



Liturgy

Key Issues and Key Questions

Cultural Realities

- 24% of Catholics regularly participate in Sunday Eucharist – this has dropped steadily since Vatican II (2013 CARA, *Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate*, report)
- 45% of adult Catholics never go to confession, 30% go less than once a year, 12% once a year, 12% several times a year and just 2% monthly (CARA-2008)
- Some possible factors for these drop offs:
 - sustained affluence has dulled spiritual hunger of God
 - amazing scientific developments has redirected expectations for human happiness
 - sexual revolution relativized the Church's teaching authority
 - changes in the liturgy after Vatican II led to many Catholics losing confidence in the Church or a loss of awe and wonder of God's holiness in their midst

Reflection Question: Given these cultural realities, how do we help people connect with the mystery and meaning of the Mass and sacraments?

Theological Foundations

- Liturgy is living out the mission of Christ and his Church - "Go and make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19-20) and "Do this in memory of me" (1Cor 11:24)
- Liturgy is the ritual enactment of Christian life – it is not separate from the rest of life
- Beauty in the liturgy is found through poetic, figurative language and symbolic forms such as bread and wine, the altar, ordained presider, the assembly, and Scripture
- In liturgy we receive God's gift to us in Christ and become God's gifts to others
- The liturgical assembly is a sacramental realization of the whole Church
- Liturgy incorporates Witness, Service and Worship – three major ways the Church manifests her essential nature in the world

Reflection Questions: How can we better understand the true meaning of liturgy and more profoundly convey the beauty of it in our celebrations of the Mass and the sacraments?

Other Issues and Challenges

- Key issues that need to be addressed to improve liturgy are: reflection by parishioners on their liturgical experiences, re-educating Catholics on the essential importance of regular Sunday Eucharist, and more effective preaching

Reflection Question: How do we go about addressing these three key issues related to liturgy?

Small Group Task: Key Initiatives, Quick Hits, Innovative Ideas

In light of the key issues and questions articulated above, identify how to strengthen the mission of the Church in the area of **Liturgy** through:

- **2-3 Key Initiatives**
- **1-2 Quick Hits**
- **2-3 Innovative Ideas**