

Liturgy Lessons: 2018



episode #1: "The meaning of "Liturgy"

The word "liturgy" comes to the Church through ancient Greek culture. It carries with it a three-fold meaning. Often translated as "*the work of the people*," it is not simply the people's work. Catholic liturgy includes the celebration of Holy Mass, of the Divine Office, and the celebration of the Sacraments.

Lit-urgy: **laos**=people + **ergon**=work English cognates: laity, energy.

- 1) Liturgy is the work of the people. The people must be engaged in it.
- 2) Liturgy is the work of Christ done on behalf of the people. **It** is "work" that the people cannot do on their own. Christ prays to his Father. We join in his perfect prayer.
- 3) Liturgy is the work of God in which the people participate.

The best way to worship God is to act as God acts. We worship the God of mercy and forgiveness. We worship the God who sings the eternal love song.

THE TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

+ "The word 'liturgy' originally meant a 'public work' or a 'service in the name of/on behalf of the people.' In Christian tradition it means the participation of the People of God in 'the work of God.'" CCC, n°. 1069—the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

IN THE TRADITION

"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast to our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin. So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help." (Hebrews 4:14-16)

"The liturgy then is rightly seen as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ." (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, # 7)

FOR YOUR REFLECTION

If _____ the liturgy is the work that Christ accomplishes on our behalf, what are some instances in the Mass where this is made explicit?

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