

# Responding to Events

*Is the Liturgy seen as a path of holiness, an inner force of apostolic dynamism and of the Church's missionary outreach?*

At times of particular need, of rejoicing or sadness, many turn to the Church for spiritual support. Often it will be appropriate to respond to these circumstances with the Celebration of Mass. When permitted the texts for Masses for Various Needs and Occasions provide a rich resource for the liturgy on these occasions. Even when a Liturgy other than Mass is to be celebrated, for example an extended Liturgy of the Word, these texts and the accompanying lectionary provide a valuable resource to be drawn on.

Authentic Catholic spirituality is centred on communal celebration of the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ so that we may go out into the world to live that mystery, refreshed and restored as agents of God's love. The Christian is called into a broken world to witness to and work for the coming of the Kingdom of God. The Eucharist must feed those who celebrate: for their work in the healing of relationships, in the promotion of peace and justice, and in the proclamation of the Good News.

SPIRITUS ET SPONSA 6, CTM 138, 17

## Some Questions

*Though the crisis may be hypothetical society's 'yearning for the encounter with God' is often sparked by such moments – large or small. The ability for the church to recognise and respond is essential.*

- What experience do you have as a community of responding to crisis?
- What networks currently exist to enable local cooperation both ecumenically and with other faiths?
- What groups in the parish might be called upon to help?
- Is there a planning team linking school, parish and home?

## Further References

*Celebrating the Mass*

1–17, 138

*Spiritus et Sponsa*

11-14

## Practical Points

- Events can be shared moments of rejoicing. More often people turn to the Church and to faith at times of crisis: local, national or international. The crisis can be man-made or a natural disaster.
- An initial response may be a time of quiet prayer, a welcoming atmosphere and clear use of symbols.
- A formal liturgical response in collaboration with the local parish may be best a week after the original event allowing time for preparation and information.
- Mass may not be the most appropriate response when it is expected that many attending will be unable to participate fully.
- Other forms of liturgical prayer include: Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Hours, Prayer Vigil, Penitential Service.

**Liturgy  
Office**  
ENGLAND  
& WALES



## 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?