



Down in the valley, God asked the prophet Ezekiel a mighty question: 'Mortal, can these dry bones live?' (Ezekiel 37:3). Today, this question is being posed once more to those who are charged with the preparation and celebration of the Sunday liturgy--the assembly that celebrates, the ministers from within that assembly who prepare and serve, and those ordained as priests or bishops who preside. We have a come a long way since the early days of the conciliar reform of the liturgy. Assemblies respond and sing, the word is proclaimed with dignity and reverence, careful attention is given to environment and season, and all come to the communion table. Many assemblies strive to realize fully week after week the vision of the Council: that the eucharistic liturgy be seen, heard, felt, and smelt as the 'summit toward which the activity of the church is directed . . . the source from which all its power flows.' This is critical work if we are utterly convinced that 'the preeminence of the church is present in the full, active participation of all God's holy people in these liturgical celebrations.' But many still know liturgical assemblies that are but shadows of who they are called to be and celebrations are slivers of what they could be. Many stand at the brink of the valley and behold dry bones. And when we come to the eucharistic prayer, named the central prayer of the Sunday liturgy, we behold very dry bones indeed. The question is put forth: Can these dry bones live? We have come to realize that liturgy is something people do, something people live. The eucharistic prayer is more than its words. It is a way of praying and living. What lies in the ritual book must be enlivened when we gather. We come together and breathe life into our rituals and their words. We can do this because we have first been sealed in the Spirit, the one who aids us in our weakness to pray 'that the very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words' (Romans 8:26). --from Chapter 1

When changes happen to the Catholic Mass, opinions are strong and diverse. Everyone feels in some way that the Mass is theirs. It is. Or is it? Whose Mass is it? And what should people do to claim it? Whether or not adult Catholics attend Mass regularly, they strongly bond with it. Within a single generation, English-speaking Catholics experienced the Second Vatican Council's authorization for the first overhaul of the liturgy in four hundred years, and then, in 2011, they prepared for and implemented a revised vernacular translation. Each of these two events awakened strong feelings as people gradually became aware that someone else's decision was going to affect the cornerstone of their spiritual life. In *Whose Mass Is It?* Paul Turner examines the impact of the Mass, the connections it makes, and its purpose in the lives of believers.