

Liturgy Is Our Nourishment

We come to the liturgy hungry and thirsty for the word, for the assembly, for the body and blood of the Lord. We are nourished by the bread of life and by the community which shares in this banquet. We need the liturgy – “like food and drink, like sleep and work, like friends.” We need to “gather at the holy table and give God thanks and praise over the bread and wine which are for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and finally to go from that room to our separate worlds... nourished by the sacred banquet, ready to make all God’s creation and all the work of human hands into the kingdom we have glimpsed.”

At the liturgy’s table, we stand as equals. We are making an image of God’s reign which we seek. At this table we accept the happy responsibility for feeding all the hungry and all the hungers of the world.

1. What are all the sources of nourishment in your life? Think about people, places, recreation, food.
2. The fast before communion used to begin at midnight. Today we are asked to fast for one hour before communion, a token, a reminder. This is a fast of anticipation and preparation. Can fasting making you aware of your need for the Eucharist? What kinds of fasting might be needed in the hours before liturgy?
3. The collection is to be “for the poor and the church.” For you, who are the poor? In what ways does the parish care for the poor? How often and by whom is that commitment examined? How important are working for justice and works of charity to the parish as a whole? Is there a growing sense of how this is bound to our Sunday Eucharist?
4. Can you hunger for Eucharist when your life is full? Can you hunger for Eucharist when you can’t buy next week’s groceries?
5. The beauty of the liturgy is abounding. Does this describe this parish’s liturgy? Consider the singing, the assembly’s responses, the vestments, the vessels. What else? Can you expect to agree on what is beautiful?
6. How is your daily prayer nourished by the Sunday liturgy?

Taken from “Guide for the Assembly” by Cardinal Joseph Bernardin.