C) THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORD OF GOD IN THE LITURGY

3. The many riches contained in the one word of God are admirably brought out in the different kinds of liturgical celebration and in the different gatherings of the faithful who take part in those celebrations. This takes place as [1] the unfolding mystery of Christ is recalled during the course of the liturgical year, as [2] the Church’s sacraments and sacramentals are celebrated, or as [3] the faithful respond individually to the Holy Spirit working within them. For then the liturgical celebration, founded primarily on the word of God and sustained by it, becomes a new event and enriches the word itself with new meaning and power. Thus in the Liturgy the Church faithfully adheres to the way Christ himself read and explained the Sacred Scriptures, beginning with the “today” of his coming forward in the synagogue and urging all to search the Scriptures. [emphasis added]

2. Liturgical Celebration of the Word of God

A) THE PROPER CHARACTER OF THE WORD OF GOD IN THE LITURGICAL CELEBRATION

4. In the celebration of the Liturgy the word of God is not announced in only one way nor does it always stir the hearts of the hearers with the same efficacy. Always, however, Christ is present in his word,2 as he carries out the mystery of salvation, he sanctifies humanity and offers the Father perfect worship.

Moreover, the word of God unceasingly calls to mind and extends the economy of salvation, which achieves its fullest expression in the Liturgy. The liturgical celebration becomes therefore the continuing, complete, and effective presentation of God’s word. [emphasis added]

The word of God constantly proclaimed in the Liturgy is always, then, a living and effective word through the power of the Holy Spirit. It expresses the Father’s love that never fails in its effectiveness toward us. [emphasis added]

B) THE WORD OF GOD IN THE ECONOMY OF SALVATION

5. When in celebrating the Liturgy the Church proclaims both the Old and New Testament, it is proclaiming one and the same mystery of Christ.

The New Testament lies hidden in the Old; the Old Testament comes fully to light in the New. Christ himself is the center and fullness of the whole of Scripture, just as he is of all

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1 1999 Vatican revision of the 1981 ICEL translation, prepared by Paul F. Ford with his interpolations in brackets. Only three further footnotes are provided here and they are original: Notes 2 and 3 are abbreviated and Note 4 is amplified.

2 . . . Mark 16:19–20; Matthew 28:20; St Augustine, “The Gospel is the mouth of Christ. He is seated in heaven yet does not cease to speak on earth” . . . .
liturgical celebration. Thus the Scriptures are the living waters from which all who seek life and salvation must drink. [emphasis added]

The more profound our understanding of the celebration of the liturgy, the higher our appreciation of the importance of God’s word. Whatever we say of the one, we can in turn say of the other, because each recalls the mystery of Christ and each in its own way causes the mystery to be carried forward. [emphasis added]

C) THE WORD OF GOD IN THE LITURGICAL PARTICIPATION OF THE FAITHFUL
6. In celebrating the Liturgy the Church faithfully echoes the “Amen” that Christ, the mediator between God and men and women, uttered once for all as he shed his blood to seal God’s new covenant in the Holy Spirit.

When God communicates his word, he expects a response, one that is, of listening and adoring “in Spirit and in truth” (John 4:23). The Holy Spirit makes that response effective, so that what is heard in the celebration of the Liturgy may be carried out in a way of life: “Be doers of the word and not hearers only” (James 1:22).

The liturgical celebration and the participation of the faithful receive outward expression in actions, gestures, and words. These derive their full meaning not simply from their origin in human experience but from the word of God and the economy of salvation, to which they refer. Accordingly, the participation of the faithful in the Liturgy increases to the degree that, as they listen to the word of God proclaimed in the Liturgy, they strive harder to commit themselves to the Word of God incarnate in Christ. Thus, they endeavor to conform their way of life to what they celebrate in the Liturgy, and then in turn to bring to the celebration of the Liturgy all that they do in life. [emphasis added]

3. The Word of God in the Life of the People of the Covenant

A) THE WORD OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH
7. In the hearing of God’s word the Church is built up and grows, and in the signs of the liturgical celebration God’s wonderful, past works in the history of salvation are presented anew as mysterious realities. God in turn makes use of the congregation of the faithful that celebrates the Liturgy in order that his word may speed on and be glorified and that his name be exalted among the nations.

