

Faith on Fire
The Fifth Step
Commitment to a Liturgical Piety

So far, I have spoken of four steps that can help our faith grow into a faith that is on fire for Jesus Christ: Commitment to renewal, commitment to prayer, commitment to communal worship, and commitment to a sacramental life. Today I am writing about the fifth step that can help us grow in faith: *commitment to a liturgical piety*.

A liturgical piety is a piety that is deeply grounded in the liturgy we celebrate each week and throughout the liturgical year. It is a piety that is nourished by the mystery of the liturgical year and the mystery of the Mass. Let me give you some concrete examples of what I mean.

First, and most importantly, a liturgical piety is a Eucharistic piety; it revolves around the gift of the Eucharist that we receive at Mass. There is nothing more important in our Catholic life than the reception of Holy Communion. When we receive the Eucharist, Christ is present to us; we are in Christ; and we are united in one Body, the Body of Christ.

Can you imagine living your life without the Eucharist? What if someone said that you may never receive Holy Communion. That would upset and disturb you, and rightly so. For the Eucharist is food for the journey, the moment when we are most intimately united with Christ. But this moment doesn't end at Mass. It stays and sustains us throughout the week because the Eucharist is the source of our holiness and piety.

Second, a liturgical piety is nourished by the Church's liturgical each. Each season of the year emphasizes and highlights some aspect of our spiritual life. *Advent* strengthens our hope as we wait for the coming of the Lord in the mystery of Christmas and at the end of the ages. *Christmas* roots us in the mystery of the Word made Flesh. It teaches us that God is "God-for-us" in Jesus Christ. *Lent* calls us to a deep conversion and renewal. *Easter* teaches us the Paschal Mystery, the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection. *Ordinary Time* provide us with lessons from the life and teaching of Jesus, week after week, as we hear the Gospel proclaimed.

All of us have a piety, which we express in different ways. Each of us has certain prayers and practices we love and cherish, and that is good. The deepest source of our piety, however, is Jesus Christ who gives himself to us in the Eucharist and throughout the liturgical year.

Do you want to grow in piety? Do you want to become holy? Do you want a faith that is on fire for the Lord? If you do, pay more attention to the liturgy. Grow in a liturgical piety grounded in the Eucharist and the Church's liturgical year. *Father Matera*