

LITURGY & SACRAMENTS



Opening Prayer

Almighty Father, you sent your only Son to suffer, die, and rise for our salvation. In your wisdom and mercy, you invite us to share in his death and resurrection through the liturgy and sacraments. Send your Holy Spirit to inspire us to be committed to being a sacramental people who always seeks an encounter with you. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture Reading *Luke 12:32-40*

Jesus tells his disciples that the Father is pleased to give to them the kingdom, but we must be watchful for the Lord's return. Our participation in the liturgy prepares us and keeps us ready for the Lord's coming by giving us the treasure of receiving the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments.

What is liturgy?

- **Liturgy** is the public corporate worship of God by the Church united with Christ. The liturgy is the faith of the Church in motion and the liturgy is the source and summit of the faith.
- In the West, the liturgy includes the Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours, the Sacraments and other public rituals and celebrations of the Church.
- In classical Greek, the word "liturgy" had a secular meaning, which denoted a work undertaken by an individual on behalf of the people.
- For the Jewish people, liturgy meant an action by which a group of people become something corporately which they had not been as a mere collection of individuals – a whole greater than the sum of its parts.
- **For the Christian, liturgy is doing the world as the world was meant to be done. The purpose of all Christian liturgy is to express in a ritual moment that which should be the basic stance of every moment of our lives.**
- The liturgy of the Church is first and foremost the liturgy of Christ. The celebrating Church welcomes the heavenly liturgy and takes part in it. The Church is thereby shown to be the body of Christ. *In other words, liturgy is Christ's work become ours.*
- The celebration of liturgy unites the entire Church with Christ because in the liturgy the Church "not only receives Christ, but becomes Christ."- St. Augustine

Incarnating THE KERYGMA

LITURGY & SACRAMENTS

How does the Church use symbols?

- Liturgy conveys the reality it symbolizes. The use of the word symbol does not mean something distinct or contrary to reality, rather symbol is the revelation of reality.
- In the liturgy, the Church uses symbols which are deeper and more comprehensive because it presents and describes a real means of communication between God and humanity.
- Through symbols, the visible reality of the whole Body of Christ is made present in the sacraments.

What is the Paschal Mystery?

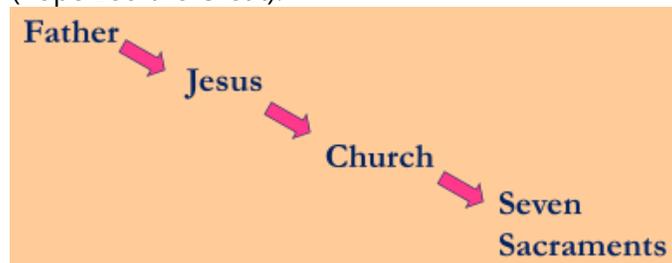
- **Paschal Mystery:** the mystery of Jesus' Incarnation, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and eventual return as the method of salvation in which we participate in through the liturgy.
- "Christian liturgy not only recalls the events that saved us but actualizes them, makes them present. The Paschal Mystery of Christ is celebrated, not repeated. It is the celebrations that are repeated, and in each celebration there is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit that makes the unique mystery present" (CCC 1104).
 - **Anamnesis:** the remembrance of all the saving events which God has brought about in history. This remembrance makes the past become the present by its effects.
 - The liturgical celebration always refers to God's saving interventions in history. The Holy Spirit awakens the memory of the Church (CCC 1103).
 - In the anamnesis, the Church calls to mind the Passion, resurrection, and glorious return of Christ Jesus; she presents to the Father the offering of his Son which reconciles us with him (CCC 1354).
 - The Greek sense of *anamnesis* comes from the Jewish *zikkaron*, which has multiple meanings:
 - To think of something known and past
 - To recall a duty (act)
 - To recall something to someone
 - To utter a name, as an invocation as part of a sacrifice.
 - **Epiclesis:** the intercession in which the priest begs the Father to send the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, so that the offerings may become the body and blood of Christ and that the faithful by receiving them, may themselves become a living offering to God.
 - The epiclesis is the central moment of every sacrament.
 - The mission of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy of the Church is:
 - to prepare the assembly to encounter Christ;
 - to recall and manifest Christ to the faith of the assembly;
 - to make the saving work of Christ present and active by his transforming power;
 - and to make the gift of communion bear fruit in the Church.

LITURGY & SACRAMENTS



What are the sacraments?

- **Sacrament:** a visible sign of the invisible presence and activity of God.
 - The purpose of the sacraments is
 - to sanctify,
 - to build up the Body of Christ,
 - and to give worship to God.
 - Because they are signs, they also instruct (CCC 1123).
 - The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us (CCC 1131).
 - The sacraments come forth from the Body of Christ and are the action of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church (cf. CCC 1116).
 - Therefore, the Church defines seven sacraments:
 - Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist
 - Sacraments of Healing: Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick
 - Sacraments of Vocation: Marriage, Holy Orders
 - These sacraments celebrate the mystery of the Lord until he comes. The Paschal Mystery of Christ's life, particularly his death on the cross, is the foundation of what he would dispense in the sacraments, "For what was visible in our Savior has passed over into his mysteries" (Pope Leo the Great).



What does it mean that the Church has a sacramental imagination?

- Jesus, the Church, and the Seven Sacraments are best appreciated as privileged expressions of a sacramental world in which God the Father has revealed and continues to reveal himself through the material of human existence.
- All reality marks God's presence because God is the creator of reality. Therefore, we must view the world as a revelation of God's loving presence.
- "In the magnificent creation scene, the life-giving finger of God stretches out and almost, but not quite touches the outstretched finger of Adam. Liturgy fills the gap between those two fingers. For God in the Sistine metaphor is a creating, life-giving, saving, redeeming hand, ever reaching out toward us, and salvation history is the story of our hands raised (or refusing to be raised) in never-ending reception of, and thanksgiving for that gift. And isn't that what liturgy is all about?" (Rev. Robert Taft, SJ, *Beyond East and West*).