Whenever, therefore, the Church, gathered by the Holy Spirit for liturgical celebration, announces and proclaims the word of God, she is aware of being a new people in whom the covenant made in the past is perfected and fulfilled. Baptism and confirmation in the Spirit have made all Christ’s faithful into messengers of God’s word because of the grace of hearing they have received. They must therefore be the bearers of the same word in the Church and in the world, at least by the witness of their lives.

3 St Jerome: “If, as St Paul says (1 Corinthians 1:24), Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God, anyone who is ignorant of the Scriptures, is ignorant of the power of God and his wisdom. For ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ”. . . .
The word of God proclaimed in the celebration of God’s mysteries does not only address present conditions but looks back to past events and forward to what is yet to come. Thus God’s word shows us what we should hope for with such a longing that in this changing world our hearts will be set on the place where our true joys lie.

B) THE CHURCH’S EXPLANATION OF THE WORD OF GOD

8. By Christ’s own will there is a marvelous diversity of members in the new people of God and each has different duties and responsibilities with respect to the word of God. Accordingly, the faithful listen to God’s word and meditate on it, but only those who have the office of teaching by virtue of sacred ordination or who have been entrusted with exercising that ministry expound the word of God. [emphasis added]

This is how in doctrine, life, and worship the Church keeps alive and passes on to every generation all that she is, all that she believes. Thus with the passage of the centuries, the Church is ever to advance toward the fullness of divine truth until God’s word is wholly accomplished in her.

C) THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE WORD OF GOD PROCLAIMED AND THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT [emphasis added throughout this section]

9. The working of the Holy Spirit is needed if the word of God is to make what we hear outwardly have its effect inwardly. Because of the Holy Spirit’s inspiration and support, the word of God becomes the foundation of the liturgical celebration and the rule and support of all our life.

The working of the Holy Spirit precedes, accompanies, and brings to completion the whole celebration of the Liturgy. But the Spirit also brings home to each person individually everything that in the proclamation of the word of God is spoken for the good of the whole gathering of the faithful. In strengthening the unity of all, the Holy Spirit at the same time fosters a diversity of gifts and furthers their multiform operation.

D) THE ESSENTIAL BOND BETWEEN THE WORD OF GOD AND THE MYSTERY OF THE EUCHARIST

10. The Church has honored the word of God and the Eucharistic mystery with the same reverence, although not with the same worship, and has always and everywhere insisted upon and sanctioned such honor. Moved by the example of its Founder, the Church has never ceased to celebrate his paschal mystery by coming together to read “what referred to him in all the Scriptures” (Luke 24:27) and to carry out the work of salvation through the celebration of the memorial of the Lord and through the sacraments. “The preaching of the word is necessary for the ministry of the sacraments, for these are sacraments of faith, which is born and nourished from the word.”

The Church is nourished spiritually at the twofold table of God’s word and of the Eucharist: from the one it grows in wisdom and from the other in holiness. In the word of God the divine covenant is announced; in the Eucharist the new and everlasting covenant is renewed. On the one hand the history of salvation is brought to mind by means of human sounds; on the other it is made manifest in the sacramental signs of the Liturgy.

It can never be forgotten, therefore, that the divine word read and proclaimed by the Church in the Liturgy has as its one purpose the sacrifice of the New Covenant and the banquet of grace,
that is, the Eucharist. The celebration of Mass in which the word is heard and the Eucharist is offered and received forms but one single act of divine worship. That act offers the sacrifice of praise to God and makes available to God’s creatures the fullness of redemption.

FIRST PART  THE WORD OF GOD IN THE CELEBRATION OF MASS
CHAPTER II  THE CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD AT MASS

1. The Elements of the Liturgy of the Word and their Rites

11. “Readings from Sacred Scripture and the chants between the readings form the main part of the liturgy of the word. The homily, the profession of faith, and the universal prayer or prayer of the faithful carry it forward and conclude it.”

A) THE BIBLICAL READINGS
12. In the celebration of Mass the biblical readings with their accompanying chants from the Sacred Scriptures may not be omitted, shortened, or, worse still, replaced by nonbiblical readings. For it is out of the word of God handed down in writing that even now “God speaks to his people” and it is from the continued use of Sacred Scripture that the people of God, docile to the Holy Spirit under the light of faith, is enabled to bear witness to Christ before the world by its manner of life. [emphasis added]

13. The reading of the Gospel is the high point of the liturgy of the word. For this the other readings, in their established sequence from the Old to the New Testament, prepare the assembly.

