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Unit 1 Reading Guide Answer Key

An Introduction to Liturgy and the Sacraments

Chapter 1: Liturgy

Article 1: What Is the liturgy?

1. The literal meaning of *leitourgia* is “the people’s work.” The Church adopted the word *liturgy* as her own. . . . The liturgy is the Church’s official, public, communal prayer. It is God’s work in which the People of God participate.
2. Liturgy is primarily the work of God . . . in which we participate. It is the public, communal, and official worship of the Church. The Eucharist (or Mass) is the central liturgy of the Catholic Church and the foundation for most other liturgical celebrations.
3. All of the Church’s sacraments and liturgies have Christ as their origin, yet he did not dictate all aspects of the liturgy.
4. Like the truths of faith, the liturgy is guided by the Magisterium. This is what makes the liturgy the official worship of the Church.
5. In the liturgy, we learn about the great mysteries of our faith by participating in them. We learn about the mystery of the Trinity by encountering the Trinity in the liturgy.
6. Scripture and Tradition are distinct, yet closely related. Both transmit the Word of God. Together they form a single, sacred Deposit of Faith. The Deposit of Faith, the treasure of the Church handed on from the time of the Apostles and contained in Scripture and Tradition, makes clear the truths that cannot be laid aside because they are part of God’s Revelation. . . . The Deposit of Faith does not change. The Magisterium, the living teaching office of the Church, is responsible, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for interpreting the Deposit of Faith.
7. Tradition is the process of passing on the Gospel message. Tradition, which began with the oral communication of the Gospel by the Apostles, was written down in the Scriptures, is handed down and lived out in the life of the Church, and is interpreted by the Magisterium under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Article 2: The Holy Trinity and the Liturgy

1. The Church’s liturgy is Trinitarian. In the liturgy, the three Divine Persons of the Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit—are at work; and through the liturgy, the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the central mystery of the Christian faith, is more deeply revealed.
2. The Holy Spirit is active in the liturgy, preparing us to encounter Christ. The Holy Spirit reveals Christ’s presence in the assembly, in Scripture, and in the sacramental actions of liturgical celebrations.



3. By Christ's transforming power, the Holy Spirit makes the saving work of Christ present and active, here and now, for us. When we leave the liturgy, we carry the message of God's love to all we meet, through the work of the Holy Spirit.
4. In every liturgy, especially the Seven Sacraments, the Church encounters God—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Through this encounter and the outpouring of God's grace, we are justified, which means we are freed from sin, and we are sanctified, which means we are made holy and share in the divine life.
5. How, then, is Christ present in the liturgy? He is present in the priest, who acts in the person of Christ. He is present in the assembly because we are the Body of Christ. He is present in the Word of God, the Scriptures. God's Word is an essential element of every liturgy and is proclaimed during the Liturgy of the Word.
6. Christ is present in many ways in the liturgy, but in a special way in the Sacrament of the Eucharist. We receive Christ's Body and Blood during Communion.

Article 3: The Liturgical Year

1. The Liturgical Year begins in Advent. This season begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas.
2. The Epiphany celebrates the Revelation of the Savior to the Gentiles.
3. The season's (Easter) liturgical color is white or gold. During this season, the liturgical readings focus on the Risen Jesus and the growth of the Church in the Acts of the Apostles.
4. Ordinary Time is not called ordinary because the Church considers it “nothing special.” It is called ordinary because its days are numbered with ordinal numbers (that is, the First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, and so forth).
5. In Ordinary Time, the Church reflects on the life of Jesus Christ—his mission, his miracles, and his teachings. . . . The week preceding Easter begins on Palm (Passion) Sunday and is called Holy Week. During this week, we remember in the most intense way possible the suffering and death of Christ.

Article 4: Liturgical Rites and Traditions

1. It is one of the twenty-three Eastern Catholic Churches, which, after the schism of 1054, either chose to remain united with the Catholic Church or later reunited with it. These Churches maintain unity in Apostolic Tradition and Apostolic Succession. To this day, Eastern Catholic Churches follow their own ancient liturgical tradition.

