

A Guide for



The Ministry of Screens and Technology

**Diocese of Prince Albert
Liturgy Office**



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The Liturgy Perspective

“The Liturgy is the place where *the Word* reigns supreme. But when we say “*the Word*” we mean a person, Jesus the Son of God. The Mass, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, is that unique gathering in which Jesus, the Word of God, reveals himself to you by various means and gives you the ability to respond deep down to him. This person Jesus, whom we understand as God’s *Word*, continues this dialogue with you right through the Mass, from start to finish.”

“In this stream of communication between Jesus and yourself there are certain high points: The Readings; The Eucharistic Prayer; Holy Communion.”

“Technology, used well and discreetly, can enable more full and active participation of the people in the Mass.

In Mass, the central focus is always the action of the Mass.

There can be times when the colour, movement, and design on a screen, serves to focus people on projected images and words rather than on the heart of the Mass.

For the worshipping community, every aid must remain at the service of the Liturgy. We seek to enable more full and active participation in the mysteries we celebrate.”

**Taken from “The Liturgy, the data projector and you”
by Fr. Clem Hill MTh



The Church and Technology

“The challenge of keeping the Church in touch with a progressive society is not a new one: half a century ago, the Second Vatican Council emphasized the need for the Church to enter into dialogue with the ‘modern’ world in all its cultural, political and technological diversity. More recently, on June of 2010, Pope Benedict XVI in establishing the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization espoused the need to study *and encourage the use of modern forms of communication instruments for the new evangelization.*

As new technologies continue to develop at an extraordinary rate, people around the globe are becoming increasingly dependent on portable devices such as laptops, tablets and Smartphones to access information and communicate with others. If the New Evangelization is to be effective, we must use the instruments of our time to reach people where they are. Jesus worked within the social milieu of his time to ensure that his message was heard. He met the people where they gathered, preaching in the synagogue, on a mountainside, or from a boat off the shore of a lake.

Yet the question arises: to what extent should these new technologies be introduced into the celebration of the liturgy itself? Are these devices being used to draw us deeper into full and active participation in the liturgy, or will they entertain and distract us while the liturgy goes on around us?

New technologies have a lot to offer in capturing people’s attention in the modern age. They have a role to play in the New Evangelization in allowing people to access information about the faith and to express this faith more deeply in prayer and the sacred liturgy. The challenge, it would seem, is to set appropriate boundaries on the use of technological devices within the liturgy itself. They are valuable to the extent that

they promote *full, conscious and active participation* in liturgy (SC 14) and help us fulfil the great commission to *go and make disciples of all nations* (Mt 28:19). How does the Church balance tradition with new technological possibilities as it works to build and nourish the people of God in the digital age?”

**Written by Clare Schwantes



“Let the rites radiate a noble simplicity”
Constitution on the Liturgy 34

Please Consider: some hymnbooks and Missal publishers produce an annual pew-book which includes all texts, prayers and readings of the Mass for the liturgical year.



(The following sections and titles have been taken from a document published for the Dioceses in New Zealand)

Today's Liturgy must speak to the audiovisual person:

In the way we are meant to celebrate Liturgy today comes out our strong conviction of the importance of communicating. We know we have to engage the person actively and consciously in responding to God's Word and the divine presence. But this means involving the whole person. That's why, as priests and readers, we are now more conscious not only of what we say but how we say it. And we try to get people's imagination going by a more skillful use of colour, and lighting, and artistic images and architectural setting, and we wrap people up in sound. And this, of course is where the projectors and screens comes in. Not only in this piece of electronic equipment itself but in the one who uses it as a way of communicating. You yourself.

Knowing how a person ticks:

What's going to help that person understand, feel part of, be encouraged to join in, to know how to respond to a clear message? At the same time, what's going to make things difficult for that person, create a distraction, overload the brain and the imagination, too much to take on board?

Appreciating a person's attention focus:

Today a person can hardly resist looking at a screen. Even when a TV is turned off, people coming into a room will automatically lock on to it! Screens can dominate our lives: TV screens, movie screens, computer screens, even little mobile phone screens. In a church a screen can have a dominating effect and we have to be careful that people don't look at it for entertainment.

Appreciating the Liturgy's lines of focus:

Within the celebration of Mass, there are clear lines of focus which help the person understand what's going on and help them engage in it. The church is set out so that our attention is captured by certain visual focal points: the altar and what's happening on it and around it, the ambo (lectern) and what's being proclaimed from it, the priest's chair and the communal prayer that's being led from it. It is so important that the projector screen (and what happens on it) does not compete with these key attention points or drag attention away, especially at the peak times of the Mass.

During these peak times, the projector should never be used—during the readings themselves, during the praying of the Eucharistic Prayer, or during the lead-up to Holy Communion. These are the most sacred times and nothing should distract from them.



Art Forms:

Who was it that said a picture is worth a thousand words? No doubt about it, a visual work of art can capture a mood, convey an emotion, sum up a theme or message and do a host of other things. But, of course, a piece of visual art does different things to different people. Not everyone will have the same set of reactions. Some people are geared to colour, others like the form and shape. Still others will home in on clothing or faces. For some it will evoke intense feelings, while others will simply look at it dispassionately! It's all very subjective. It depends, too, on whether the art is familiar (like the Mona Lisa) or something novel and new.

This means that whatever artworks we choose to screen with a data projector we have to choose carefully, with people's reactions in mind, and not just willy-nilly. The question is: Will what we choose really help in getting the message across, or are we just using art for the sake of it?