14. A speaking style on the part of the readers that is audible, clear, and intelligent is the first means of transmitting the word of God properly to the congregation. The readings, taken from the approved editions, may be sung in a way suited to different languages. This singing, however, must serve to bring out the sense of the words, not obscure them. On occasions when the readings are in Latin, the manner given in the Ordo cantus Missae is to be maintained. [emphasis added]

15. There may be concise introductions before the readings, especially the first. The style proper to such comments must be respected, that is, they must be simple, faithful to the text, brief, well prepared, and properly varied to suit the text they introduce.

16. In a Mass with the people the readings are always to be proclaimed at the ambo.

17. Of all the rites connected with the liturgy of the word, the reverence due to the Gospel reading must receive special attention. Where there is an Evangeliary or Book of Gospels that has been carried in by the deacon or reader during the entry procession, it is most fitting that the deacon or a priest, when there is no deacon, take the book from the altar and carry it to the ambo. He is preceded by servers with candles and incense or other symbols of reverence that may be customary. As the faithful stand and acclaim the Lord, they show honor to the Book of Gospels. The deacon who is to read the Gospel, bowing in front of the one presiding, asks and receives the blessing. When no deacon is present, the priest, bowing before the altar, prays inaudibly, Almighty God, cleanse my heart....
At the ambo the one who proclaims the Gospel greets the people, who are standing, and announces the reading as he makes the sign of the cross on forehead, mouth, and breast. If incense is used, he next incenses the book, then reads the Gospel. When finished, he kisses the book, saying the appointed words inaudibly.

Even if the Gospel itself is not sung, it is appropriate for the greeting The Lord be with you, and A reading from the holy Gospel according to..., and at the end The Gospel of the Lord to be sung, in order that the congregation may also sing its acclamations. This is a way both of bringing out the importance of the Gospel reading and of stirring up the faith of those who hear it.

18. At the conclusion of the other readings, The word of the Lord may be sung, even by someone other than the reader; all respond with the acclamation. In this way the assembled congregation pays reverence to the word of God it has listened to in faith and gratitude.

B) THE RESPONSORIAL PSALM
19. The responsorial psalm, also called the gradual, has great liturgical and pastoral significance because it is an “integral part of the liturgy of the word.” Accordingly, the faithful must be continually instructed on the way to perceive the word of God speaking in the psalms and to turn these psalms into the prayer of the Church. This, of course, “will be achieved more readily if a deeper understanding of the psalms, according to the meaning with which they are sung in the sacred Liturgy, is more diligently promoted among the clergy and communicated to all the faithful by means of appropriate catechesis.”

Brief remarks about the choice of the psalm and response as well as their correspondence to the readings may be helpful.

20. As a rule the responsorial psalm should be sung. . . .

21. The singing of the psalm, or even of the response alone, is a great help toward understanding and meditating on the psalm’s spiritual meaning.

To foster the congregation’s singing, every means available in each individual culture is to be employed. In particular, use is to be made of all the relevant options provided in the Order of Readings for Mass regarding responses corresponding to the different liturgical seasons.

22. When not sung, the psalm after the reading is to be recited in a manner conducive to meditation on the word of God.

The responsorial psalm is sung or recited by the psalmist or cantor at the ambo.

C) THE ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE READING OF THE GOSPEL
23. The Alleluia or, as the liturgical season requires, the verse before the Gospel, is also a “rite or act standing by itself.” It serves as the greeting of welcome of the assembled faithful to the Lord who is about to speak to them and as an expression of their faith through song.
The Alleluia or the verse before the Gospel must be sung and during it all stand. It is not to be sung only by the cantor who intones it or by the choir, but by the whole of the people together.

D) THE HOMILY

24. Through the course of the liturgical year the homily sets forth the mysteries of faith and the standards of the Christian life on the basis of the sacred text. Beginning with the Constitution on the Liturgy, the homily as part of the liturgy of the word has been repeatedly and strongly recommended and in some cases it is obligatory. As a rule it is to be given by the one presiding. The purpose of the homily at Mass is that the spoken word of God and the liturgy of the Eucharist may together become “a proclamation of God’s wonderful works in the history of salvation, the mystery of Christ.” Through the readings and homily Christ’s paschal mystery is proclaimed; through the sacrifice of the Mass it becomes present. Moreover Christ himself is always present and active in the preaching of his Church.

