

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

Dear People of St Mary's

Why have I been inviting you to stand with me for the Eucharistic Prayer? Because the church has known from its earliest days that we, priest+people, we all share in the priesthood of Christ. It means we all offer the sacrifice of the Mass together. The Liturgy is in the first place an action of Christ: Christ offering himself to the Father. Then, because we have been baptised into Christ to become part of his body, we are now one with him in this action. It's now an action of the whole Church, Christ+HisBody, Head+Members, a totality offering itself in sacrifice to the Father. It's easier for us to be aware that we are actively doing this together when we stand together to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. When I'm standing and you're kneeling it's harder to maintain this awareness that we're doing it together.

The Second Vatican Council is now reminding us that we all offer the sacrifice of the Mass together:

'All the baptised are consecrated as a holy priesthood. Therefore all should present themselves as a living sacrifice to God' (*Lumen Gentium* 10)

The Liturgy is 'performed by the Mystical Body of Christ, that is by the Head and His members (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* 7)

Hence this great call of the Council to full, conscious and active participation:

'Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgical celebrations, which is called for by the very nature of the Liturgy.' (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* 14)

Pope Francis has now reinforced this call to recover our full participation in the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy in his letter *Desiderio Desideravi* (DD). Pope Francis:

'The subject acting in the Liturgy is always and only *Christ+Church*.' (DD15)

'The action of the Liturgy does not belong to the individual, but to the totality of the faithful united to Christ...by means of the symbolic actions of the body.' DD19

This self-offering of the Christ-Church totality is made present and active in the celebration of the Liturgy 'by means of signs addressed to the senses'. (DD21)

'Everybody doing together the same gesture, everybody speaking together in on voice – this transmits to each individual the energy of the entire assembly. (DD51)

I want to say a bit more about this at Mass this Sunday.

By contrast to this focus on the Liturgy with Pope Francis we'll also have optional Eucharistic adoration in church after Mass this Sunday. Haven't had this for six weeks.

The quince tree is laden with fruit. Please help yourself. Take the highest you can reach so that those less tall can reach some as well.



Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, 18 september 2022