

# Sacred Liturgy

## Liturgy

- I. **CCC 1069**
  - a. Liturgy is the *opus Dei* - the work of God.
  - b. Liturgy includes the Mass, the sacraments, and some other things the Church does
- II. **CCC 1136**
  - a. On earth the liturgies we participate in are celebrated under signs
  - b. In heaven the signs fall away because the reality is present
- III. **CCC 1139**

## Exodus and the Golden Calf

- I. Primary goal of the Exodus - to worship God
- II. **Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*** Man himself cannot simply “make” worship. If God does not reveal himself, man is clutching empty space. Moses says to Pharaoh: “[W]e do not know with what we must serve the Lord” (Ex 10:26). These words display a fundamental law of all liturgy. When God does not reveal himself, man can, of course, from the sense of God within him, build altars “to the unknown god” (cf. Acts 17:23). He can reach out toward God in his thinking and try to feel his way toward him. But real liturgy implies that God responds and reveals how we can worship him. In any form, liturgy includes some kind of “institution”. It cannot spring from imagination, our own creativity - then it would remain just a cry in the dark or mere self-affirmation. Liturgy implies a real relationship with Another, who reveals himself to us and gives our existence a new direction.
  - a.
- III. **Exodus 24:6-8** And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, “All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.” And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, “Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.”
- IV. **Exodus 24:18** And Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.
- V. **Exodus 32:1** When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron, and said to him, “Up, make us gods, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”
  - a. **Exodus 16:3** “Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”
  - b. **Exodus 8:25-27** Then Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron, and said, “Go, sacrifice to your God within the land.” But Moses said, “It would not be right

to do so; for we shall sacrifice to the Lord our God offerings abominable to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice offerings abominable to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not stone us? We must go three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to the Lord our God as he will command us.”

i. Israel would be sacrificing animals the Egyptians thought were gods

c. **Exodus 12:37-39** And the sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. A mixed multitude also went up with them, and very many cattle, both flocks and herds. And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt, for it was not leavened, because they were thrust out of Egypt and could not tarry, neither had they prepared for themselves any provisions.

i. Israel still thought of the animals they left Egypt with as gods

d. Ratzinger tells us they aren't trying to make false gods...

i. **Exodus 32:4** These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!

ii. **Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*** They want to glorify the God who led Israel out of Egypt and believe that they may very properly represent his mysterious power in the image of a bull calf. Everything seems to be in order. Presumably even the ritual is in complete conformity to the rubrics. And yet it is a falling away from the worship of God to idolatry...The people cannot cope with the invisible remote, and mysterious God. They want to bring him down into their own world, into what they can see and understand. Worship is no longer going up to God, but drawing God down into one's own world...Man is using God, and in reality,...he is placing himself above God...When Moses stays away for too long, and God himself become inaccessible, the people just fetch him back. Worship becomes a feast that the community gives itself, a festival of self-affirmation...The narrative of the golden calf is a warning about any kind of self-initiated and self-seeking worship. Ultimately, it is no longer concerned with God but with giving oneself a nice little alternative world, manufactured from one's own resources. Then liturgy really does become pointless, just fooling around. Or still worse it becomes an apostasy from the living God, an apostasy in sacral disguise.

iii. Ratzinger says they are trying to make the true God into something they can understand

e. In the meantime, God is giving Moses detailed instructions on how he wants to be worshipped

VI. God is the author of liturgy (in the New Covenant too!)

a. **CCC 1125**

b. **Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*** A people without a common rule of law cannot live. It destroys itself in anarchy, which is a parody

of freedom, its exaltation to the point of abolition. When every man lives without law, every man lives without freedom.

## Sacraments

- I. The sacraments are part of the liturgy of the Church
- II. The sacraments are therefore work of God
- III. A sacrament is “An outward sign constituted by Christ to give grace.”
- IV. **CCC 1113-1114, & 1116** The whole liturgical life of the Church revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments.

’Adhering to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, to the apostolic traditions, and to the consensus...of the Fathers,’ we profess that ‘the sacraments of the new law were...all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord.’

Sacraments are ‘powers that comes forth’ from the body of Christ which is ever-living and life-giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church. They are ‘the masterworks of God’ in the new and everlasting covenant.

- V. Seven sacraments (See handout for more details)
  - a. Baptism
  - b. Confirmation
  - c. The Eucharist
  - d. Reconciliation
  - e. Anointing of the Sick
  - f. Holy Orders
  - g. Matrimony
- VI. **CCC 1123-1124, & 1127** ’The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify men, to build up the Body of Christ and, finally, to give worship to God. Because they are signs they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and express it. That is why they are called ‘sacraments of faith.’

The Church’s faith precedes the faith of the believer who is invited to adhere to it. When the Church celebrates the sacraments, she confesses the faith received from the apostles – whence the ancient saying *lex orandi, lex credendi*. The law of prayer is the law of faith: the Church believes as she prays. Liturgy is a constitutive element of the holy and living Tradition.

Celebrated worthily in faith, the sacraments confer the grace that they signify. They are efficacious because in them Christ himself is at work: it is he who baptizes, he who acts in his sacraments in order to communicate the grace that each sacrament signifies.

- VII. The sacraments act *ex opere operato* (by the very fact of the action’s being performed)
  - a. This is because Christ himself is communicating his grace through the priest and Jesus is perfect

- VIII. Validity of a sacrament (See handout for more details)
  - a. Form
  - b. Matter
  - c. Minister
  - d. Intention of recipient
- IX. Reception of grace