Whether the homily explains the text of the Sacred Scriptures proclaimed in the readings or some other text of the Liturgy, it must always lead the community of the faithful to celebrate the Eucharist actively, “so that they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by faith.” From this living explanation, the word of God proclaimed in the readings and the Church’s celebration of the day’s Liturgy will have greater impact. But this demands that the homily be truly the fruit of meditation, carefully prepared, neither too long nor too short, and suited to all those present, even children and the uneducated.

27. Any necessary announcements are to be kept completely separate from the homily; they must take place following the prayer after Communion.

E) SILENCE [emphasis added throughout this next section]

28. The liturgy of the word must be celebrated in a way that fosters meditation; clearly, any sort of haste that hinders recollection must be avoided. The dialogue between God and his people taking place through the Holy Spirit demands short intervals of silence, suited to the assembled congregation, as an opportunity to take the word of God to heart and to prepare a response to it in prayer.

Proper times for silence during the liturgy of the word are, for example, before this liturgy begins, after the first and the second reading, after the homily.

F) THE PROFESSION OF FAITH

29. The symbol, creed or profession of faith, said when the rubrics require, has as its purpose in the celebration of Mass that the assembled congregation may respond and give assent to the word of God heard in the readings and through the homily, and that before beginning to celebrate in the Eucharist the mystery of faith it may call to mind the rule of faith in a formulary approved by the Church. [emphasis added]

G) THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER OR PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

30. In the light of God’s word and in a sense in response to it, the congregation of the faithful prays in the universal prayer as a rule for the needs of the universal Church and the local community, for the salvation of the world and those oppressed by any burden, and for special categories of people.
The celebrant introduces the prayer; a deacon, another minister, or some of the faithful may propose intentions that are short and phrased with a measure of freedom. In these petitions “the people, exercising its priestly function, makes intercession for all men and women,” with the result that, as the liturgy of the word has its full effects in the faithful, they are better prepared to proceed to the liturgy of the Eucharist. [emphasis added]

31. For the prayer of the faithful the celebrant presides at the chair and the intentions are announced at the ambo.

The assembled congregation takes part in the prayer of the faithful while standing and by saying or singing a common response after each intention or by silent prayer.

2. Aids to the Proper Celebration of the Liturgy of the Word

A) THE PLACE FOR THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD
32. There must be a place in the church that is somewhat elevated, fixed, and of a suitable design and nobility. It should reflect the dignity of God’s word and be a clear reminder to the people that in the Mass the table of God’s word and of Christ’s body is placed before them. The place for the readings must also truly help the people’s listening and attention during the liturgy of the word. Great pains must therefore be taken, in keeping with the design of each church, over the harmonious and close relationship of the ambo with the altar.

33. Either permanently or at least on occasions of greater solemnity, the ambo should be decorated simply and in keeping with its design.

Since the ambo is the place from which the word of God is proclaimed by the ministers, it must of its nature be reserved for the readings, the responsorial psalm, and the Easter Proclamation (the Exsultet). The ambo may rightly be used for the homily and the prayer of the faithful, however, because of their close connection with the entire liturgy of the word. It is better for the commentator, cantor, or director of singing, for example, not to use the ambo.

34. In order that the ambo may properly serve its liturgical purpose, it is to be rather large, since on occasion several ministers must use it at the same time. Provision must also be made for the readers to have enough light to read the text and, as required, to have modern sound equipment enabling the faithful to hear them without difficulty.

B) THE BOOKS FOR PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD IN THE LITURGY
35. Along with the ministers, the actions, the allocated places, and other elements, the books containing the readings of the word of God remind the hearers of the presence of God speaking to his people. Since in liturgical celebrations the books too serve as signs and symbols of the higher realities, care must be taken to ensure that they truly are worthy, dignified and beautiful.

36. The proclamation of the Gospel always stands as the high point of the liturgy of the word. Thus the liturgical tradition of both West and East has consistently made a certain distinction between the books for the readings. The Book of Gospels was always fabricated and decorated with the utmost care and shown greater respect than any of the other books of readings. In our
times also, then, it is very desirable that cathedrals and at least the larger, more populous parishes and the churches with a larger attendance possess a beautifully designed Book of Gospels, separate from any other book of readings. For good reason it is the Book of Gospels that is presented to a deacon at his ordination and that at an ordination to the episcopate is laid upon the head of the bishop-elect and held there.

