

Liturgy Category of the Parish Pastoral Plan

The first category of the Parish Pastoral Plan is Liturgy. Liturgy is a Greek word. Its original meaning referred to tasks that, today, one would expect a public servant to perform for the common good of society, the nation, or for political unity.¹ In the Church, the word liturgy came to mean her public services (e.g., morning, evening, night prayers), but particularly the sacraments. Preeminent in the Church's liturgical worship is the Divine Liturgy. Referring to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist as the *Divine* Liturgy emphasizes the mystical (sacramental) radiance of Christ's person and His working among us. The Liturgy is not as much a public service that the priest performs for the people (although it is that), or even the people's participation in it (it is that also), but rather a divine service in which God offers to the human person the grace of salvation and communion with Him. It is Christ's liturgy, the One who serves as the "merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people" (Heb 2:27).² The liturgy of the Holy Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life, and that which makes the Church, because there it is Christ the high priest who serves. "For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). The liturgical life of the Church, then, is an essential category of the Parish Pastoral Plan.

Example Goal (what): Deepen understanding and personal participation in the Divine Liturgy.

Example Objective (how): Create a high-quality display in the social hall about the Divine Liturgy that illustrates and explains its various parts.

¹ See Hermann Strathmann and Rudolf Meyer, "Λειτουργίᾳ, Λειτουργία, Λειτουργός, Λειτουργικός," ed. Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964-), 215-216.

² Only Jesus is priest in the fullest and truest sense. All others are instrumental or ministerial priests of the one priesthood of Christ. They merely act in His person, meaning, that in the liturgical service that the ordained priest renders, it is Christ who is present and serves as our high priest. See CCC 1548-1551 for a more complete explanation.