (often boys only) and organ. By about 1500, it was often endowed with polyphony (voices or organ or both – composed or improvised), as heard today.

# THE MASS IN DETAIL

## FOLLOWING THE PATTERN OF DEVOTION SET OUT IN *THE LAYFOLKS' MASS BOOK* FOR THE PEOPLE TO FOLLOW

Before the Mass, the server (in this case the parish clerk) takes the necessary vessels to the Jesus altar where the Mass is to be celebrated. The singers then chant the **Introit**, followed by **Kyrie eleison**. The people are directed to kneel as the priest enters. Priest and server go to the Jesus altar and prepare the vessels.

The priest then makes his confession to all present, and the server confesses to him. Although this is not heard, it is intended for all who are willing to confess. The people are directed to confess their sins therefore; and (in order that they may receive the benefit), to recite the Lord's Prayer, the angel's greeting to Mary ('Ave Maria gratia plena' – 'Hail Mary full of grace') and the Apostles' Creed. These are the only texts they are expected to know; and they form a constant resource throughout the Mass. After confession, the people stand, while the priest recites the Introit and Kyrie eleison at the altar.

The people are told to pray that all present may be well prepared – to pray that the priest be kept this day without sin, and complete this Mass to the honour of Christ, his mother, and all the saints; to pray for the health of the souls of all who hear the Mass and their friends; and to pray for glory everlasting for all.

Two **Collects** are intoned by the priest. The first is a special prayer of the day, the second for a benefactor, Sir Thomas ap Rhys. The scenario for the enactment is that the Jesus Mass at St Teilo's was endowed by Sir Thomas (an act typical of wealthy medieval people), and that the endowment was then increased by his widow and children, who are present at the Mass. Though Sir Thomas is fictitious, he serves as an emblem of those who give for the benefit of others, and those whom we know but see no longer.

The parish clerk then chants the **Lesson** (a biblical reading). He then intones the chant of the **Gradual** which is taken up by the choir, who continue with the **Alleluya** and **Sequence**. The people are encouraged to make their own prayers, saying especially the Lord's Prayer. The priest goes to the north end

of the altar and faces east to read the **Gospel**. The people are directed to stand. As the Gospel is announced, they are told to sign themselves with a large cross, and to pray in the name of the Trinity that they may gladly receive God's word. As the Gospel is read, they are advised to meditate on Christ their Redeemer, and to pray for grace and strength to do his will.

After the Gospel, the priest says the **Offertory** prayers. Just like the Magi who brought gifts at Christ's birth, so the people are told to ask that Christ may receive their prayers to his praise, fulfil their good desires, and be their help in time of need. Then, still standing, they are asked to recite the Lord's Prayer, whilst the priest is washing his hands.

The priest then bows before the altar and turns to ask our prayers: the Mass guide directs the people to smite their breast and pray that the Holy Ghost may come upon the priest and rule his heart. The people are to kneel down: with uplifted hands they are to pray that God may receive the sacrifice of the priest and all present, for help to the living, and eternal rest to the dead.

The priest recites prayers privately, beginning with two Secrets (shared between himself and God). Then he turns, greets the people, and sings 'Lift up your hearts' – '**Sursum corda**', followed by the **Preface**. The people are to lift up heart and body, to raise a thankful heart to the Lord, and pray that they may evermore praise him with the angels in the bliss of heaven.

The **Sanctus** follows – 'Holy, holy, holy Lord God', and then the priest begins the solemn prayer: the **Canon of the Mass**, in which he consecrates the bread and wine to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. He frames this action with prayer, and the people are directed to follow the same pattern: they are to kneel from this point to the end of the Mass, and devoutly to offer thanksgivings and intercessions for all estates of humankind.

The bell is rung inside the church to alert the people to Christ's coming in the consecrated bread. They are to do reverence to Jesus Christ now present; he who suffered for mankind and shed his blood; who died and rose again; who will come to be our judge. The most solemn and climactic moment occurs at the priest's **Elevation of the Host** (the consecrated bread) as the Body of Christ. This moment is known as the sacring.