37. Because of the dignity of the word of God, the books of readings used in the celebration are not to be replaced by other pastoral aids, for example, by leaflets printed for the preparation of the readings by the faithful or for their personal meditation.

CHAPTER III
OFFICES AND MINISTRIES IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD WITHIN MASS

1. The Function of the President at the Liturgy of the Word

2. The Role of the Faithful in the Liturgy of the Word

44. Christ’s word gathers the people of God as one and increases and sustains them. “This applies above all to the liturgy of the word in the celebration of Mass, where there are inseparably united the proclamation of the death of the Lord, the response of the people listening, and the very offering through which Christ has confirmed the New Covenant in his Blood, and in which the people share by their intentions and by reception of the sacrament.” For “not only when things are read ‘that were written for our instruction’ (Romans 15:4), but also when the Church prays or sings or acts, the faith of those taking part is nourished and their minds are raised to God, so that they may offer him rightful worship and receive his grace more abundantly.”

45. In the liturgy of the word, the congregation of Christ’s faithful even today receives from God the word of his covenant through the faith that comes by hearing, and must respond to that word in faith, so that they may become more and more truly the people of the New Covenant.

The people of God have a spiritual right to receive abundantly from the treasury of God’s word. Its riches are presented to them through use of the Order of Readings, the homily, and pastoral efforts.

For their part, the faithful at the celebration of Mass are to listen to the word of God with an inward and outward reverence that will bring them continuous growth in the spiritual life and draw them more deeply into the mystery which is celebrated.

46. As a help toward celebrating the memorial of the Lord with eager devotion, the faithful should be keenly aware of the one presence of Christ in both the word of God — it is he himself “who speaks when the Sacred Scriptures are read in the Church” — and “above all under the Eucharistic species.” [emphasis added]

47. To be received and integrated into the life of Christ’s faithful, the word of God demands a living faith. Hearing the word of God unceasingly proclaimed arouses that faith. [emphasis added]
The Sacred Scriptures, above all in their liturgical proclamation, are the source of life and strength. As the Apostle Paul attests, the Gospel is the saving power of God for everyone who believes. Love of the Scriptures is therefore a force reinvigorating and renewing the entire people of God. All the faithful without exception must therefore always be ready to listen gladly to God’s word. When this word is proclaimed in the Church and put into living practice, it enlightens the faithful through the working of the Holy Spirit and draws them into the entire mystery of the Lord as a reality to be lived. The word of God reverently received moves the heart and its desires toward conversion and toward a life resplendent with both individual and community faith, since God’s word is the food of Christian life and the source of the prayer of the whole Church. [emphasis added]

48. The intimate connection between the liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the Eucharist in the Mass should [1] prompt the faithful to be present right from the beginning of the celebration, to take part attentively, and to prepare themselves in so far as possible to hear the word, especially by learning beforehand more about Sacred Scripture. That same connection should also [2] awaken in them a desire for a liturgical understanding of the texts read and a readiness to respond through singing.

When they hear the word of God and reflect deeply on it, Christ’s faithful are enabled to respond to it actively with full faith, hope, and charity through prayer and self-giving, and not only during Mass but in their entire Christian life. [emphasis added]

3. Ministries in the Liturgy of the Word

49. Liturgical tradition assigns responsibility for the biblical readings in the celebration of Mass to ministers: to readers and the deacon.

50. It pertains to the deacon in the liturgy of the word at Mass to proclaim the Gospel, sometimes to give the homily, as occasion suggests, and to propose to the people the intentions of the prayer of the faithful.

52. The liturgical assembly truly requires readers. Proper measures must therefore be taken to ensure that there are certain suitable laypeople who have been trained to carry out this ministry. Whenever there is more than one reading, it is better to assign the readings to different readers, if available.

53. In Masses without a deacon, the function of announcing the intentions for the prayer of the faithful is to be assigned to the cantor, particularly when they are to be sung, to a reader, or to someone else.

54. Those who carry out the ministry of reader just for the occasion or even regularly but without institution may go to the ambo in ordinary attire, but this should be in keeping with the customs of the different regions.
55. “It is necessary that those who exercise the ministry of reader . . . be truly suited and carefully prepared, so that the faithful may develop a warm and living love for Sacred Scripture from listening to the sacred readings.”

