



GOOD LITURGY BUILDS FAITH

Poor Liturgy Destroys It

Liturgy of the Word and Eucharist **Gather, Proclaim, Break, and Send**

- + The Last Supper was never named that by Jesus. "Do this as a remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19) was the only term the gospels gave to the first Eucharist, which took place on the eve of Jesus' passion and death.
- + Since Jesus did not give his apostles a strict formula for celebrating the "Breaking of the Bread" the apostles had to decide how often they were going to carry out Christ's mandate. How often would they celebrate it? Once a year with Passover or more often? Would it be a rite? What would be the ceremonial pattern? Matters like these needed to be settled by the church.
- + The early church's task was to give the Mass form and expression. It was and still is up to the Catholic Church to decide how the liturgy will express itself.
- + The church has divided the Mass into two parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The Liturgy of the Word comes from the Jewish word service, while the roots of the Liturgy of the Eucharist can be traced to the Last Supper.
- + The Liturgy of the Word is divided into two parts: Gather and Proclaim. There are also two parts to the Liturgy of the Eucharist: Break and Send.
- + It is the role of the assembly gathered for liturgy to make church happen. Gathering is an important ritual of the Mass, but it is also difficult to do because it demands a certain amount of generosity.
- + Another name for gathering is hospitality. This is the process in which we welcome others and make them feel at home in our Catholic community.
- + The purpose of the gathering rite is to help people become a worshipping community by being ready to hear the Word of God, receive Jesus in the Eucharist, and be Christ to one another.
- + The Church proclaims the Word of God during the liturgy in the midst of the assembly in order to assist the faithful in experiencing the life-giving presence of Jesus in his word. Proclamation in the midst of the assembly is the first purpose of all scripture.

- + The experience of Jesus in the word takes place only to the extent that members of the assembly take on the role of the listener.
- + Three readings are proclaimed on Sunday, plus a psalm is sung as a response to the first reading. The first reading is from the Old Testament, the second reading from Paul or one of the epistles and the third reading comes from the gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.
- + After the readings are proclaimed the homily occurs. The homily is meant to break open the readings and apply the just proclaimed scripture passages to the lives of the people in real and concrete terms. The creed and general intercessions or prayers of the faithful follow the homily.
- + Styled after the Jewish table blessing prayer, the Eucharistic prayer, which is the prayer of the Church, is the story of all that God has done for his people with an emphasis on Christ's death and resurrection. The presider tells the story and invites the assembly into the story.
- + The assembly prays the Eucharistic prayer over bread and wine with the belief that through this prayer the elements of bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus. Following the presider's words of consecration Jesus is fully present in the bread and wine.
- + The Catholic Church offers the Eucharistic prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit, not only is the bread and wine transformed into Christ's body and blood but it is the hope of the church that people's hearts are transformed in Jesus as well.
- + The dismissal or sending rite sends each member of the community to go forth to do good works while giving praise and thanksgiving to God. The goal at the end of the liturgy is not to get out of the parking lot as soon as possible. We are commissioned and blessed to bring the gospel message of Christ of a waiting world.
- + Vatican II tells us the Eucharistic response of the assembly does not stop when Mass is over. The ultimate and most important Eucharistic response is what is done after one goes home.
- + As the assembly we are sent out as the Lord's disciples, not just individuals, but as "church" to proclaim the Good News of Jesus' love for all. Each Catholic at liturgy has a role in evangelization.

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