

Weekly Message from Fr William for Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time 2022

Dear People of St Mary's

Pope Francis – *Desiderio Desideravi* (DD)

Over the last few weeks I've given you a 3-page summary of this recent apostolic letter on the Liturgy. (See weekly messages 3rd July, 31st July and 21st August). It would be good now to begin to put some of his exhortation into practice. The good news is that over the last few years we've already embraced a lot of the things he writes about.

He writes: 'The subject acting in the Liturgy is always and only *Christ-Church*', in other words He + We acting in the Liturgy together as one. (DD15). We can experience something of this liturgical oneness when we sing together, when we speak together with one voice, and when we make the same liturgical gestures together.

So a practical thing we can do is to work on our togetherness at particular points in the mass, to enhance our experience of oneness. We can look at particular examples of this together in church this Sunday. This would be a good starting point for our ongoing liturgical formation. (Pope Francis – 'We are in need of a serious and dynamic liturgical formation' DD31)

He writes about this *togetherness* again later in the letter, about 'Everybody doing together the same gesture, everybody speaking together with one voice – this', he writes, 'transmits to each individual the energy of the entire assembly.' (DD51) I hope you've experienced something of this 'together-energy' already, for example in the Creed, when we lift up our voices together in our profession of faith. Let's extend this to other parts of the mass as well.

Throughout this letter, Francis makes clear that the celebration of the Liturgy is meant to be something experienced, and experienced by the whole assembly, the whole congregation. I'll look with you in future weeks at what else we might expect to experience in the celebration of the Liturgy, and the awareness this brings.

But as a starting point this week, as a starting point for our ongoing liturgical formation, let's home in on this experience of *togetherness* in our celebration of the Liturgy, and on what this experience of *togetherness* brings us, namely an ever deeper awareness that we celebrate the Liturgy as one body – Christ and his Church, Head and Members.

Next Sunday we'll be having an appeal for donations towards the Pakistan Emergency Relief programme.

God bless you!



Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, 4 september 2022