

Weekly Message from Fr William for Fifteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time 2022

Dear People of St Mary's

On the feast of Corpus Christi (Sunday 19th June) we had optional Eucharistic Adoration after all three Sunday masses for anyone that wanted to stay behind for it. Since then there's been a request to have this more often, maybe even once a month. Well, I'm not sure about once a month but I'd be very happy to arrange this occasionally. So there will be Eucharistic Adoration this Sunday after all three masses for anybody that would like to stay for it. It's arguably the most treasured devotion in our Catholic spirituality.

This is also a good time to introduce this because it serves to highlight the important distinction for us between Liturgy and Devotions, at a time when Pope Francis has just released his Apostolic Letter on the Liturgy (see last Sunday's weekly message).

Liturgy/Devotions – What's the difference?

Liturgy is the celebration of the Mass plus the celebration of the other sacraments instituted by Christ. Devotions on the other hand are acts of love for Christ or his saints introduced by Christians down the centuries since Christ. Eucharistic Adoration for example was introduced in the 11th century during the papacy of Pope Gregory VII.

Liturgy is therefore core to our Christian spirituality. Devotions are optional extras that can enrich our Christian spirituality and deepen our love.

What other differences? Liturgy is an action. And it's an action that we do together as the Body of Christ. The word literally means 'the action of the people' (Greek: *litos* = people; *urgos* = action). The action is offering ourselves with Christ and in Christ to the Father in the Mass, having been joined to Christ in Baptism. The Devotion we call Eucharistic Adoration takes an element from the Mass, namely Christ's Real Presence in the consecrated host, and adores him. It's not an action in the way that the Liturgy is an action. And it doesn't have to be us all together doing the same thing. Adoration can be done in different ways as individuals, each in our own way: kneeling, sitting, standing, praying, praising, adoring, or just being with him in a wordless way and being aware of his presence.

Liturgy, and the devotion we call Eucharistic Adoration, throw light on each other. As some of us may take the opportunity to spend some time in Eucharistic Adoration this Sunday, I would encourage all to read Pope Francis' apostolic letter on the Liturgy, or at least my one page summary in last Sunday's weekly message (all weekly messages are still on the website). Or if you want to read the whole apostolic letter itself, click on the link *Desiderio Desideravi* on the website homepage. It's the Latin name of this apostolic letter.



Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 10 July 2022