

## **Why the RCL is killing churches: And what you can do about it**

### **Matthew S. C. Olver**

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Pastors and priests are weakening people's faith every Sunday, and they don't even realize it. Their secret weapon? [The Revised Common Lectionary](#) (RCL). The history and construction of the RCL [is easily accessible](#); I won't rehash the whole thing here. A few salient facts will put my thesis in context.

## **PART 1: Why the RCL is killing churches**

### **A little history**

Since at least the 7th century, the Mass lectionary of the Western Churches had nearly always proposed two readings: an "Epistle" and Gospel. Historically, minor propers joined these readings, usually drawn from the Psalms (Introit, Gradual, Alleluia or Tract, Sequence, Offertory, and Communion). Most of the new Reformation lectionaries omitted these propers in the 16th and 18th centuries, but many Anglo-Catholic churches began restoring them during the 19th century.

[As Derek Olson has highlighted](#), this older structure was such that, with the combination of the Office and Mass lectionaries, one basically heard the whole Bible in the course of a year. (In the 16th century, Thomas Cranmer retained [many traditional Mass lessons](#), but [created a new Office lectionary](#). As a result, the whole of the Bible was read each year *in the Office alone*.)

However, the average Christian wasn't saying the Office every day, whether before or after the 16th-century reformations. Vatican II hoped to address this issue, and the Roman Catholic Church thus bears primary responsibility for the three-year lectionary system, as opposed to the old one-year system. It was one of many liturgical reforms stemming from the Second Vatican Council's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, [Sacrosanctum Concilium](#) (Dec. 4, 1963).

The Council hoped to make the Sunday Mass a place for greater exposure to Scripture. As *Sacrosanctum Concilium* §51 says,

The treasures of the bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God's word. In this way a more representative portion of the holy scriptures will be read to the people in the course of a prescribed number of years.

Not long after the appearance of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the other Western churches took note and followed suit, all based upon the 1969 Roman model. The Episcopal Church's response was embodied in the [1979 BCP lectionary](#).

In contrast to the one-year model, most post-Vatican II lectionaries mandated four sets of lessons for Sundays and major feasts: a reading from the Old Testament (or Acts during Eastertide), a gradual Psalm, a New Testament Lesson, and a Gospel lesson. The Roman lectionary also includes the minor propers (Entrance chant, Sequence, Alleluia or tract, Offertory, and Communion), though they are not always required. The Gospels read each year follow a cycle: Year A is the Gospel of Matthew; Year B is the Gospel of Mark; and Year C is the Gospel of Luke. John is interspersed in all three years, especially in Christmas, Lent, and Eastertide, as well as in year B, since Mark's Gospel is much shorter.

### **The intention of the three-year lectionary**

The driving concern of this revision, along with the other Western ones that followed, was clearly *pastoral*. The prayerful reading and knowledge of Scripture is one of the basic building blocks of Christian growth in prayer, love, and holiness. Hence, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* argues that

to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of the sacred liturgy, it is essential to promote that warm and living love for Scripture to which the venerable tradition of both eastern and western rites gives testimony (§24).

This concern should not be forgotten. The change to vernacular lessons combined with three lessons and a portion of a psalm was a profound change indeed for most Catholics

who were used to the Tridentine Mass in Latin. This pastoral concern is *not* the object of the criticism of this essay.

Moreover, the reform of the lectionary was meant to aid congregational preaching. A noteworthy aspect of the post-Vatican II three-year lectionary was the thematic, and often typological, correspondence between the Old Testament lesson, Psalm, and Gospel chosen for each Mass. This principle was followed in the new three-year Eucharistic lectionary in the 1979 BCP.<sup>1</sup> The Christological unity of the Scriptures was in focus, automatically and naturally directing congregational preaching toward Jesus the Savior. What those lectionary choices “say” to the congregation — whether or not they were (or are) consciously acknowledged — is that all the Scriptures speak the same glorious word about God’s incarnate Word and Son.

### **The major weaknesses of the three-year lectionary**

I see a number of weaknesses in the three-year model, at least in the Anglican-Episcopal context. In this respect, the RCL does not shoulder all the blame; some of its weaknesses are common to most three-year lectionaries. I will begin with the general weaknesses of the three-year model, after which I’ll turn to the RCL specifically.

