

LITURGY

Cdl. Ratzinger: "We abandoned the organic, living process of growth and development"

Liturgy is the public worship of God the Father, which Christ offers with the members of His Mystical Body, the Church. Liturgy includes the Divine Office, Holy Mass called the Divine Liturgy and the other sacraments.

The Vatican II document, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, [says](#) liturgy is a "great work wherein God is perfectly glorified, and men are sanctified." It adds, "in the liturgy, the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members." Earthly liturgy, says the document, is but a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy offered by the angels and saints, who forever behold the Beatific Vision.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Catechism) in paragraph 1077–1083 [speaks](#) of God the Father as the "source and goal of the Liturgy." God gives man the gift of liturgy through the Church so man is able to worship Him with signs, symbols, words, actions, colors, holy attire and liturgical time. The Church adapted much of this ceremony from Mosaic ritual given by God to the Jewish people in the Old Testament.

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Catholic Church expresses in Her liturgy an ever-deepening understanding of the sacred mysteries, which She contemplates over time. She also employs aspects of authentic culture as it develops. This is called the organic development of the liturgy and is not a banal fabrication. In paragraph 1125, the Catechism [affirms](#), "Even the supreme authority in the Church may not change the Liturgy arbitrarily but only in the obedience of faith and with religious respect for the mystery of the liturgy."

In 1993, Cdl. Joseph Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI, [addressed](#) the lack of organic liturgy following Vatican II: "In the place of Liturgy as the fruit of development came fabricated liturgy. We abandoned the organic, living process of growth and development over centuries and replaced it — as in a manufacturing process — with a fabrication, a banal on-the-spot product."

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