“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” (7). This statement from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the first document produced by the Second Vatican Council in 1963, is a conviction you share and promote through your ministry to the parish’s liturgy committee.

In calling for the reform and promotion of the liturgy, the Council Fathers identified the liturgy as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus, in which “the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and his members” (CSL, 7). The liturgical texts and rites were revised in order to more clearly express the holy things they signify, allowing the Christian people “to understand them with ease and take part in the rites fully” (CSL, 21).

The Constitution set forth a renewed promotion of liturgy in seminaries and religious houses of study (15), and called for the establishment of liturgical commissions to regulate the pastoral-liturgical actions throughout the diocese (44). It also recognized that liturgy is comprised of immutable elements divinely instituted, but also elements subject to change and adaptation. As a member of the liturgy committee, you cooperate to safeguard the divinely instituted elements in our liturgical tradition, and carefully engage the adaptations in order to enable your parish community to participate more fully in the liturgy.

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.