**1. The collect only rarely “collects” together the theme of the day.** Before, the first proper prayer for each Sunday and Feast Day brought together the themes of the reading. But with the advent of a new lectionary, the older prayers could no longer fulfill this function, especially since the compilers of the three-year lectionary did not make any attempt to tie together the theme of the Sundays — especially in Ordinary Time — in each of the three years (e.g., the lessons for the Fourth Sunday after Pentecost in Years

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<sup>1</sup> For example, on Advent III in Year A in the 1979 BCP (and in the RCL), the OT lesson from Isaiah 35 is a prophecy that speaks of the blind seeing, the deaf hearing, the lame leaping, and the dumb singing. The Gospel from the beginning of Matthew 11 recounts how the disciples of John come to Jesus and ask if he is “the one who is to come,” i.e., the Messiah. Jesus responds:

“Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is he who takes no offense at me” (Matt. 11:4-6).

Notice that each of the prophecies is fulfilled in Jesus’ summary of his own ministry, but with two addenda, upping the ante: not only is the cleansing of lepers added to the list, but the leaping of the lame has become the raising up of the dead. Psalm 147, also assigned, hits some of these same notes (e.g., the seeing of the blind) while additional complexity is added: “the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; / The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger; \* he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.”

A, B, and C are unrelated). I do not fault the compilers; such a task would have been enormously difficult. And sometimes, we should recall, the same Sundays in the major seasons do have similar themes because of the weight of tradition (i.e., Palm Sunday). But the result is that, more often than not, the Collect of the Day is unrelated to the lessons. It no longer speaks a single message with the readings of the day.

The net result is that a Sunday morning liturgy now brings together unrelated parts. In the Episcopal context, I would also note that, in the 1979 BCP, the order of the Holy Eucharist from the period after the Sermon through the Peace also feels rather disconnected. For us, then, the entire first part of the Eucharistic liturgy can feel like a grab bag of disparate parts. Careful hymn and other music choices can help mitigate against this weakness, but a weakness it remains.

**2. The psalm has become a fourth “lesson” in many parishes.** The place of psalmody in the previous prayer book eucharistic lectionaries was a significant aberration and, arguably, a weakness. [Cranmer provided a lengthy Introit psalm in 1549, but that dropped out in 1552, never to return.](#) We should keep in mind, however, that for Anglicans Sunday morning required the inclusion of Morning Prayer with its psalmody and two lessons along with ante-Communion: the Anglican Eucharist was thus a multi-psalm, four-lesson affair. As a result, until the 1928 American revision,

the congregation would have heard almost all of the Old Testament read on Sundays within the course of every seven years, and the New Testament (except for Revelation) within every period of two years and four months. The whole of the Psalter would have been read on Sundays almost twice every year. (Marion Hatchett, *Commentary on the American Prayer Book*, pp. 325-26)

The traditional Western minor propers were pretty easy to incorporate into the older BCP lectionary, providing a scriptural thread that bound the liturgy together at all of those “soft points” ([as the scholar Robert Taft, SJ, calls them](#)). In so doing, they wove a complex two-Testament picture of the day’s theme, rich in Psalmody.

In the American and English contexts, this all changed. The 1928 American BCP removed the requirement to have Morning Prayer on Sundays before Holy Eucharist. At the same time, many Church of England parishes ceased to observe Morning Prayer before Holy Communion, following a suggestion in their proposed 1928 Book of Common Prayer; although Parliament never formally approved the text, some churches

began using its forms. This change meant that, at least in the United States, England, and Wales, Anglicanism's multi-psalm, four-lesson Communion gave way to a scripturally impoverished service.

Thus, the introduction of a psalm into the eucharistic lectionary was a real strength of the 1979 BCP lectionary. But, in the course of my parochial ministry, I've observed a number of ways in which the benefits of this change are all but eliminated.

One way this happens is that the lector who reads the first lessons will also lead the recitation of the psalm. When this takes place, the lector often reads the psalm in a way so nearly identical to the first lesson that the psalm's nature as both hymn and prayer is almost completely obscured.

