

LITURGY CORNER: Why do we do that?

PART ONE: An Introduction

In the coming weeks, members of the Liturgy Board will be contributing articles responding to some of the questions from the Parish Pastoral Council and others at St. Hubert who have wondered “*why do we do that?*”

There are many things to consider when making decisions about our liturgical celebrations. A variety of sources with their own guidelines govern our choices, such as the Roman Missal or the General Instruction on the Roman Missal. There are liturgical documents arising from the Second Vatican Council that provide a framework for our celebration of the liturgy. There are parish practices of many years and the abilities of the assembly.

Editors and interpreters must always bring to their recommendations and decisions based on a well-formed understanding of the liturgy, its ministries, and those things employed in service to the ritual and its participants.

Here are some guiding principles that support our responses to questions and observations.

- Liturgy is the official worship of the Church. It does not belong to me or you; there is a prescribed ritual in place with guidelines.
- It is a communal celebration. All prayers, all ritual actions are those of the community, one voice, one in movement, unified hearts and minds.
- Personal piety and preferences are important, but do not govern our preparation, celebration, or evaluation of the liturgy. Whenever our preferences as liturgical ministers, personnel, or the assembly are employed, they must reflect the guidelines and theology of the Church.
- Liturgy is celebrated well to give praise and worship to God, increase our faith and lead us to mission.

Some have suggested the idea of having a “reactor” group. We call this a Liturgy Board—trained assembly members who observe, evaluate, and respond. Every Sunday comments are made toward all things in any liturgical experience from the assembly. An ear and eye are always turned toward those celebrating the Eucharist. Any comment is listened to and important; yet, not all can be initiated or changed.

In addition to these contributors to the evaluation of the liturgy, on a regular basis are the presiders, deacons, and liturgical ministers whose task it is to respond to the celebration from their formation and training.

Gyonne Cassa