



At the Annual Parish Meeting we complained about the change of time for the second Mass on Sunday, but nothing has done about it. Who makes the decisions about liturgical matters at St Paul's, and what is the basis for those decisions? Doesn't our opinion count?

Canon Law in the Episcopal Church prescribes that the Rector of the parish alone under the Bishop is the final authority in all liturgical matters (in diocesan missions it is the Bishop alone).

In November 1974 when Father Richard Lundberg, St Paul's Rector, had been appointed to a new parish, Bishop Montgomery asked me to come talk with the Vestry and other leadership persons. (James Jay, James Dvorak, and Helen Jablonski are the current parishioners who were present at that meeting which took place in the Guild Room.)

The 1970's in the Episcopal Church were a period of liturgical revision and the development of a new prayer book. It was a time of acrimonious controversy and bitter divisiveness in the Church on all levels. It is no exaggeration to say that parishes as well as dioceses and the national Church were torn asunder. It was very natural that St Paul's lay leaders asked what I would do about the liturgy if I were appointed Rector.

My answer was that as Rector of St Paul's – or any parish, for that matter – I would try to provide the type of liturgy that best met the needs of the majority of people who came to a given Mass on a Sunday-by-Sunday basis as long as it was:

- sacramentally Catholic and theologically orthodox
- done with integrity in one of the historic liturgical traditions
- corporate, i.e. incorporated the whole congregation.

I went on to say that I would always warmly welcome anyone at any liturgy, and – except for canonical parish officials – I would never ask people who did not attend on a Sunday-by-Sunday basis why they had not been present. However, those who did not come Sunday-by-Sunday (the commitment the Church requires to be in Good Standing and to maintain one's canonical membership) could not show up on occasion and then “call the shots.”

When I became Rector of St Paul's in February 1975 one of the first things I did was appoint a Liturgy Committee, which was chaired by Dr Rolf Gunnar. That spring we did a three-month series of “trial liturgies” at both the 8 am and 10.30 am Eucharists. Then those at 8 am asked for the *Anglican Missal* version of the 1928 Prayer Book rite (which easily became a traditional celebration of Rite I when canonically required on January 1, 1980), and those at 10.30 am asked for a more corporate celebration of Rite I. We followed the same procedure again in 1983-1984 – this time with Patricia Olderr as chair of the Liturgy Committee – when the now – 10.15 am congregation asked for Rite II.

As a result, in those difficult days when many parishes lost a substantial number of parishioners, conflict over the liturgy was never a problem at St Paul's.