

CD 766.RA- Worship in the Korean Context  
Fall, 2006  
Prof.: Dr. Jintae Kim  
Student:

## Worship Service Evaluation

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Date & Time: Dec 12, 2006 Tuesday 8:30 a.m.- 9:00 a.m.  
Church: Lady of Mount Carmel (Tenafly, NJ)- Catholic  
Type of Service: Weekday Service  
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### 1. The church and atmosphere

“Click, click, click.” When I first walked in, I saw two children with white hooded robes trying to light the candles next to the pulpit. Finally they were successful. The sanctuary is fairly large. I estimate that it is a 500-600 seat capacity room. There was a wholesome brightness to the room since there are many tall stained glass windows flanking the sides. The ceiling and most of the walls had white paint which added to the glow of the room. Centered and raised is a cross and a figure portraying Jesus with hands raised and fully clothed looking fairly triumphant. I was surprised by this because I thought I would see a portrayal of Jesus on the cross half-naked and suffering. Yet this picture of a living Jesus added to a positive atmosphere to the room. There were only about 30 people in the room but it did not make the room feel sparse because this is a weekday morning meeting. People who came today were people who wanted to come and be blessed so the room felt in a way ‘full’.

### 2. Worship Order

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|------|---|
| 8:30 | Candle lighting with Introduction<br>The Father came out and as he walked recited something that the people responded by stating something. |
| 8:35 | Father recited and explained that we are celebrating the feast of Guadeloupe to honor Mary. He welcomed people and said “Good morning”.     |
| 8:40 | Father gave a 3-5 minute message.   |
| 8:45 | More recitations and responsive reading   |
| 8:50 | Prayers   |

8:55

Communion

### 3. Evaluation

#### 1) Basic factors

A. Did the worship glorify God?

: Yes. There was a lot of emphasis on Mary. Yet many of the prayers and recitations stated "Glory to God", etc. Only God knows since I am not familiar with this kind of worship service but the people seemed sincere who were saying the prayers and I think it came from their hearts.

B. Was the worship Christ-centered?

: The priest spoke of the journey towards Christmas yet there was as much or higher emphasis on Mary. "Have you considered how many images of Mary there are?" (Presumably in the Scriptures he was asking about.) He answered his rhetorical question by saying 73 images of Mary. There was some mention of Jesus in the prayers and recitation.

C. Were people inspired?

: People actively participated in the service through response reading and form prayers. Since it is an older group of people (mostly in their 60's), I can not gauge whether they were inspired or not because there was not a lot of obvious displays of emotion. Yet I would not be surprised if they walked away inspired because this is the form of worship that they are used to.

D. Was the worship moved by the Spirit?

: The service proceeded in a strict order and there did not seem to be any deviation from it yet I think I sensed the Holy Spirit in the beginning and during the communion portion of the service.

#### 2) Emphasis

A. Emphasis on Mary and how much *she* suffered in life

a. Highly liturgical

a) Liturgical responsive readings

: No songs, no music

b. Use of Creeds, the Lord's Prayer.

c. Visual signs

- a) Forms: figurines give symbolism
- b) Statues of Mary
- c) Cross

B. Message

- a. Sequence: middle
- b. Content

- a) Emphasized going out and doing the good that we've been delaying to do
  - b) Very short
- c. Time: 3-5 minutes

C. Frequent Responsive Readings and Prayer

D. Not Spontaneous Yet Participatory

- a. Variety of participation by the congregation
  - a) People recited back or responded
  - b) People bowed down and stood and sat

3) Movement of the service

A. Very cohesive

- a. No Music
- b. Sermon
  - : The message seemed to fit their advent calendar.
- c. Sense of direction
  - : Clear understanding of the order of the service for participants but not for me since I am not familiar with it.

B. Well prepared service

- : It was like clock-work. It was evident that the priest was experienced at conducting these services.

C. Variety of pace and it did not seem slow

: There were pauses inserted intentionally to give people time to meditate or pray. It seemed to briskly move along but not too quickly or too slowly.

#### D. Balance

##### a. Silence and Sound

: Service began and ended with a warm greeting and a warm send off. It seemed like a friendly neighborhood catholic church.

#### E. Conclusion

Concluded with the father saying to go out and be blessed.

#### 4) Weakness

##### A. Impossible for a newcomer to the catholic tradition to readily participate

##### a. There were no pew bibles or recitation books

a) When I entered I looked at the pews and there was nothing to aid me

b) Yet everyone else seemed to have memorized everything

c) I just mimicked everyone else when they kneeled, stood or sat. I am glad I sat in the back because that way I can see what people in front of me are doing. Otherwise I would not have been able to participate readily.

##### B. Sermon

a. There was a large emphasis on Mary because she seems very accessible but I would like to have heard more about Jesus.

#### 4. Conclusion

Conspicuously missing was music or singing of any kind. The service sounded more like chanting and did not have a "happy, happy" tone yet it was hopeful and not at all in a depressing tone. It was reverential but because of the priest's voice inflection it was uplifting.

From this experience, I feel an appreciation and respect for how Catholics worship. The service culminates with the communion and my impression was that the service

although it seemed routine to me was precious to the older saints who participated as fully as they could as they have probably done since they were as young as the children who aided the priest.

There were bells rung during the introduction of the communion when the priest mentioned the bread (large round wafer) and then the wine. My guess is that it has something to do with their understanding of transubstantiation. For those who participated with a sincere heart there was richness in all the service's mysteries.