I have even heard a lector conclude the psalm with "The Word of the Lord," confusing all who are present into thinking that this is Scripture to be proclaimed (i.e., read aloud to the congregation) rather than prayed and sung.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, when the psalm is led by the lector (though the BCP would seem to indicate that it is the minister's role to lead the psalms — [see p. 582](#)), the 1979 BCP's directions about antiphonal recitation are often ignored: Alternation frequently occurs *halfway* through psalm verses, rather than occurring verse by verse. This means that still another rubric is ignored: "An asterisk divides each verse into two parts for reading or chanting. In reading, a distinct pause should be made at the asterisk" (pp. 582-83).

Similarly, many congregations choose never to chant or sing the psalm. And the difference between singing the psalms and dully reading them in a bored tone is enormous. To be honest, *reading* the psalms is about as weird as reading the text to a song or hymn, acting as though reading it is the same thing as singing it to music.

Christian worship without psalmody is an anomaly that should be resolved as quickly as possible, and the 1979 BCP and other three-year lectionaries helped with this problem. But we must not obscure the psalms' true nature as hymnic prayer. Many good resources exist for singing the psalms to plainchant or simplified Anglican chant. The latter is easier to sing than most hymns, especially when directed in a simple manner in the bulletin (much help is provided in *The Hymnal: The Accompaniment Edition*, vol. 2).

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<sup>2</sup> The RCL commentary rightly notes the following: "The psalm is a congregational response and meditation on the first reading, and is not intended as another reading" (§13).

**3. More is not always better.** The pastoral concern that motivated the new lectionary was that most people weren't praying the Daily Office and that they didn't know the Scriptures very well. Fair enough. The solution, however, does not seem to have done much to address this lack in most churchgoers.

The purpose of lectionaries, along with liturgies, creeds, and dogmatic statements, is among other things to provide for the church more concise articulations of "the fullness of saving doctrine" (to quote [the Rev. David Curry's essay on the three-year lectionary](#)). Thus, one has to ask whether *more* Bible in the liturgy has actually brought about a better knowledge of the Bible and, even more importantly, a better grasp of "the fullness of saving doctrine."

**4. Sometimes the Scripture lessons are at cross-purposes with eucharistic worship.** This fourth claim is a bit trickier to parse out, and I do so with a bit of trepidation. Here is also where the Catholic focus on the Sunday Eucharist may stand in tension with some Protestant focuses on a lengthy, pedagogical sermon.

My contention is this: the sermon must always point, even if in a somewhat oblique way, to the Eucharist. It must always direct hearers toward the Gospel of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus: the mystery disclosed in the Eucharist, the mystery to which the Father joins us by grace as we participate in the rite. The Eucharist has a central purpose: the adoration and glorification of God. Faithfulness to Jesus' command to "do this" and thus to offer to God worship "with reverence and awe" has a number of natural consequences that we can only assume God intends for his people: union and communion with Jesus Christ through participation in the rite and the reception of the eucharistic elements; understanding more of the Gospel; further realization of the unity of God's purposes in the Old and New Testaments; further knowledge of Christian doctrine and moral teaching; even the instigation of faith in unbelievers. Thus, I am not arguing that *learning* is in tension with the Eucharist. But what I am arguing is that the Eucharist is *not* the context in which people should be taught everything it behooves Christians to learn, particularly when it comes to the content of the Bible.

There are a lot of passages that never are read in Eucharistic worship, and rightly so: the rape of Tamar (Gen. 38); the bears eating up the children who mocked Elisha (2 Kgs. 2:23-24); prayer that God would dash the heads of our enemies' babies against the rocks (Ps. 137:9).

Let me say something here about the RCL specifically: There are portions of the Old Testament assigned in the RCL — particularly in Ordinary Time — that I think probably have no place in eucharistic worship but are nonetheless worthy of study at other times. Here are just two examples.

[Proper 6 in Year C assigns portions of 1 Kings 21](#), which includes Ahab’s gruesome murder of Naboth. One might think that this falls within a series of the stories of Ahab and Elijah, but that isn’t the case. The lectionary skips around 2 Kings and doesn’t provide a coherent narrative. But, even if it did, how does the reading of this text assist the congregation in the dutiful work and worship made possible by means of the Eucharist?

