

Liturgy Is Our Promise

When we participate actively, honestly and enthusiastically in liturgy, we make promises – to ourselves, to this gathered church, to God. “In all we have done at Mass, we have been uttering promises to one another, creating visions for one another, giving one another hope.” We promise to live gospel lives, “to be a holy communion, to grow in love and holiness for one another’s sake.” We promise “to become the bread of life and cup of blessing for the world.” All our promising is foolishness unless we have first believed a promise.

“Participation in liturgy does not exhaust our duties as Christians. We shall be judged for attending to justice and giving witness to the truth, for hungry people fed and prisoners visited... Liturgy makes us a people whose hearts are set on such deeds.” We leave liturgy strengthened by the promise we have received, and with promises of our own to keep, “a holy people always in mission... to recreate the world and in doing so prepare ourselves for fulfillment in heaven.”

1. How have you learned about promises, making them, keeping them?
2. What speaks to you of God’s promises when you participate in Sunday liturgy?
3. “Our voices united in the acclamations express our willingness to be counted as witnesses to the gospel, with a mission to the world.” What do you find challenging in these words about the dismissal at Sunday liturgy?
4. Liturgy makes us “the bread of life and the cup of blessing for the world.” How does this happen in this parish? How does it happen in the quiet work of ordinary Catholic people?
5. “How can we – in liturgy and in life – show the world a community where old age is loved and respected, where the sufferings of the poor are known and remedies are sought, where we can say with Paul that among us ‘there does not exist male or female but all are one in Christ Jesus’?”

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