

Living in the Kingdom

Lesson 13: Liturgy

Our Participation in God's Work



CCC 1074, SC 10

CCC 1069-71

Eph 1:3-6

CCC 1077-83

CCC 1084-90
Heb 10:19-22

CCC 1091-1109

CCC 1114-1130

CCC 1136-1144

CCC 1145-1162

1. *The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the font from which all her power flows.*
2. "Liturgy" = "public work," "service on behalf of the people." The liturgy is the participation of the People of God in "the work of God." Through the liturgy Christ continues the work of our redemption in, with and through his Church. In the liturgy the Church shares in Christ's priesthood (worship) which is both prophetic (proclamation) and kingly (service of charity). The liturgy manifests the Church as the visible sign of the communion between God and men.
3. The liturgy is the work of the Holy Trinity. The **Father** makes the plan for us to participate in Trinitarian life by sending the Son. The **Son** makes the plan effective and gives us access to it by sending the Holy Spirit. The **Holy Spirit** effects the plan and makes it work through the liturgy and sacraments of the **Church**.
4. **God the Father** is the source and goal of the liturgy. The whole of God's work is a blessing which is fully revealed and communicated in the liturgy. The two dimensions of Christian liturgy: a) We seek the Father's grace: blessings, sanctification, mercy and forgiveness; b) We respond to Him in faith and love through praise and thanksgiving.
5. The liturgy is led by **Christ** as Head of the Body and our High priest. The Paschal Mystery occurred once in history, but it transcends time and is eternal, present in the liturgy where Christ continues the work of our redemption. The earthly liturgy shares in the heavenly liturgy with all the angels and saints.
6. The **Holy Spirit** makes the liturgy efficacious by: a) Preparing for the reception of Christ, by reliving the great events of salvation history; b) recalling the mystery of Christ; c) making present the mystery of Christ; d) uniting the Church to the life and mission of Christ.
7. The 7 sacraments are: a) Of Christ - powers that come forth from his Body, the Church; b) of the Church: through the ministerial and baptismal priesthoods; c) of faith: the sacraments are prepared by the word of God and by a response of faith; d) of salvation: the sacraments confer the grace that they signify; they are necessary for salvation; e) of eternal life: as the guarantee of the Church's inheritance.
8. Who celebrates: The liturgy is an action of the "whole Christ" – the Head and Body, in heaven and on earth. The heavenly liturgy: Father, Son, Holy Spirit, the Virgin Mary, the angels and multitude of saints. The earthly liturgy: the Pope, bishops, priests, deacons and faithful. The Church on earth prays for the suffering Church in purgatory.
9. How is the liturgy celebrated?
 - a. Physical signs and symbols point to spiritual realities;
 - b. Words and actions give life to the dialogue between God and His

	<p>children;</p> <p>c. <u>Singing and music</u> unite beauty and prayer and foster active participation: "He who sings prays twice."</p> <p>d. <u>Holy images</u> of Christ and the saints make manifest the cloud of witnesses who continue to participate in the salvation of the world.</p>
CCC 1166-67	<p>10. Forms of the liturgy (from most central to most peripheral):</p> <p>a. The <u>Eucharist</u> (Mass) is the source and summit of liturgy, celebrated especially on Sundays.</p>
CCC 1168-73	<p>b. The <u>other sacraments</u> give us spiritual birth, food, strengthening, forgiveness, healing, and vocation.</p>
CCC 1174-78	<p>c. The <u>liturgical year</u> re-presents the story of salvation, Christ's life and the Paschal mystery, and honors the Blessed Virgin Mary, the martyrs and saints.</p>
CCC 1667-73	<p>d. The <u>Liturgy of the Hours</u> sanctifies the hours of the day.</p>
CCC 1168-73	<p>e. <u>Sacramentals</u> are signs that sanctify ministries, states of life and things; e.g. blessings, consecrations, exorcisms.</p> <p>11. In the liturgical year the various aspects of the Paschal Mystery unfold – often linked to the Jewish liturgical year. Easter is the "Feast of feasts" celebrating the mystery of the resurrection. Second most important are the feasts surrounding the mystery of the incarnation (Annunciation, Christmas, Epiphany). The memorials of martyrs and saints proclaim the Paschal mystery in those who have suffered and been glorified with Christ and proposes them as examples of faith.</p>
CCC 1179-86	<p>12. Where do we celebrate? The worship "in Spirit and in truth" of the New Covenant is not tied to one place: the whole earth is sacred. Where possible, Christians build churches, buildings for divine worship that should reflect beauty and signify the Church living there. The church has an eschatological meaning: to enter it we cross a <i>threshold</i> symbolizing passing from the sinful world to the world of New Life.</p>
CCC 1098	<p>13. It is very important to prepare ourselves before meeting our King in the liturgy.</p> <p>a. Preparing our hearts through conversion and by awakening faith;</p> <p>b. Fasting for our hour before communion;</p> <p>c. Receiving communion in a state of grace;</p> <p>d. Making liturgy part of our daily life.</p>

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is the liturgy more than merely a "gathering of people"?
2. What is the role of each person of the Trinity in the liturgy?
3. How does the Church's liturgical prayer unite us with one another?
4. How does the liturgy help us to stay focused on our Christian vocation?