

# The fundamental questions about Liturgy that you should know how to answer



*"You do not just hear about Liturgy, but live and experience the Liturgy!"*

In general, the concept may be so present and latent in your everyday life that words may be lacking to actually name what it represents.

In many parishes, there are service teams whose primary mission is to look after and care for the liturgical life. Priests, laypeople and religious spend years dedicating efforts and commitment to the study of the Liturgy, because of the richness of details, meaning and importance for the Church and the life of God's people.

But would you know how to answer what is the Liturgy? Do you know the origin of the word? Do you know the relationship between Catechesis and the Liturgy?

In this text, you will be able to know some references that answer fundamental questions about the liturgy of the

Catholic, Apostolic and Roman rite. Check out:

## **1. What is the Liturgy?**

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CIC), "the word "liturgy" originally meant a "public work" or a "service in the name of/on behalf of the people." It means that the people of God participate in his Work. "Through the liturgy Christ, our redeemer and high priest, continues the work of our redemption in, with and through his Church." (§ 1069, CIC). The Catechism also teaches that in the New Testament the word "liturgy" refers not only to the celebration of divine worship but also to the proclamation of the Gospel and to active charity. (cf. , 12).

## **2. What is the importance of the Bible in the Liturgy?**

According to the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium, adopted during the Second Vatican Council in 1963, the Holy Scriptures are of the utmost importance in the liturgical celebration. "It is from her that the texts that are read and explained in the homily are taken, as well as the psalms that are sung; it was from his texts and from his inspiration that the liturgical prayers, prayers and hymns were born; and it is from her that actions and signs receive their meaning "(Sacrosanctum Concilium, 24).

## **3. How does Christ work in the liturgical celebration?**

In the Liturgy, God serves men and men serve God. This service of the Church is in the image of Christ, who acts as high priest and makes us participate in his priesthood in a prophetic (when performing worship) and real way (when we

serve in charity). "The Liturgy is rightly regarded as the exercise of the priestly function of Jesus Christ. In it, through sensible signs and in the proper way of each one, the sanctification of men is signified and accomplished and the integral public worship is exercised by the mystical body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the head and the members. Therefore, any liturgical celebration, as the work of Christ the Priest and his body which is the Church, is a sacred action par excellence and no other action of the Church equates it in efficacy with the same title and in the same degree "(Sacrosanctum Concilium, 5) .

#### **4. What is the relation between Catechesis and the Liturgy?**

St John Paul II, in the Apostolic Exhortation *Catechesi Tradendae*, wrote: "Catechesis is intrinsically linked with the whole of liturgical and sacramental activity, for it is in the sacraments, especially in the Eucharist, that Christ Jesus works in fullness for the transformation of human beings" (23). It is an experiential relationship. Liturgical catechesis is sacramental. It aims to initiate people into the mystery of Christ "by proceeding from the visible to the invisible, from the sign to the signified, from the sacrament to the mysteries" (CCC, no 1075).

#### **5. Is there a type of music the Church recommends for liturgical celebrations?**

Yes. The Church recognizes Gregorian chant as a "proper chant of the Roman liturgy," but emphasizes that "polyphony will by no means be excluded in the celebration of the divine offices, provided they are in harmony with the spirit of liturgical action" (SS, 116).

Also according to the musical dimension, the Church also mentions – especially on missionary occasions – peoples with musical traditions different from Western culture and who have a great importance in the religious and social life of the people. “Give this music the proper esteem and the suitable place, not only in the education of the religious sense of these peoples, but also in the adaptation of the cult to its character” (SS, 119).

## **6. Do you know what liturgical implements are?**

It is called implements, small panels and objects covered with cloth that is used next to the sacred vessels: corporal, pala, sanguine, manustérgio, veil of the chalice and corporal bag. On the presentation of the implements, in the manner in which sacred art will be applied to them, the Sacrosanctum Concilium directs them to “contribute to the splendor of worship with dignity and beauty, accepting the changes in matter, form and ornamentation, which technical progress was introduced in the course of time “(SS, 122).

## **7. Does the liturgy provide different colors for each time?**

Yes. According to the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), “the different colors of the sacred garments are intended to express externally the character of the celebrated mysteries, and also the awareness of a Christian life that progresses with the unfolding of the liturgical year” (345).

The green color is used in Common Time. White is used in the Offices and Masses of Paschal Time and the Christmas of the Lord; in addition, in the celebrations of the Lord, except those of his Passion, the Blessed Virgin Mary and some saints. Red is used on Sunday of the Passion and on Easter Friday,

Pentecost Sunday, the celebrations of the Passion of the Lord, the holiday of the apostles and evangelists, and the celebrations of the holy martyrs. The purple, in Advent and Lent. It can also be used in the Offices and Masses of the Dead.

The pink can be used, where it is customary, on Sundays Gaudete (Advent III) and Laetare (IV in Lent). Black can be used, where it is customary, at the Masses of the Dead.

**For more solemn days, the Missal foresees the possibility of wearing holy or festive robes, even if they are not the color of the day.**