

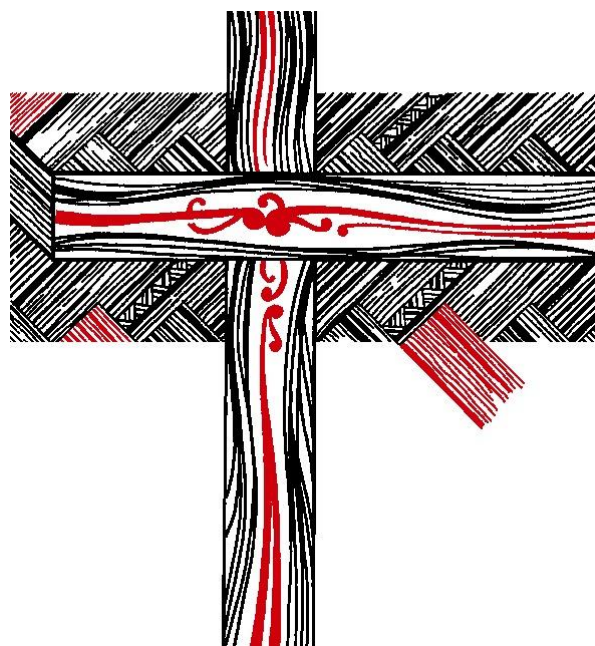
## BEGINNINGS: EUCHARIST

The 'Eucharist'—Lord's Supper, Holy Communion, Mass, whatever name we use for it—is in reality two ancient services, joined at The Peace (NZPB/HKMOA 419, 466, 485). One was a service of gathering and sharing in prayer and scripture, technically called 'the synaxis'— from the same Greek word from which we get 'synod'— simply meaning 'coming together'.

The second was the Passover rite, in which the Hebrew people came together and re-presented (presented again) the saving acts of God in their history: our Great Prayer of Thanksgiving.

In Lent in particular, and to a lesser extent Advent, we should generate and observe a change of mood in the shift from one section to the other, with the synaxis more reflective and penitential. The thanksgiving itself should always be an outpouring of joy, foretaste of the eschatological banquet. This is even the case at a Requiem Mass, though of course the joy of resurrection-hope is deeply tinged with the sorrow of human loss.

In many Anglican liturgies, such as the US 1979 *Book of Common Prayer* (see the rubric on p. 330) and the *Prayer Book for Australia* (rubric p. 126) the option of delaying confession and absolution until after the breaking open of the word is identified. To do this can be a powerful vehicle of penitence: in the "purple seasons" we should play with the NZPB/HKMOA to enable this more penitential feel.



As you will see in my writings it is my belief we should use our bodies to express this change in relationship to God. If aching joints permit we should enact the journey from mainly God's kneeling people to usually God's standing people (with one or two parentheses in the middle). More of that later.

**But for now back to the two ancient liturgies/services.**

The two liturgies are joined at the Peace. This is not 'Hello, how are the mokopuna?' but 'May Peace, God's Peace for which we long, break into your life now, as we share in this foretaste of the banquet which is yet to come'.

With this in mind, then, let us in the weeks to come enter into exploration of our joy-filled celebrations. As we do so may we celebrate each Eucharist with heightened joy and deeper love for this vehicle of grace and gospel, the sacred drama God's Spirit has given us.



## Diocese of Dunedin

Responding to God's Call in Otago and Southland:  
Faith Communities reading the Bible, praying, living out the life of Jesus Christ