

# The Introductory Rites

## *A beginning, introduction and preparation*

The rites preceding the Liturgy of the Word, namely the Entrance, Greeting, Penitential Act, Kyrie, Gloria, and Collect, have the character of a beginning, introduction, and preparation.

Their purpose is to ensure that the faithful, who come together as one, establish communion and dispose themselves to listen properly to God's word and to celebrate the Eucharist worthily.

After the people have gathered, the Entrance chant begins as the priest enters with the deacon and ministers. The purpose of this chant is to open the celebration, foster the unity of those who have been gathered, introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical season or festivity, and accompany the procession of the priest and ministers.

GIRM 46–7

## Some Questions

- How 'gathered' are the people before the celebration of Mass begins? What factors assist their gathering? What factors tend to work against it?
- The Missal offers alternative forms for the Penitential Act – the rite of blessing and sprinkling of water, or three forms of the Penitential Rite. What influences the decision to use which and when?
- What is the parish repertoire for the sung elements of the Introductory Rites?

## Further References

*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*  
34, 39–41, 46–54

*Celebrating the Mass*  
72–78, 139–150

## Practical Points

- The introductory function of these Rites can be assisted by reserving certain forms for particular times and seasons.
  - § The Blessing and Sprinkling of water for Sundays, especially in the season of Easter
  - § The *I Confess* during Lent
  - § The *Lord we have sinned against you* during weekdays and Sundays of Ordinary time
  - § The *Lord Jesus, you are...* form for the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Easter and Ordinary Time
- The liturgical Greeting should not be replaced or rendered redundant by other introductory words. It should be sung or said warmly and reverently.
- Careful use of song enhances the experience of being a community gathered for a common action.

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## Questions for Groups

1. What is good about current practice?  
What concerns do you have?

4. Who is most directly involved in these matters, e.g. liturgical ministers?  
What formation/information is necessary to engage them in the renewal of current practice?

2. In what ways does the documentation affirm or challenge your current practice?

5. How will the assembly be engaged in the process?  
What, in particular, needs addressing at Sunday and/or weekday celebrations?

3. Prioritise the issues you have identified.

6. How will you know whether the formation has worked?