You share a great gift with children by teaching them to participate in liturgy from an early age. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the first document produced by the Second Vatican Council in 1963, tells us that liturgy is “the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit” (14). All of us, including children, are called to take part fully in the sacred action, conscious of what we are doing (CSL, 48).

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, which called for the reform and promotion of the liturgy, affirmed our participation in the liturgy as an exercise of the priestly office of Christ, in which all the faithful share in by reason of their Baptism. Therefore, the liturgy is performed by the entire Mystical Body of Christ: the Head and his members. In the restoration of the liturgy, the full, conscious, and active participation of all the faithful was to be considered before all else.

To this end, the Constitution recognized an urgent need for pastors to promote the liturgical instruction of the faithful, not only in word but also by example (19). In your ministry with children, you collaborate with pastors in this important responsibility when you help children to encounter Christ in Scripture and prayer, model reverent behavior, and foster their participation in the liturgy. As you teach and form children to participate in the liturgy, you help them develop their baptismal call as members of Christ’s Body.

As we prepare to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the publication of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the Church offers gratitude for your contribution and engagement in the liturgy. We encourage you to reflect further on the value of your ministry, and to explore the rich text of this document on your own or with a study group. Finally, we pray that our liturgical celebrations increasingly gather the entire Body of Christ into deep and lasting communion.