The use of Colour:

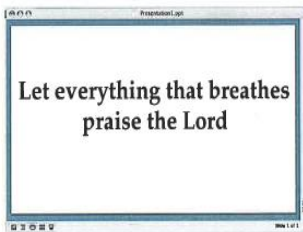
Colours can affect us psychologically. They can influence our perceptions and our behaviour. Soft pastel blues and pinks can calm us down and are used often in chemist shops and dentist’s waiting rooms! Hot oranges and reds can stir us up and even put us on edge. And dark blue carpet in a church makes people go passive, quiet and unreceptive. What colours you choose for data projection have to suit the mood, theme or occasion.

Using animation techniques:

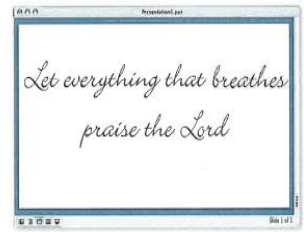
Computer programmes today give you greater options than ever for “special effects.” You can make texts dissolve, fly in from left or right, blink and be accompanied by a fanfare or a roll of drums! The possibilities are becoming endless. But in the context of the Liturgy this needs prudent judgement. What you present should not cause people to be glued to the screen, wondering what’s coming next. This is where your programme turns into entertainment, and as such, becomes a major distraction from the Word of God, something that really undermines the Liturgy.

Using PowerPoint may call for a simple “dissolving” or “fading” of words, or a text that comes in from right or left. Your good judgement will ensure that the change of text on the screen is simplicity itself, causing no distraction at all. But no special sound effects should ever be used in Liturgy.

Font: Palatino Bold – clear, easy to read



Font: Bickley Script LET (Bold) – harder to read



Working in ‘synch’ with the People:

You and your data projector have to form a kind of partnership with the people in their responses. So you need to have a good sense of “timing,” so that when they need to respond in the Mass, the words will be there, right on cue. They won’t have to wait until the text appears, because a time lag at that point will be a real barrier to communication.

It also means that you will work ‘in synch’ with the priest, the cantor, and the singers. Verses of the hymns have to be right there, on time, exactly when they are needed. The response to the psalm likewise has to be there, right at the appointed time, and disappear when it is finished.

Your Responsibility Regarding Copyright:

In preparing PowerPoint slides, you have a legal responsibility to comply with Copyright laws and regulations. Parishes and schools should have copyright licence agreements for screening lyrics and music. The Licence number needs to be quoted.

The correct method of displaying copyright details is: Title, Copyright year, Author, Publisher, Permission details (As in: Used with permission, Word of Life International Licence number... All rights reserved.)

For more information about Copyrights in Canada, please check out the Diocesan Website for more resources.

Preparing your PowerPoint slides:

Your choice of Font: Choose a font that is simple, straightforward and easy to read. Avoid fancy scripts. There are so many to choose from and this will entail some trial and error. Once you settle on a clear font, stick to it. Don’t chop and change, going from one font to another, otherwise the result will be less effective and even be confusing.

Size and definition of the Font: When you have typed a line or a verse, make sure the definition or sharpness of the text is in BOLD. You can further enhance this by adding SHADOW. This will really make the letters stand out, since

shadow adds contrast. No one in the assembly should have trouble seeing these words on the screen. (As shown on the bottom of page 8.)

Using “sound bites”: Set out the verse of a hymn or song in a way that makes perfect sense. Set it out phrase by phrase, and don’t break up a phrase.

Background: Some PowerPoint computer programmes offer a choice of strong colour backgrounds as well as many different slide designs. Choose one that is not too complex or distracting, and don’t use more than one design at a time.

Don’t use a picture as a background for text. This will automatically add a degree of difficulty in reading the words at a glance. It may even distort the meaning of what you want to communicate.

Slide animation: Within the Liturgy, the less movement on the screen the better. Faced with multiple possibilities in the way you bring on a text, there is a temptation to experiment with clever entry techniques – text that flies in from the left or right, text that comes on with a checkerboard effect, text that blinks or bounces. This quickly distracts a person’s attention and defeats the purpose. The best rule for the Liturgy is simplicity of presentation, otherwise you cross the thin line between worship and entertainment.

**Avoid any technical terms and spell out ideas in simple, quick–and–easy-to-grasp form. And avoid any unnecessary punctuation marks.

The Screen:

This is one of the most challenging aspects of all, when setting up a projector system. A screen can dominate and take attention away from the Mass itself. The liturgy demands certain key lines of focus essential to its celebration; for example, what is happening at the ambo and the altar. In no way should this be swamped by the screen. So, a great deal of thought is needed in positioning the screen.

The PowerPoint Creator:

A truly effective creator of PowerPoint presentations at Mass needs to be fully at home with the liturgy and not just with computer expertise. Certainly, the first section of our analysis of the data projector is of great importance, since it portrays the programme creator as a facilitator of the person's response in the liturgical celebration. As such, he or she has to be at one with the person, and know how to generate that person's best response through text and colour.

A Team of Operators:

Ideally we're talking about a team rather than one person, because absence or sickness on any one weekend will throw things into disarray. For a start, a data projector operator needs to be computer-savvy, to know the function of each component of the system and how effectively to set it up, ready to go. An operator also has to know how to react when there's a problem.

Operators are required to set the system up in plenty of time before the start of Mass, making sure that all the equipment works, and testing it out to see that the PowerPoint programme can be seen clearly. All this should not happen five minutes before Mass begins! In fact, a rehearsal of the presentation should be a matter of course. As a programme presenter, the operator should have an innate sense of timing of slides, and also when to mute the screen when it's not needed.

Finally, the operator has the task of turning the whole system off properly and of returning the retractable screens to their original base.



Thank you for your service at the Eucharist.



“All things set apart for use in divine worship should be truly worthy, becoming, and beautiful, signs and symbols of the supernatural world.”

Sacrosanctum Concilium 122

