

Participating in the Liturgy

Scripture Reading

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o'clock in the afternoon. And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple.

When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, "Look at us." And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk." And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

All the people saw him walking and praising God, and they recognized him as the one who used to sit and ask for alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Acts 3: 1-10

For Discussion

- What are your personal expectations of the celebration of the Liturgy?

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- What do you believe you have to offer through the celebration of the Liturgy? And how free do you feel to offer this?

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Suggested methodology

- A. Scripture Reading (c. 30 min.)
 - One person reads the Scripture reading
 - Period of silent reflection
 - Second reading of passage
 - After a pause for reflection discussion on the questions given
- B. Documentation (c. 30 min.)
 - One person reads the text
 - Period of silent reflection
 - Followed by discussion on the questions given

You may find it helpful to write down your own reflections in the space provided.



Documentation

(From *Celebrating the Mass*)

36. When a priest presides at the celebration of the Liturgy he leads the people in prayer, in listening and responding to God's word, and in offering the Sacrifice through Christ in the Spirit to the Father. He proclaims the message of salvation in preaching and gives the Bread of eternal life and the Cup of salvation.
37. By the depth of the priest's prayerfulness and the dignity and humility of his bearing, the people should be able to recognise the living presence of Christ, who spoke with authority but who came to serve, not to be served. The priest is to be conscious that he presides over the assembly in the name of Christ and of the ritual forms by which he gives proper expression to his leadership.
 - Through his liturgical presidency, the priest encourages the participation of others and coordinates them into one harmonious action. Rather than appropriating the functions of others, he is responsible for seeing that everything is done well.
 - The priest leads people in prayer and exercises his responsibility chiefly in the proclamation of the presidential prayers: the Collect (Opening Prayer), the Prayer over the Offerings, the Prayer after Communion, and, supremely, the Eucharistic Prayer. Presiding in the person of Christ, he addresses these prayers to God in the name not only of the assembly but of the entire people of God.
 - In some circumstances the priest may also facilitate the conscious participation of the assembly by brief and helpful comments and introductions, for example, at the beginning of the celebration, before the readings and the Eucharistic Prayer, or at the dismissal.
 - By tradition the role of proclaiming the readings is ministerial, not presidential. Therefore, a reader should proclaim the readings, and a deacon or, in his absence, a priest other than the celebrant should announce the Gospel. If, however, a deacon or another priest is not present, the priest celebrant himself should read the Gospel.
 - The Homily is ordinarily given by the presiding priest. Preaching is an integral part of the liturgy, and obligatory when the community gathers for its Sunday celebration of the Eucharist on Sundays and holydays.

For Discussion

- What do you see as your own strengths as a presider?

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- What would you see as your weaknesses?

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