

Basic Liturgical Formation

The necessity for ongoing liturgical catechesis of all members of the assembly is self-evident.

At Mass — that is, the Lord's Supper — the People of God is called together, with a priest presiding and acting in the person of Christ, to celebrate the memorial of the Lord, the Eucharistic Sacrifice. For this reason Christ's promise applies in an outstanding way to such a local gathering of the holy Church: 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in their midst' (Mt 18:20). For in the celebration of Mass, in which the Sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated, Christ is really present in the very liturgical assembly gathered in his name, in the person of the minister, in his word, and indeed substantially and continuously under the Eucharistic species.

The Mass is made up, as it were, of two parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. These, however, are so closely interconnected that they form but one single act of worship. For in the Mass the table both of God's word and of Christ's Body is prepared, from which the faithful may be instructed and refreshed. There are also certain rites that open and conclude the celebration.

CTM 13, GIRM 27–28

Some Questions

- What are the opportunities for basic liturgical formation in the parish?
- What basic formation is available to liturgical ministers so that they understand their role in the context of the whole celebration?
- What opportunities for adult formation are available in the parish or deanery?

Further References

- For reference to the need to provide formation see the sheet **1022** *Formation for the Assembly*
- For the content of the formation see the resources mentioned in the right hand column and *Celebrating the Mass*.

Practical Points

- The primary purpose of liturgical formation for the assembly is to enable greater participation in the liturgy.
- Liturgy well celebrated can be the best form of formation:
 - By the reverence shown to Christ present not in the Eucharistic species but also in the word, the assembly and the minister.
 - By clarity and integrity — only one action at a time.
- Many of the resources prepared to accompany the publication of the *General Instruction* are intended for the formation of the assembly. In particular — *With Hearts and Minds* and *In Communion with Christ*.

**Liturgy
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Questions for Groups

1. What is good about current practice?
What concerns do you have?

4. Who is most directly involved in these matters, e.g. liturgical ministers?
What formation/information is necessary to engage them in the renewal of current practice?

2. In what ways does the documentation affirm or challenge your current practice?

5. How will the assembly be engaged in the process?
What, in particular, needs addressing at Sunday and/or weekday celebrations?

3. Prioritise the issues you have identified.

6. How will you know whether the formation has worked?