

## Quotations from Liturgical Documents

The word “liturgy” comes from the Greek word, *leitourgia*, literally meaning “the people’s work.”

1. In the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* we read the following: “In the celebration of Mass the faithful are a holy people, a people God has made His own, a royal priesthood; they give thanks to the Father and offer Jesus not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him....

They are to shun any appearance of individualism or division. The People of God should become one body, whether by hearing the word of God, or joining in prayers and song, or above all, by offering the sacrifice together and sharing together in the Lord’s table. What a beautiful expression of unity when the faithful maintain uniformity in their actions whether it be standing, sitting or kneeling.”

2. From the U.S. Catholic Bishops’ Conference a publication in which the bishops write: “The most powerful experience of the sacred is found in the celebration and the persons celebrating, that is, it is found in the action of the assembly: the living words, the living gestures, the living sacrifice, the living meal...The entire congregation is an active component. There is no audience, no passive element in the liturgical celebration.”

3. *The Constitution of the Sacred Liturgy* from Vatican II highlights the primacy of the Ministry of the Assembly in these words: “The Church earnestly desires that Christ’s faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators; on the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred service---conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full involvement.”

4. From *GIRM*: “The faithful, moreover, should not refuse to serve the People of God gladly whenever they are asked to perform some particular ministry or function in the celebration.”

5. The *CSL* emphasizes that liturgical ministers “ought to discharge their office with the sincere devotion and decorum demanded by so exalted a ministry and rightly expected of them by God’s people.”

6. From the Bishops' document, *Music in Catholic Worship*, we read: "Among the many signs and symbols used by the church to celebrate its faith, music is of pre-eminent importance. The function of music is ministerial; it must serve and never dominate. Music should assist the assembled believers to express and share the gift of faith that is within them. The quality of joy and enthusiasm which music adds to community worship cannot be gained in any other way. It imparts a sense of unity to the congregation and sets the appropriate tone for a particular celebration."