

From principle to practice

A theology of Catholic Worship

Improving our celebration and participation

Liturgical Principles

The foundational principles of Catholic liturgy could be named as follows:

1. The liturgical **life of the Church is comprised of a rich feast of rites, ordered with Eucharist and the sacraments at the centre.** (CSL n.6)
2. **Christ is always present** in the Church, especially in its liturgical celebrations. (CSL n.7) Liturgy is the work of Christ which takes place **through the power of the Spirit.** (CSL n.6)
3. **Every liturgy is a proclamation and celebration of the Paschal Mystery.** (CSL n.6, 103)
4. **Liturgy is a communal activity: the whole public worship of the Church, a celebration (action) of the whole Church.** Its nature therefore is both **communal and hierarchic.** (CSL n.7, 26-32; GIRM n.5)
5. The liturgy achieves its intention (glorification and sanctification) through **symbols (signs) perceptible to the senses and in ways proper to each of these signs.** This work is signified through the liturgy's symbols (signs). (CSL n.7)
6. People must be **called to faith and conversion** before they can come to the liturgy. (CSL n.9, 59)
7. Liturgy is the **summit and the source** of all the activity and power of the Church. (CSL n.10) AND Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life. (LG n.11)
8. The very nature of the liturgy requires **the full, conscious and active participation of all the faithful** as their right and responsibility by virtue of their baptism. (CSL n.14)
9. **Liturgy is formational** – The liturgy is the primary and indispensable **source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.** (CSL n.14, 33)
10. **Sacred Scripture is essential** to the celebration of liturgy. (CSL n.24)
11. Liturgy is **sacramental in nature.** (CSL n.33)
12. The Bishop is the chief liturgist of the diocese. (SC n.41 and 45) The liturgical life of the diocese is centred around the bishop, especially when he presides at eucharist in the Cathedral. (CSL n.41)

Lex Orandi – Lex Credendi – Lex Vivendi

'As we worship, so we believe, so we live'