

5-1-1997

Liturgy in a multicultural community

Donald C. Nevile

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus>

Recommended Citation

Nevile, Donald C. (1997) "Liturgy in a multicultural community," *Consensus*: Vol. 23 : Iss. 1 , Article 18.

Available at: <http://scholars.wlu.ca/consensus/vol23/iss1/18>

This Book Reviews is brought to you for free and open access by Scholars Commons @ Laurier. It has been accepted for inclusion in Consensus by an authorized editor of Scholars Commons @ Laurier. For more information, please contact scholarscommons@wlu.ca.

stops and in church parlors after worship. (Now comes the line which makes this a genuine parable:) "If Jesus had lived in the 1990s, he would probably have raised a coffee mug, and said, 'Each time you do this, remember me'" (125).

I believe Jim Taylor is right. We need to be about the task of helping people be aware of the presence of God in all aspects of life, not just in esoteric "spiritual" moments. Starting with shoe laces and fire extinguishers is basic to that task. But the art of making these into media for God's presence is not very visible here.

Taylor is editor of Wood Lake Books and of the ministerial journal, *PMC: The Practice of Ministry in Canada*.

Eduard and Ladona Riegert
Waterloo, Ontario

"Liturgy in a Multicultural Community." American Essays in Liturgy

Mark B. Francis, C.S.V.

Edited by Edward Foley

Collegeville, Minn.: The Liturgical Press, 1991

78 pp. \$8.05

Another in the Collegeville Benedictines' series of essays on liturgy, the focus of the monograph is on multicultural worship, specifically as it grew out of studies and experiments conducted by the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. The writer, who has served parishes in Latin America, is presently on the faculty of CTU.

The initial thrust of this essay takes us beyond the familiar theology of the "cultural adaptation of the liturgy", as expressed in the work of Anscar Chupungco, to fundamental anthropological issues. He adopts Geertz's definition of culture as "a system of inherited concepts expressed in symbolic forms by means of which human beings communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about, and their attitudes toward life" (p. 11). He then points out the dangers and challenges of planning and leading liturgy in multicultural communities. His focus is on non-anglo North American communities which are required to use the Roman rite. However, as we will see, the application of his research can be taken beyond this narrow focus.

There is a very helpful chapter on cultural diversity in New Testament times and the challenges this presented to the early church, the problem presented by the great variety of languages in use; the Hebrew/Hellenist tension; and the issues of food. Subsequent chapters deal with the treatment of multicultural issues up to the time of the Council of Trent, and the Second Vatican Council.

Readers of the monograph will find the fourth chapter of greatest value. Here he discusses cultural issues that arise in multicultural parishes. He identifies the goal of multicultural worship as "helping people from a variety of cultural groups simultaneously to celebrate their faith in the liturgy" (p. 49). This is a surprising suggestion, and implies a different model of multicultural worship than most mainline traditions have considered. Although his examples represent typical Roman situations, i.e., Polish, Italian, and Spanish parishes, the model is applicable in other settings, for example, Baltic, German, Scandinavian, French, Asian, and Aboriginal.

This essay will be useful for Lutheran pastors who find themselves working in so-called "bilingual" parishes. His suggestions for multicultural worship will not be favourably received by those who prefer the model of exclusively unilingual, unicultural non-English parishes. Nevertheless, his suggestions warrant careful consideration by such pastors and congregations. This is especially the case, given the reality that most non-English congregations, immersed in an English-speaking milieu, are recognizably on a terminal course. Even though the original language can be retained for a generation or two in worship, still the second and third generations of such congregations are immersed in the host culture and language the other six days of the week. Francis recognizes the multicultural nature of such churches, and provides helpful suggestions for intercultural worship.

The essay ends with two appendices: the Roman Catholic "Guidelines for Multilingual Masses", and a useful bibliography.

Donald Nevile
Highwood Lutheran Church
Calgary, Alberta

Exploring Our Lutheran Liturgy: How and Why We Worship

Dennis R. Fakes
Lima, Ohio: C.S.S. Publishing Co., Inc., 1994
146 pp.

My first reaction was—who needs another book on the subject of the Lutheran liturgy? The author, by his own admission, struggles with the "why" of liturgical worship. He has shared this struggle in a meaningful way with the congregation he serves, and now, in this book, allows the reader to join in the quest to make sense of what we do in worship.

With an opening chapter on some of the basic ingredients (building, vestments, church year, etc.), in seven additional chapters he takes the reader through the basic Sunday liturgy (with Holy Communion) step-by-step. References are made to both the *Lutheran Book of Worship* and