Likewise, [Proper 12 in Year B assigns 2 Samuel 11:1-15](#), where David sees Bathsheba bathing and commits adultery with her. It ends with David sending her husband Uriah to the front lines in order that he will be killed and David can take her. The resolution doesn’t come until the following Sunday. There is much to be gained from studying this passage. But when these narratives are so long, and only half can be read in one sitting, is this the place for such study?

Though he is describing the Canadian three-year lectionary, [Fr. Curry’s point is spot on](#): “The problem that the BAS [lectionary] faces is simply the impossibility of providing at the eucharist what can only be properly provided through the offices.”<sup>3</sup> [3] (Fr. Curry’s essay is well worth reading to consider other significant weaknesses in the three-year approach.)

## **PART 2: Why the RCL is killing churches: And what you can do about it**

In Part 1, I explained why I believe the RCL is killing churches. Although this lectionary (and others like it) are supposed to help develop biblical piety in congregations, I contend that most post-Vatican II lectionaries have not succeeded in their goal and that

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<sup>3</sup> [The commentary provided by the compilers of the RCL](#) argue in the opposite direction: “As the decline of biblical literacy proceeds apace, among adults as well as young Christians, the return to a greater selection of readings from the Bible may be the most important gift of these Roman and Common systems for the public proclamation of the word of God. At last we have recovered a liturgical way to lead the faithful followers of Christ through his birth, baptism, ministry, death, and resurrection, which is precisely what the sacraments have always sought to do” (§46).

they can even hinder the development of faith. In this post, I further my critique of the RCL and offer some suggestions for remedying our current lectionary confusions.

### **The changes in the RCL**

In 1983, under the auspices of the [Consultation on Common Texts](#), the Common Lectionary was produced and used, comments were made, and as a result the [Revised Common Lectionary](#) was published in 1992. Both were based on the post-conciliar Roman lectionary, but with some major changes. The RCL, we should note, was first authorized for trial use in the Episcopal Church in 1994 ([A0274](#)) and finally replaced the 1979 BCP lectionary in 2006 ([A077](#)). However, in 2012 the General Convention newly authorized the use of the 1979 BCP lectionary, at the discretion of the ecclesiastical authority ([B009](#)) so that a parish is free to use either lectionary.

So what's the problem with the RCL? In point of fact, the RCL only exacerbates the systemic problems of the three-year lectionary, which I recounted in the previous post: too much Scripture, often unrelated to the collect of the day, frequently chosen without sensitivity to the context or purposes of eucharistic worship. The length of the new lessons is a particular problem: a Gospel lesson will frequently contain two pericopes that are unrelated to each other. But in addition to these issues, the RCL introduced at least two additional weaknesses to the three-year lectionary in the 1979 BCP.

*First*, the RCL changed a great number of the lessons from the BCP (hence the felt need for the 2012 General Convention to [alter the lessons in the BCP for the services of the Triduum](#)). None of the changes seem to me an enhancement; indeed, the RCL sometimes proposes texts that are superficially “at odds” with each other, creating theological tensions that the preacher must then attempt to solve or leave unaddressed.

*Second*, two patterns ([titled “Track 1” and “Track 2” on lectionary inserts](#)) are provided for Ordinary Time in the Sundays following Pentecost and Trinity Sunday (the OT-Gospel connection is maintained during the Sundays in Ordinary Time between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday). In Track 1, OT lessons are read in a semi-continuous fashion, like the Epistles and Gospels, but now without any correspondence between the OT and the Gospel. The purpose of this is to allow “a larger variety of Old Testament themes to be presented” (§20) and the commentary claims somewhat disingenuously



that this new option carries out “the logic of the Roman model more consistently than it has done itself” (§31).

This scheme redressed the lack of the OT in previous lectionaries, and allayed concerns that the typological approach of older lectionaries evidenced Christian [supersessionism](#). On the latter point, even in Track 2 of the RCL, where the OT and Gospel passages are related, the connection between the two is far broader than in the Roman Catholic approach: more thematic and complementary than specifically typological.

Anecdotally, it seems to me that most seminaries pushed Track 1, and so it has become the dominant approach in most congregations. Thus, most people in our churches hear three disconnected lessons, plus a psalm, for nearly half of the calendar year.

Recall that the pastoral concern that motivated the new lectionary was both that most people weren't praying the Daily Office and that they didn't know the Scriptures very well. Fair enough.

