

Timeline	Building	Altar	Text	Communion	Evidence
Mid 1 st C <i>Underground church</i>	Room in a house.	At the Last Supper – Roman style dining, probably a table surrounded by three couches.	Words of thanksgiving (to Father for Jesus) over the cup <i>first</i> then over the loaf; after communion a longer thanksgiving prayer which prophets can improvise as long as they are able.	A sign that the worshippers are members of one scattered church body. Evening service with meal, separate from morning psalms. Sunday is a working day.	Didache Luke I Corinthians
1 st -3 rd C <i>Underground church</i>	Room in a house.	Probably a table on a raised platform at the east end of the room.	Scripture. Sermon. Prayer of the Faithful. Spontaneous prayers and thanksgiving: presider speaks “as he is able” and the people reply AMEN.	Taken home by families for the sick and weekday communion – little restriction on handling the Blessed Sacrament. Superstitions creep in!	Matthew, Mark Paul, Acts Justin’s 1 st Apology #65-66 Dura-Europos site, Syria Writings of Tertullian Prayer of Hippolytus
AD 313 onwards <i>Imperial Christianity</i>	Basilica facing EAST Limited width – wooden beams make roof. Bema half-way down.	At the apse, or centrally over relics (so St Peter’s in Rome faces West to accommodate this).	Begins to be written for wider use. Latin gradually replaces Greek.	Mass only on Sundays, feasts and saints’ days. Reservation in private houses suppressed.	Buildings in Rome and elsewhere. St Augustine
Early monasticism	Parallel choirs facing each other on North and South walls of chapel.		Gregory the Great’s 604 Eucharistic Prayer is basis for the “Roman Canon”	Daily <i>communion</i> but not daily Mass.	Pachomius Rule of the Master
Eastern Orthodoxy (definitive split from Papal authority in 1054)	Basilica with icon screen (iconostasis). Often a cross with equal length arms, central dome.	Behind icon screen – Gospel and communion presented to people through doors.	Languages other than Latin are used in the East. Texts of St Basil and St John Chrysostom used.	Communion services on Wednesday and Friday without Mass.	Continuing customs and buildings in the East today.
Gothic and Romance	Flying buttresses allow new kinds of construction. More elaborate buildings – perhaps with a choir between people and altar, or beyond the altar.	Accentuated by architecture. Rood screens, to protect sanctuary from other use. Side altars so each priest can say his own Mass in the morning.	Diversity of texts, each place has its own form of words in local books. In 12 th Century, the new Franciscans copy Rome, Dominicans standardise their own book format.	Distribution of chalice lessens (practical worries about spillage). Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament develops but people stop receiving communion out of fear.	Great European Cathedrals (Chartres, Notre Dame etc.) St Thomas Aquinas on Adoration. Franciscan and Dominican manuscripts.
The rise of printing. Council of Trent in session 1543-1563.	Catholic churches in Wales & England before Henry VIII become Anglican churches.	Rituals standardised. Rood screens removed to increase visibility. Altar rails come gradually, especially 19 th Century.	Standard Latin text for whole Catholic world, except 200 year heritage (e.g. Dominicans).	Communion is received kneeling. Laity are not to receive the chalice.	Documents of the Council of Trent. Missal of Pius V, issued in 1570. Clement VIII’s update, 1604.

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Pius X (1903-1914). Early 20 th Century.	Catholics free to build churches in the UK again, often as inconspicuous halls pending future work.	Typical altar: against wall, ornate decoration, "big six" candles, tabernacle.	"Dialogue Mass" permitted in 1922, so people say what only the server previously said.	Encourages frequent communion and earlier 1 st communion for children (at 7, the "age of reason").	Papal documents, e.g. <i>Quam Singulari</i> .
Teaching of Vatican II (1962-1965) and official liturgical instructions from the Vatican which were then issued.	"Noble simplicity" with prominent features: altar, ambo, presider's chair. Tabernacle to be in a place of honour and prominence, ideally in a separate chapel for ease of access and devotion.	Altar as the central focus of a church as place of sacrifice; placed so priest presiding can face people and walk around altar. Sacrifice on the altar is primary; abiding presence of the Blessed Sacrament follows.	Latin to be preserved; use of local language is permitted when needed to help the congregation to understand. New Eucharistic Prayers: II using rediscovered Hippolytus (c.250), IV St Basil's (used in East) and III a new composition.	Laity receiving from chalice cautiously encouraged. Vatican very reluctant to authorise communion in the hand. Communion may be received standing instead of kneeling – bishops are to set national policy.	Council document <i>Sacrosanctum concilium</i> (1964). Latin Missal of Paul VI issued 1969. English translation 1974. Many directives from the Vatican's liturgy department from the close of the Council onwards.
Developments following Vatican II – often running ahead of what the Vatican had authorised.	Increased sense of community in the round – some experimentation with a central altar. Many churches in less traditional shapes. Tabernacle often moved so neither prominent nor in a separate chapel.	Near-universal use of freedom to celebrate with priest facing people. Altar rails often removed to enable access by readers and standing communicants.	Vatican authorises additional Eucharistic Prayers for children, reconciliation and special occasions. Musical settings are composed which are very loose adaptations of the official texts.	Receiving chalice totally derestricted in many countries. Under pressure from <i>fait accompli</i> , Vatican licenses communion in the hand. Both were authorised for Wales and England in 1985.	Additional Eucharistic Prayers – from the Vatican Rules for England and Wales – <i>Bishops' Briefing</i> Mass settings – see hymnals (e.g. <i>Liturgical Hymns Old and New</i>)
21 st Century Current edition of the Latin Missal and accompanying instructions is from 2002 ("GIRM 2002") LATIN TEXT OF MISSAL AT http://www.clerus.org/bibliaclerusonline/en/st.htm	Pope Benedict XVI's personal ideal is that the whole community should "face God" while praying – priest and people together facing geographic East – or at least facing the Crucifix.	GIRM 2002 "Altar should be built... so that Mass can be celebrated at it facing the people, which is desirable wherever possible."	GIRM 2002 No major changes to previous editions. Translations to be more literally based on Latin and Biblical sources. English translation will use "and with your spirit" and restore triple "through my fault". Pope Benedict XVI has added new dismissals.	GIRM 2002 Communion should be received on the tongue or, where bishops permit and recipient so chooses, in the hand. Bishops of England and Wales, 2005: it's "through this action of walking solemnly in procession that the faithful make their sign of reverence in preparation for receiving Communion."	Documents for Wales and for England at: www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/GIRM/Documents/ See the new English translation of the core Mass texts (approved by the Vatican but not yet authorised for use) at http://www.usccb.org/liturgy/missalformation/OrdMissaeWhiteBook.pdf