

Jubilee 2003
Diocesan Pastoral Plan
Promulgated by the
Most Reverend George J. Lucas,
Bishop of Springfield in Illinois,
26 October 2003

Goal 1
**Grow in our communion
with God and one another
through prayer and the
celebration of the
sacraments, especially
Sunday Eucharist.**

- Promote catechesis on the Holy Eucharist as the source and summit of Catholic life.
- Promote catechesis on the Sacrament of Reconciliation and its place in Catholic life.
- Foster full, conscious, and active participation in the life of the Church.
- Revitalize Sunday as the first holy day of all – a day of Christian joy.
- Encourage Eucharistic adoration in parishes and institutions.
- Participate in retreats and renewal programs.

Our response to God's invitation to grow in our communion with him and with one another leads us to prayer, to the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our daily lives. The Second Vatican Council expressed the profound hope that all members of the Catholic community would be engaged in "full, conscious, and active participation" in the liturgy and, therefore, the life of the Church. This is our primary goal as a diocesan Church – to grow in communion with God and one another by participating fully in the life of the Church.

2005 ❖ Office for Worship/RCIA
Diocese of Springfield in Illinois

Weighing Practices against Principles: Revisiting the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*

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A workbook on eight basic principles for the liturgy

By Eliot L. Kapitan

The beginning of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* provides an overall goal and eight foundational principles for doing good liturgy. In presenting each principle I will explain terms and concepts, describe how the principle is expressed in the liturgy and the liturgical year, name good practices to foster (using examples from parish experience), list dangers to avoid, and clarify what is at stake.

This workbook also contains worksheets for users to (1) name additional good practices to foster, (2) name additional dangers to avoid, (3) assess current parish practice, and (4) list dreams for parish improvement as a way to establish parish priorities.

GOAL FOR DOING GOOD LITURGY

“The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people’ (1 Peter 2:9; see 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism” [CSL, no. 14].

SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR THE PROMOTION, REFORM, AND GOOD CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY

1. Liturgy celebrates the paschal mystery (the passion, death, resurrection, and ascension) as the redeeming work of Jesus Christ the Lord.
2. Liturgy celebrates the many ways Christ is present in the Church.
3. Liturgy, through the power of Christ, makes people holy.
4. Liturgy prepares and leads the Church to the heavenly life with God.
5. Liturgy invites believers to live the Christian life: a life grounded in catechesis, community, worship and liturgy, and service.
6. Liturgy is both the summit and the fount for the Church.
7. Liturgy requires the faithful to have proper dispositions and pastors to realize the law is not enough.
8. Devotional prayer is always in harmony with liturgical prayer.

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Weighing Practices against Principles: Revisiting the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*

By Eliot L. Kapitan

Introduction

In the Diocese of Springfield in Illinois two liturgy anniversaries absorbed our attention in 2003. The first was local: the diocese celebrated her sesquicentennial, marking 150 years of being Church in south-central Illinois. At the end of a year filled with special prayers and events, Bishop George Lucas issued a pastoral plan to guide the local Church for the coming years. It set out four sets of goals: 1) on worship and liturgy, 2) on lives of commitment and service, 3) on Scripture and Catholic faith, and 4) on action for charity and justice. Our goals for worship and liturgy were as follows:

Grow in our communion with God and one another through prayer and the celebration of the sacraments, especially Sunday Eucharist.

- Promote catechesis on the Holy Eucharist as the source and summit of Catholic life.
- Promote catechesis on the Sacrament of Reconciliation and its place in Catholic life.
- Foster full, conscious, and active participation in the life of the Church.
- Revitalize Sunday as the first holy day of all – a day of Christian joy.
- Encourage Eucharistic adoration in parishes and institutions.
- Participate in retreats and renewal programs.

Our response to God's invitation to grow in our communion with him and with one another leads us to prayer, to the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our daily lives. The Second Vatican Council expressed the profound hope that all members of the Catholic community would be engaged in "full, conscious, and active participation" in the liturgy and, therefore, the life of the Church. This is our primary goal as a diocesan Church – to grow in communion with God and one another by participating fully in the life of the Church.¹

This challenges the diocese to very hard work. But it also offers a grace-filled opportunity to rethink conversion and discipleship, faith and worship, liturgy and spiritual renewal, and allocation of resources. It is an opportunity to ask: "How will we be faithful in this new age?"

The second anniversary observed the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* issued in 1963.² This anniversary prompted a new commitment for this writer: to reread the constitution annually on 4 December to assess the past and look to the future by asking hard questions. How has the liturgy been celebrated? What progress have these parishes and this diocese made? How have we been faithful?

¹ *Jubilee 2003 Diocesan Pastoral Plan*, promulgated by the Most Reverend George J. Lucas, Bishop of Springfield in Illinois, 26 October 2003.

² VATICAN COUNCIL II, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963.

What still needs attention? What kind of people do we want to be, do we need to be on the constitution's golden anniversary of 4 December 2013 because of faithfully celebrating the Church's liturgy?

This article is the result of rereading the constitution on its fortieth anniversary. Priests, liturgists, and diocesan staff can present programs, attend meetings, and print documents, but to be sure we are on the right liturgical track it is important to return to the station from which the reform of the liturgy started – the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. The beginning of the constitution (articles 1-14) provides an overall goal and eight foundational principles for doing good liturgy.

Vision and Goal of the Liturgical Reform

The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* was approved by 99.8 percent of the bishops in council – an astonishing level of agreement.³ In the introduction they asserted that “the liturgy is important to the life of the Church because it is the outstanding means whereby the faithful may express in their lives and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.”⁴ They went on to state the goal of the whole liturgical reform quite clearly at the beginning of Chapter II: “The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations called for by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people’ (1 Peter 2:9; see 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.”⁵

Our American bishops affirmed the importance of liturgy in 1972 and reaffirmed it in 1982: “Faith grows when it is well expressed in celebration. Good celebrations foster and nourish faith. Poor celebrations may weaken and destroy it.”⁶ Every celebration has some effect on the lives of the faithful – for good or ill. What is at stake in the celebration of liturgy is not “the faith,” meaning our doctrine and dogma, important as they are but rather “faith” itself, the very relationship with God, with God in Christ, with the good and Holy Spirit.⁷ The Church cannot take the risk of celebrating liturgy poorly. All of our liturgy must be done well – too much is at stake.

The Constitution's Basic Principles for Good Liturgy – Touchstones for Ongoing Work

The first chapter of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* provides the Church with some basic principles for the promotion, reform, and good celebration of liturgy. Being faithful to the constitution that launched the reform will guide us during these subsequent stages of ongoing reform.

The eight basic principles recounted here will keep liturgical ministers very busy for the next ten years. In presenting each principle I will explain terms and concepts, describe how the principle is expressed in the liturgy and the liturgical year, name good practices to foster (using examples from parish experience), list dangers to avoid, and clarify what is at stake. Although fostering good liturgy may seem like lofty work, it is often the practical, specific, and humble actions at every parish's disposal that help express the mysteries of faith.

³ 2137 yes votes, 4 no votes.

⁴ *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, no. 2.

⁵ *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, no. 14.

⁶ BISHOPS' COMMITTEE ON THE LITURGY, National Conference of Catholic Bishops [now the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops], *Music in Catholic Worship*, 15 November 1982, no. 6.

⁷ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 150.