But has the solution done much to address this lack in most churchgoers? I'm not so sure. Biblical and theological literacy in mainline churches remains low. As a result, public recitation of these huge swathes of Scripture, all of which are basically unrelated to each other, can easily have a detrimental effect on nascent faith. Why? I see at least two reasons.

*First*, a barely-catechized person (perhaps the new norm) is likely not in the right spiritual place to appropriate all of the Scripture heard in the span of 10 minutes. This is especially true if most of the passages receive no comment in the sermon. In fact, can any Christian really “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” all this Scripture in such a short period of time? And would that even be a worthy goal? Further, how many pastors can preach a rich 15-minute sermon on four unrelated passages?

*Second*, the barely-catechized person in the congregation lives in a cultural situation in which taking the Bible seriously is for many people strongly associated with being a “fundamentalist” and thus with reading the Bible “literally” (the definitions of both words are moving targets). Reading portions of Scripture without exposition to people who are still babes in spiritual infancy and who live in such a cultural context can often have the effect of *confirming their nascent mistrust of the Bible*.

“It was already wrong about slavery and women and sex and [add your favorite phobia],” they think. “No doubt the Bible is also misguided about a whole host of other matters and thus reflects primitive and unenlightened religious impulses that we as progressive and enlightened Westerners have left behind.”

For example, after preaching on Trinity Sunday in Year A, when Genesis 1:1-2:3 is the OT lesson, a parishioner approached me and revealed just how embarrassed he was. “Can you imagine if anyone was visiting today and heard us read this? They probably would have thought we believed in that seven-day creation nonsense.”

Where to begin? I told him that Augustine’s famous commentary [\*On the Literal Meaning of Genesis\*](#) was, in fact, a *figurative* reading of Genesis and that this was representative of the vast majority of (at least, pre-Reformation) interpretation. I also suggested that the primary reason we would read Genesis 1 on Trinity Sunday is because it tells us something important about God.

He looked at me blankly.

### **Suggestions for the pastor**

1. *Free yourself of the obligation to use all three lessons in Ordinary Time.*<sup>4</sup> In the major seasons, and always on Principal Feasts, all three lessons along with the psalm usually have a rich theological and thematic unity. Combine this with a solid sermon and good music choices, and the beautiful, polyphonic glory of this or that mystery of the Gospel will be displayed with marvelous resplendence. But at least in Ordinary Time, the best pastoral approach for most congregations is two lessons, along with the appropriate psalm (combined with the other suggestions that follow). And even though the psalm is not obligatory, *never replace the psalm with a hymn.*

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<sup>4</sup> The rubrics in the Holy Eucharist in Rite I and Rite II both read: “One or two Lessons, as appointed, are read, the Reader first saying”; this would appear to indicate that it is permissible to read only one lesson before the Gospel, since the 1979 BCP lectionary never appoints only one lesson and a Gospel. Marion Hatchett confirms this in his *Commentary on the American Prayer Book*: “In this [1979] revision a full liturgy of the word, including Old Testament, psalmody, new Testament, and Gospel is provided, though one of the two lessons which precede the Gospel may be omitted and the use of the psalm is not obligatory” (p. 326).

