

CHAPTER 10

SECTION 2

WHAT IS THE CHURCH SAYING

What is the Church saying?

“The fundamental importance of Sunday has been recognized through two thousand years of history and was emphatically restated by the Second Vatican Council: "Every seven days, the Church celebrates the Easter mystery. This is a tradition going back to the Apostles, taking its origin from the actual day of Christ's Resurrection — a day thus appropriately designated 'the Lord's Day'." Dies Domini – Pope St. John Paul II

“..the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows” Sacrosanctum Concillium, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (10)

“Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy.” Sacrosanctum Concillium, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (14)

“...every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree.” Sacrosanctum Concillium, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* (5)

“it would be a mistake not to see in the homily an important and very adaptable instrument of evangelization...This preaching, inserted in a unique way into the Eucharistic celebration, from which it receives special force and vigor, certainly has a particular role in evangelization, to the extent that it expresses the profound faith of the sacred minister and is impregnated with love...”
Evangelli Nuntiandi, *Evangelization in the Modern World* - Pope Paul VI (43)

“Given the nature of Sunday Mass and its importance in the lives of the faithful, it **must be prepared with special care**. In ways dictated by pastoral experience and local custom in keeping with liturgical norms, efforts must be made to ensure that the celebration has the festive character appropriate to the day commemorating the Lord's Resurrection. To this end, it is important to devote attention to the *songs used by the assembly*, since singing is a particularly apt way to express a joyful heart, accentuating the solemnity of the celebration and fostering the sense of a common faith and a shared love. Care must be taken to ensure the quality, both of the texts and of the melodies, so that what is proposed today as new and creative will conform to liturgical requirements and be worthy of the Church's tradition which, in the field of sacred music, boasts a priceless heritage.” Die Dominis, Pope St. John Paul II (50)

What is Pope Francis saying?

“Evangelization with joy becomes beauty in the liturgy, as part of our daily concern to spread goodness. The Church evangelizes and is herself evangelized through the beauty of the liturgy, which is both a celebration of the task of evangelization and the source of her renewed self-giving.” Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium ; Joy of the Gospel*, no. 24

“The homily takes up once more the dialogue which the Lord has already established with his people. The preacher must know the heart of his community, in order to realize where its desire for God is alive and ardent, as well as where that dialogue, once loving, has been thwarted and is now barren.” Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium ; Joy of the Gospel*, no. 138

“Preparation for preaching is so important a task that a prolonged time of study, prayer, reflection and pastoral creativity should be devoted to it.” Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium (Joy of the Gospel)*, no. 145

“Some pastors argue that such preparation is not possible given the vast number of tasks which they must perform; nonetheless, I presume to ask that each week a sufficient portion of personal and community time be dedicated to this task, even if less time has to be given to other important activities. Trust in the Holy Spirit who is at work during the homily is not merely passive but active and creative. It demands that we offer ourselves and all our abilities as instruments (cf. *Rom 12:1*) which God can use. A preacher who does not prepare is not “spiritual”; he is dishonest and irresponsible with the gifts he has received.” Pope Francis, *Evangelii gaudium (Joy of the Gospel)*, no. 145

What is the USCCB saying?

“When the liturgy of a parish is celebrated well, the faith of the members of the community is strengthened. It is also a door to evangelization. The community of faith is a place of invitation, welcome, and hospitality, especially for those who are inquiring or returning.

The Church’s liturgy, by its very nature as a proclamation and enactment of the Good News of salvation, is an evangelical act: “The Church evangelizes and is herself evangelized through the beauty of the liturgy, which is both a celebration of the task of evangelization and the source of her renewed self-giving.”

Living as Missionary Disciple, USCCB