

Celebrating the *Constitution* on the Sacred Liturgy for Servers



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The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, the first document produced by the Second Vatican Council in 1963, states that when Christ's faithful are gathered at the Eucharist, "they should give thanks to God; by offering the immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him" (48). In your ministry as a server, you have a unique insight into this reality.

This document, which called for the reform and promotion of the liturgy, articulated a renewed understanding that the act of liturgy is an exercise of the priestly office of Christ, which all the faithful share by reason of their Baptism. As a result, the liturgy is performed by all the members of the Body of Christ, and their full, conscious, and active participation was identified as the primary concern in the reform and promotion of the liturgy.

While all members of Christ's Body participate and are enriched in the liturgy, the *Constitution* recognizes that individual members of the Church engage in the liturgy in different ways according to their distinct ranks, offices, and roles.

This document highlights your ministry as a server as an exercise of a genuine liturgical function, and urges all servers to fulfill their office with piety and decorum, imbued with the spirit of liturgy, and trained to function "in a correct and orderly manner" (29). The respect and reverence with which you approach your ministry not only fosters, but also models, active and engaged liturgical prayer.

As we prepare to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the publication of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, the Church offers gratitude for your contribution and engagement in the liturgy. We encourage you to reflect further on the value of your ministry, and to explore the rich text of this document on your own or with a study group. Finally, we pray that our liturgical celebrations increasingly gather the entire Body of Christ into deep and lasting communion.



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