

**Session 10: Reverent Liturgies with Active Participation**

**Proposition Definition:** Celebrate prayerful liturgies that inspire the faithful to offer their very selves in the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass.

**Other Key Points:**

- Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has often repeated the need for “full, conscious, and active participation” in the Church’s liturgy (Sacrosanctum Concilium, 14). What you may not know is that this phrase was actually first used by Pope Saint Pius X in 1903!
- Participation in the Mass must first and foremost be a spiritual reality, flowing from the dignity of our Baptism.
- Since this participation is the “primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit ... pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work” (SC, 14). Therefore, all of the Church’s laboring and ministry must derive its energy from the liturgy and be directed towards it as the “source and summit” of the Christian life.
- The Mass itself, celebrated and organized well, can be the greatest catechist in the Christian life.
- In Pope Francis’s 2022 Apostolic Letter *Desiderio Desideravi*, we read that “every aspect of the celebration must be carefully tended to (space, time, gestures, words, objects, vestments, song, music...) and every rubric must be observed. Such attention would be enough to prevent robbing from the assembly what is owed to it; namely, the paschal mystery celebrated according to the ritual that the Church sets down.” (DD 23)
- Here are some areas of the liturgical celebration that were recognized as requiring attention:
  - Clergy invest in the resources necessary for the preaching of relevant, educational, and inspirational homilies that equip the faithful to joyfully live out the faith.
  - Parishes offer sacred music that lifts hearts and minds to God.
  - Parishes need to aim to better form lay liturgical ministers to cooperate with clergy in assisting in the liturgy with devotion.
  - Focus on fostering a community that is rooted in sacramental life through which faith is nourished, strengthened and expressed.
- We must approach the Mass with hearts open to deeper conversion and the working of God’s love and mercy, with hearts open to allowing God to form us into the saints He wants us to be.
- Our full, conscious, and active participation in Mass will carry into our daily lives. Our encounter with Christ’s love will empower us to live the dismissal exhortations.

**Reflection Questions:**

1. Was your heart open the last time you attended Mass?
2. Where/when have you felt particularly moved by the cohesion between all aspects of the Mass—ministers, homily, etc.?
3. Have you experienced a powerfully moving Mass even in the absence of a good homily or inspiring music? When/where and why do you think this was?