

Like many of the young people who have already posted, I am a graduate of St. John's School of Theology-Seminary. I do not, however, consider myself to be a liturgical scholar. I am interested in the practical and applicable aspects of liturgy and how these affect the liturgical worship of my community. I will write a bit about my parish experiences and how that informs my thoughts on liturgy.

I have noticed more and more that there is little reverence for the Eucharist—and all the sacraments—among the people. The Eucharistic Chapel doubles as a cry room on weekends; communion is distributed from baskets at large Christmas and Easter Masses; I was recently offered the “bread of Christ” at a funeral mass [not from one of the parish's ministers, at least]; people rarely remember to genuflect toward the Tabernacle or to bow when they receive communion; just to name a few. Also, baptisms are hurried and often not included as part of the Sunday celebration, marriage liturgies are as brief as possible in order to get to the reception, and many priests alter, edit, or omit prayers during the mass.

In the face of this actual parish experience, anything that encourages more reverence sounds positive to me. The Second Vatican Council never intended to allow decreasing reverence for the sacraments. Everyone knows the quote that the Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life” (LG, 11). I will welcome any developments that reinforce this level of care when preparing and attending liturgical celebrations. “The source and summit,” really? Then why don't we treat it that way? Why do we hurry through Mass to get it done in one hour or less? Why do we sing only half the hymn? Why do we allow people to have chatty conversations in the Presence of Christ contained in the Tabernacle?

I know the Rites books and the Sacramentary are full of beautiful prayers and rubrics for celebrating the sacraments, but they are often not even referred to when preparing liturgy. I was married back in August and I prepared my own wedding liturgy because I could and I wanted it to be done right. I am still getting comments from those who attended that it was one of the most beautiful and sacramental marriages they have ever attended. My secret? I studied the *Rite of Marriage* and did everything it suggested. Down to the letter. That sucker even suggests which prefaces and collects to use from the Sacramentary and tells you what page to turn to.

Why isn't this rich liturgical tradition being used!?

Maybe the Church needs a huge change to make us aware of what we have. Our liturgy is amazing and beautiful and carefully crafted if we let it be. If that makes me “reform” or “reform of the reform” I don't know. I just want liturgy that is prayerful and spiritual and nourishing.