2. *Plan your sermons ahead of time.* The only way to omit a lesson wisely and in a pastorally responsible way is to plan ahead. The semi-continuous approach with the Epistle means that the preacher *can* preach through a book for a number of weeks. If this approach is being used, it makes sense to skip the OT lesson during the preaching series. Obviously, a similar thematic series could be preached on the OT and Gospel lessons. But the point remains: this choice only has spiritual and pedagogical possibilities if one plans with care.
3. *Use the BCP lectionary if your bishop allows it; consider very carefully whether to use RCL.* Thanks to Bishop Daniel Martins of the Diocese of Springfield (and, full disclosure, [a writer for Covenant](#)), General Convention gave permission for the use of the 1979 BCP lectionary with the permission of the ecclesiastical authority ([2012-B009](#)). So if your bishop gives permission, go for it. One additional benefit: current Gospel and lectionary books are only printed in the NRSV translation for the RCL, and not in the RSV. The former leaves much to be desired as a translation for reading in the Eucharist. Thus, if you use the BCP lectionary, you can still find used copies of the lectern and gospel books for use in your church.
4. *If using the RCL, always use Track 2 (where the OT and Gospel are connected).* This unity of the Scriptures is absolutely essential to a mature Christian faith. Jesus preached the Old Testament as a disclosure of himself; in the Emmaus account, Jesus' preaching of the Old Testament precedes the eucharistic disclosure of him as Messiah, God, and Savior. Asking the Sunday Eucharist to be the principal place where the average Christian learns the whole of the Bible is simply asking the engine of the Eucharist to pull freight it was never built to pull. This is the same problem with making the Eucharist the principal place of evangelism. People will learn more of the Bible by coming to Mass, just as people will hear the Gospel disclosed. But these are not the primary purposes of the Eucharist. Rather, these natural secondary results must be supplemented with the Office and Bible study on the one hand, and winsome evangelistic explications of the Gospel in the context of loving relationships on the other.
5. *Teach the Bible outside of Sunday Eucharist and always provide multiple ways for people to learn the Bible.* I heard one priest tell me that on Sunday mornings,

he teaches an adult education class on the Psalm appointed for the Mass. A different approach could be to preach on the OT/Gospel combo, and use just those two lessons with a sung psalm between them in the liturgy. Then, in adult education classes (whether Sundays or weekdays), teach through the Epistles in their full and unedited form (the lectionary often edits out difficult or possibly offensive portions). Episcopal churches are known for “adult forums” where all sorts of sexy contemporary topics are discussed. But one actually has to *know* the Christian faith — scripturally, doctrinally, morally, and liturgically — for such a discussion to really be fruitful and grace-giving. Otherwise, the situation is like what a friend described to me. His parish loves to explain that the Episcopal Church is the church “where [you don’t have to check your brain at the door.](#)”

“Yeah,” he replied, “but with the sermons I hear each week, it often helps.”

### **One final idea: A three-year experiment with the one-year lectionary**

I have long wondered whether it might be a useful exercise for a number of parishes to experiment with the use of the old one-year BCP lectionary in a conscious and deliberate way. To make the insights from such an experiment useful, it would need to be practiced by at least 10 or 15 parishes of various sizes, in various geographical locations, and of various churchmanships (for lack of a better word).

Real care would need to be given in the preparation of sermons, to be sure. But to make this available to the rest of the church, I would want to add an online component: each church that does this could keep a blog where the sermons are posted, where the priests produce some sort of weekly reflection (i.e., what it’s like to preach Advent with this lectionary compared with the three-year lectionary), and where a number of parishioners are given a place to also articulate their experience of the old lectionary. Since the three-year lectionary was constructed with the intention of teaching people more of the Bible, I think it is really important to determine if using less of the Bible in the Eucharist — but using it in a more focused and ordered way — may actually lead to greater biblical knowledge. Why? Because the intention of the older lectionary’s structure was to lead to “the fullness of saving doctrine,” or what the early Church called the *regula fidei* (“rule of faith”).

The Bible can only really be learned if it is presented to us by its ecclesial Guardian, who gives us the Creeds and Rule of Faith as the Scriptures come to their natural two-Testament conclusion (to use a phrase coined by Christopher Seitz). It is only *in and through these instruments* that we can read the Scriptures and thus come to know and love God's eternal Word and Son made flesh.

Is the goal of the Christian faith really the knowledge of the Bible? Not exactly. Knowing the Bible is, rather, one of the principal tools by which we know the trinitarian God of the Bible, whom Robert Jenson famously describes as "whoever raised Jesus from the dead, having before raised Israel from Egypt." The relationship and unity between these two events can only be known through praying the Scriptures, studying the Scriptures, joining in the celebration of the Eucharist, confessing one's sins, seeking after holiness, embracing the discipline of the Gospel, serving the poor, caring for widows and orphans, and visiting those in prison.

I believe wholeheartedly that in Christ's institution of the Eucharist, he meant it to be the center of the Church's worship life. But let us not try to reduce *everything* to the Eucharist or make it the literal means for accomplishing everything in the Christian life and mission.

Bishops, priests, deacons, catechists, licensed preachers: Teach the Bible. Teach the Bible. Teach the Bible.

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