After the sacring, there is an extended period of silence, while the priest **concludes the Canon** of the Mass. Having prayed before the consecration for the living, priest and people now pray for those who have died. The people

are to pray for all the dead, especially for parents, kinsmen, friends and those who wished them well; for benefactors; and for all souls in purgatory, for their release and everlasting glory. The priest intones the final phrase of this great prayer, and then continues to chant the **Lord's Prayer**. The people are to pray the Lord's Prayer silently as he prays.

The singers chant **Agnus Dei** three times, asking twice for God's mercy and then for God's peace. They are told that they cannot be at peace if they are not in charity (caritas). Therefore at the **Pax** (the ritual of the Peace), they should pray for peace and three stages of love (caritas): love of the Lord, love of yourself, and love of your neighbour. Only in love and charity with God and all men, by the Mass and presence of the sacrament could the people expect to obtain forgiveness and grace.

The priest kisses the chalice, containing the Blood of Christ; then he kisses the Pax, symbolically transferring Christ's peace from the chalice. The Pax is then shared with the clerk, the singers and lastly the people. (The Pax – sometimes known as the Pax Board – used today is based on a late medieval survival from the church of Sandon, Essex.)

The priest alone makes his **Communion**. The singers chant the Communion antiphon. Then, while the priest washes the vessels, the people are directed once again to recite the Lord's Prayer, Ave Maria and the Creed.

The priest turns to greet the people, and says the **Post-Communion** prayers (the second for Sir Thomas). The people are told to ask for God's protection in all dangers: they should pray that if they were to be overtaken by sudden death, this Mass might serve instead of absolution and visitation of the sick. They are to keep repeating the Lord's Prayer until the end of the Mass.

**Benedicamus Domino** ('Let us bless the Lord!') is sung, and the priest makes his final prayers. Then he recites the **Last Gospel** – the opening verses of St John's Gospel ('In the beginning was the Word'). This is private, until the words 'Verbum caro factum est' are sung, when the people are told to kiss the earth: by doing this their tribulation after death in purgatory might be shortened a little through an indulgence.

Before leaving the church, the people are directed to say a prayer to thank God for this Mass, and to pray for the acceptance of its offering. They are to make the sign of the cross in memory of Christ crucified and risen, as they ask God's blessing.

# THE EXPERIENCE OF WORSHIP PROJECT

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

*Thursday 6 October, 2011: Salisbury Cathedral*

17.30 Latin Eucharist of the Holy Name of Jesus

Before and after this Eucharist, there will also be a related course introducing and reflecting on the Jesus Mass and devotion to the Holy Name on at Sarum College, Salisbury (advance booking required – see below).

*Sunday 9 October, 2011: Salisbury Cathedral*

9.30 Procession of the Holy Name of Jesus before the Eucharist

On the preceding day, Saturday 8 October, there will be an introduction to the Procession in the Quire of Salisbury Cathedral. This will begin at 14.15 pm, and will last about one hour. No booking is required.

## FURTHER DETAILS AND BOOKING

[www.experienceofworship.org.uk](http://www.experienceofworship.org.uk)

[experienceofworship@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:experienceofworship@bangor.ac.uk) +44 (0)1248 382490

The Experience of Worship, School of Music, Bangor University, Bangor LL57 2DG

## ABOUT THE RESEARCH PROJECT

This Latin Eucharist has been devised as part of the research project *The Experience of Worship in late Medieval Cathedral and Parish Church*. The project is part of the UK-wide research programme, *Religion and Society*, funded jointly by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and the Economic and Social Research Council. The project is led by Professor John Harper, director of the International Centre for Sacred Music Studies, Bangor University. The other core members of the research team are Dr Sally Harper and Judith Aveling (Bangor University), Dr Paul Barnwell (Oxford University), and Dr Magnus Williamson (Newcastle University). The partner organisations in the research project are Salisbury Cathedral and St Fagans National History Museum Wales, near Cardiff.

The Experience of Worship project team wish to express their warmest thanks to the curatorial, interpretative and educational staff of St Fagans National History Museum, for their support and collaboration in this venture.