Chapter 2: Sacraments

Article 6: Symbols and Rituals

1. A ritual is an established pattern of actions, usually including words. The words and actions have symbolic meaning, so “symbolic action” is another way to refer to a ritual.
2. Symbols and rituals are related, but they are not exactly the same thing. The word symbol comes from a Greek word meaning “to throw together.”



Article 7: Sacraments: Sign and Mystery

1. “The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted by the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, number 1131).
2. The core of every sacrament is the Paschal Mystery of Christ—his Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven—and his promise to be with us always.
3. You may recall that *Paschal* refers to the Passover, when the angel *passed over* the houses of the Israelites and spared their firstborn sons, and, centuries later, when Jesus, the Son of God, *passed over* from death to life, and spared us from eternal death.
4. In the Gospel of John, the miracles of Jesus are called signs not because they are commands or directions, but because they point to a deeper reality: that God is here among us.
5. The Paschal Mystery is the work of salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ mainly through his Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension.
6. None of us is in the position to judge another person’s holiness or “righteousness” or closeness to God. The power of Christ and the Holy Spirit act in the sacraments independently of the personal holiness of the person administering the sacrament.

Article 8: Sacraments: Signs of Christ

1. The communication or dispensation of the fruits of Christ’s Paschal Mystery in the celebration of the Church’s sacramental liturgy is called the sacramental economy.
2. The sacramental economy runs on grace. Try to remember that grace is not a thing; rather, grace is a relationship with God and a participation in his life.
3. Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we were adopted as God’s sons and daughters, and we have been living “in grace” (as long as we have steered clear of mortal sin) since that moment.
4. Grace has made us God’s children and, in Christ, has brought us into the life of the Trinity.
5. Sanctifying grace is the free gift of God’s life first given to us at Baptism and renewed in us in all the sacraments. Sanctifying grace orients us toward God.
6. [Sanctifying grace] is distinct from actual graces, which are God’s interventions in our lives. His initiative in the work of grace both prepares us to respond and demands that we respond, but it does not limit our freedom.
7. True happiness and true freedom come from responding to grace.

Article 9: Sacraments: Signs of Redemption

1. Generally, we can say that to redeem something implies taking something from one state of being to another. . . . Meanings for the word redemption include “deliverance” or “rescue.”
2. The People of God at the time of Jesus definitely needed redemption. They needed to be brought back to the truth about God and about themselves and into a graced relationship with God, freed from the burden of sin.



Article 10: The Praying Church

1. If prayer is an encounter with God, where do we learn to pray? We need only look directly to God's Revelation in Scripture. The word *pray*, in its various forms, is used almost four hundred times!
2. Many verses can encourage our daily communication with God and give us direction for prayers of healing, strength, protection, petition, devotion, and more.
3. The liturgy, the public prayer of the Church, is our greatest prayer. The Liturgy of the Hours, prayer designated for certain hours of the day, is part of the public prayer of the Church.
4. The Liturgy of the Hours is also known as the Divine Office, the official, public, daily prayer of the Catholic Church. The Divine Office provides standard prayers, Scripture readings, and reflections at regular hours throughout the day.
5. The Liturgy of the Hours is the prayer of the whole People of God. . . . The ordained members of the Church are also obliged to pray the Liturgy of the Hours each day.
6. Some ways we pray with others spring from particular cultures or local traditions. These expressions of faith are called popular piety. *Piety* means religious reverence or devotion. . . . Although these popular expressions of faith are not part of the official liturgy, the Church encourages them as long as they express the spirit of the Gospels and offer sound guidance in living a Christian life.
7. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, various forms of prayer have arisen in the Church: blessing or adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise. . . . In the Christian tradition, three major expressions of the life of prayer have come down to us. They are vocal prayer, meditation, and contemplation.
8. Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church that prepare us to receive God's grace and to cooperate with it.

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