Their preparation must above all be spiritual, but what may be called a technical preparation is also needed. The spiritual preparation presupposes at least a biblical and liturgical formation. The purpose of their biblical formation is to give readers the ability to understand the readings in context and to perceive by the light of faith the central point of the revealed message. The liturgical formation ought to equip the readers to have some grasp of the meaning and structure of the liturgy of the word and of the significance of its connection with the liturgy of the Eucharist. The technical preparation should make the readers more skilled in the art of reading publicly, either with the power of their own voice or with the help of sound equipment.

56. The psalmist, or cantor of the psalm, is responsible for singing, responsorially or directly, the chants between the readings — the psalm or other biblical canticle, the gradual and Alleluia, or other chant. The psalmist may, as occasion requires, intone the Alleluia and verse.

For carrying out the function of psalmist it is advantageous to have in each ecclesial community laypeople with the ability to sing and read with correct diction. The points made about the formation of readers apply to cantors as well.

57. The commentator also fulfills a genuine liturgical ministry, which consists in presenting to the congregation of the faithful, from a suitable place, relevant explanations and comments that are clear, of marked sobriety, meticulously prepared, and as a rule written out and approved beforehand by the celebrant.
58. On the basis of the intention of the Second Vatican Council, the Order of Readings provided by the Lectionary of the Roman Missal has been composed above all for a pastoral purpose. . . .

The prolonged use of this Order of Readings to proclaim and explain Sacred Scripture in the Eucharistic celebration will, it is hoped, prove to be an effective step toward achieving the objective stated repeatedly by the Second Vatican Council.4

59. The decision on revising the Lectionary for Mass was to draw up and edit a single, rich, and full Order of Readings that would be in complete accord with the intent and prescriptions of the Second Vatican Council. . . .

60. The present Order of Readings for Mass, then, is an arrangement of biblical readings that provides the faithful with a knowledge of the whole of God’s word, in a pattern suited to the purpose. Throughout the liturgical year, but above all during the seasons of Easter, Lent, and Advent, the choice and sequence of readings are aimed at giving Christ’s faithful an ever-deepening perception of the faith they profess and of the history of salvation. . . .

61. The celebration of the Liturgy is not in itself simply a form of catechesis, but it does contain an element of teaching. The Lectionary of the Roman Missal brings this out and therefore deserves to be regarded as a pedagogical resource aiding catechesis.

This is so because the Order of Readings for Mass aptly presents from Sacred Scripture the principal deeds and words belonging to the history of salvation. As its many phases and events are recalled in the liturgy of the word, it will become clear to the faithful that the history of salvation is continued here and now in the representation of Christ’s paschal mystery celebrated through the Eucharist.

4 [Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution, Missale Romanum (Promulgation of the Roman Missal Revised by Decree of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council) 3 April 1969:

According to the decree of the Second Vatican Council, that “a more representative portion of the holy Scriptures be read to the people over the course of a prescribed number of years,” the Sunday readings are arranged in a cycle of three years. In addition, on Sundays and all the major feasts the epistle and gospel are preceded by an Old Testament reading or, at Easter, by readings from Acts. This is meant to provide a fuller exposition of the continuing process of the mystery of salvation, as shown in the words of divine revelation. These broadly selected biblical readings, which set before the faithful on Sundays and holydays the most important part of sacred Scripture, are complemented by other parts of the Bible read on other days.

All this has been planned to arouse among the faithful a greater hunger for the word of God. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this hunger will seem, so to speak, to impel the people of the New Covenant toward the perfect unity of the Church. We are fully confident that under this arrangement both priest and faithful will prepare their minds and hearts more devoutly for the Lord’s Supper and that, meditating on the Scriptures, they will be nourished more each day by the words of the Lord. In accord with the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, all will thus regard sacred Scripture as the abiding source of spiritual life, the foundation for Christian inspiration, and the core of all theological study.]
63. Pastors may wish to respond specifically from the word of God to the concerns of their own congregations. Although they must be mindful that they are above all to be heralds of the entire mystery of Christ and of the Gospel, they may rightfully use the options provided in the Order of Readings for Mass. This applies particularly to the celebration of a ritual or votive Mass, a Mass in honor of the Saints, or one of the Masses for various needs and occasions. . . .