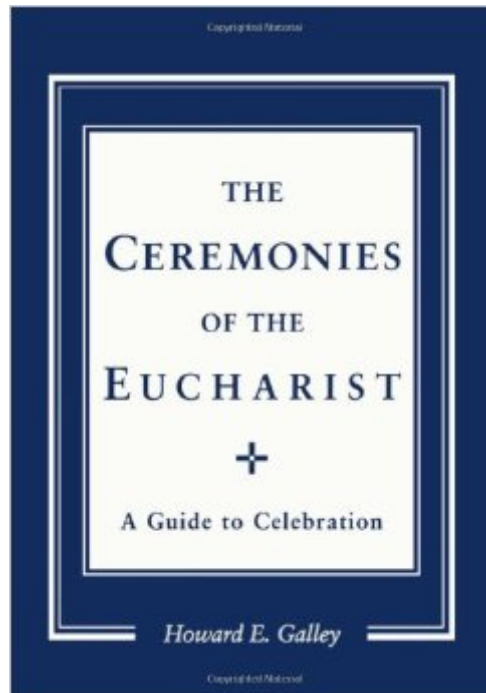


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The Ceremonies Of The Eucharist: A Guide To Celebration



Synopsis

Unlike liturgical manuals of the past, which were intended specifically for the use of the clergy, this book is directed to a wider audience—to members of parish worship committees, priests, organists and directors of music, lectors, deacons, cantors and other singers, bishops, altar guild members, acolytes—in short, to all who bear responsibility for the planning and conduct of public worship. So begins Howard Galley's classic guide to the Eucharistic liturgy, *The Ceremonies of the Eucharist*. Galley opens his formidable liturgical learning and veteran ecclesial experience for all worshippers to access. Throughout, he enhances his suggestions for practice with the rationale and historical background for his recommendations.

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Customer Reviews

The Ceremonies of the Eucharist is an excellent guide for those persons responsible for Eucharistic worship. It is particularly helpful for clergy and lay people seeking ways to improve and deepen the quality of their liturgy (worship services) through the introduction of well thought out and theologically sound ceremonies. Galley's book is intended largely for an Episcopal readership as he seeks to create the liturgical environment intended by the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. What makes this book especially useful is that he not only explains how things might be done but also discusses how differences in size of congregation will effect choices. Overall he achieves a good balance between formality and hospitality in worship. The book is Anglican in its spirituality and

breadth. Non-episcopals would find this book interesting as an additional resource in deciding what shape and style their worship might take.

This book walks Priest, Deacon, Acolyte and lay ministers through the liturgy in a parallel guide, so you can see what each person needs to be doing and what others are doing at the same time. The book also discusses why things are done the way they are and when there are different approaches which is preferable. Highly recommended.

The most appealing aspect of this book is that it allows everyone access to what is normally the province of the clergy. That is a good thing because it is often forgotten in churches, even the Episcopal Church, that liturgy is the work of the people, not something to be imposed from on high by the rector. In typical Anglican fashion, Galley attempts to walk the via media. He gives readers broad latitude in shaping their own liturgy while explaining what many Episcopalians can not answer: why do we do that? While some of the practices he endorses and not for everyone, this book is an excellent resource for anyone with an interest in the liturgy of the Episcopal Church.

Galley writes this ceremonial with broad applicability. It is useful to the layman/laywomen who assists as server, acolyte, thurifer, or lector (reader). His discussion is not so erudite as to be unintelligible to someone without seminary education. However he is so thorough and clear that a priest would be ill-advised to pass this book over. His synopsis (chapter 6) provides a complete walk through the entire eucharist from before the processional to the dismissal, and everything in between. It is presented in four columns, showing the concurrent liturgical actions of the celebrant, deacon, acolyte and other ministers. The ceremonial is written around the Book of Common Prayer (BCP) 1979, and assumes a parish that is not entirely low-church. Galley's real value is that this work is easily extended to other rites and forms, due in great part to his concise directions. Anyone of the Anglican persuasion should be interested in this, as it explains the action of the liturgy. Anyone from another denomination will find this a useful resource for comparison.

This book was a lifesaver when I was preparing for my first Eucharist. Definitely the best "middle-of-the-road" ceremonial guide, but it was still helpful for me as a traditional low-church type. Plus, while some books in the genre read like Ikea assembly instructions or income tax forms, Galley writes refreshingly well. Seminarians may also want to pick up the other two texts in the series (Holy Week/Easter and the Pastoral Liturgies).

Galley has a fairly comprehensive understanding of the liturgies of the Eucharist in the Episcopal Church, and writes a generally helpful guide for those who don't. It is of most use when taken together with other similar guides, like Michno's, and even Ritual Notes. Taken alone, the problem is that there is an expectation that everyone everywhere subscribes to the theology of the liturgical movement and the *novus ordo*. There is little acknowledgement of the fact that many parishes and missions within the Episcopal Church have a rich local tradition which is fed by liturgies which predate the liturgical movement, or disagree with the more casual and less formal style favored by the majority of the church. Many find that such an approach dilutes the sense of mystery and beauty that is integral to the celebration and service of the Divine Liturgy. The pervasive idea seems to be that the 'Golden Age' of liturgy was some time in the late fourth century, and that we should adapt our liturgies to fit into that norm and into the modern research which describes it, perhaps at the expense of being responsive to how the Spirit is teaching and calling us to worship. If the 'Golden Age' isn't in the here and now, formed and informed by the practice and theology of the whole Church throughout time and throughout the world, a syndrome of isolationism and revisionism, lethal to religion, creeps in.

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