

**Ask a Priest!**  
**July 12, 2021**

**Question: What does it mean to *minister to the Lord*?** For example: "Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation, giving thanks that you have held us worthy to be in your presence and **minister to you.**"

**Answer:** Any relationship is two-way, and even as God ministers to us, especially in our needs, we are also invited to minister to Him. Let's think about the word "to minister" in the context of the Gospel of Matthew. After Jesus was tempted in the desert, "angels came and ministered to him." (4:11) Now, were they wearing vestments and swinging incense? Maybe. But what the Gospel is getting at is the angels attending to his needs. They were serving him. That is how we can "minister" to Christ – by serving Him, whether present in our brothers & sisters, or receiving our thanks and praise offered to Him in the context of the Mass! The Eucharistic liturgy is both God's gift to us, and our way of rendering back to Him what is owed to Him. ("Eucharist" translates into "Thanksgiving" in Greek.)

Each of us are present at the liturgy to minister to Jesus, but not necessarily in the same way. The priest, for example, ministers in a special way because of his priesthood. So the word "ministry" in a technical sense applies to his service—offering the Sacrifice to God, in the Person of Christ. But we also share in that ministry, uniting ours as one with the priest's action.

Also, we serve and minister to Christ when we serve and minister to others, i.e. family, community, parish, coworkers, etc. In the *Morning Offering* prayer, we pray "I offer You my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world." The Mass is the highpoint of that offering of all that we say and do. Our whole lives are an offering or "ministering to Jesus" by way of our service and interactions with others. Jesus described the Final Judgement with the King answering those before him saying, "Truly I say to you, whatsoever you did for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of Mine, you did it for Me." -Matthew 25:40