

## Ten After Ten, Session 83: Other Liturgical Celebrations

1667 Holy Mother Church has, moreover, instituted sacramentals. These are sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the sacraments. They signify effects, particularly of a spiritual nature, which are obtained through the intercession of the Church. By them men are disposed to receive the chief effect of the sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy.

1668 Sacramentals are instituted for the sanctification of certain ministries of the Church, certain states of life, a great variety of circumstances in Christian life, and the use of many things helpful to man...they always include a prayer, often accompanied by a specific sign, such as the laying on of hands, the sign of the cross, or the sprinkling of holy water.

1669 Sacramentals derive from the baptismal priesthood: every baptized person is called to be a "blessing," and to bless. Hence lay people may preside at certain blessings; the more a blessing concerns ecclesial and sacramental life, the more is its administration reserved to the ordained ministry.

1670 Sacramentals do not confer the grace of the Holy Spirit in the way that the sacraments do, but by the Church's prayer, they prepare us to receive grace and dispose us to cooperate with it.

1671 Among sacramental, blessings (of persons, meals, objects, and places) come first. Every blessing praises God and prays for his gifts. In Christ, Christians are blessed by God the Father with every spiritual blessing.

1672 Certain blessings have a lasting importance because they consecrate persons to God, or reserve objects and places for liturgical use. Among those blessings which are intended for persons...the blessing of the abbot or abbess of a monastery, the consecration of virgins and widows, the rite of religious profession and the blessing of certain ministries of the Church. The dedication or blessing of a church or an altar, the blessing of holy oils, vessels, and vestments, bells, etc., can be mentioned as examples of blessings that concern objects.

1673 When the Church asks publicly and authoritatively in the name of Jesus Christ that a person or object be protected against the power of the Evil One and withdrawn from his dominion, it is called exorcism...before an exorcism is performed, it is important to ascertain that one is dealing with the presence of the Evil One, and not an illness.

1674 The religious sense of the Christian people has always found expression in various forms of piety surrounding the Church's sacramental life, such as the veneration of relics, visits to sanctuaries, pilgrimages, processions, the stations of the cross, religious dances, the rosary, medals, etc.

1675 These expressions of piety extend the liturgical life of the Church, but do not replace it...the liturgy by its very nature is far superior to any of them.

1676 Pastoral discernment is needed to sustain and support popular piety and, if necessary, to purify and correct the religious sense which underlies these devotions so that the faithful may advance in knowledge of the mystery of Christ. Their exercise is subject to the care and judgment of the bishops and to the general norms of the Church.

1680 All the sacraments, and principally those of Christian initiation, have as their goal the last Passover of the child of God which, through death, leads him into the life of the Kingdom. Then what he confessed in faith and hope will be fulfilled: "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come."

1681 The Christian meaning of death is revealed in the light of the Paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ in whom resides our only hope.

1682 For the Christian the day of death inaugurates, at the end of his sacramental life, the fulfillment of his new birth begun at Baptism, the definitive “conformity” to “the image of the Son” conferred by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and participation in the feast of the Kingdom which was anticipated in the Eucharist—even if final purifications are still necessary for him in order to be clothed with the nuptial garment.

1683 The Church who, as Mother, has borne the Christian sacramentally in her womb during his earthly pilgrimage, accompanies him at his journey’s end, in order to surrender him “into the Father’s hands.” She offers to the Father, in Christ, the child of his grace, and she commits to the earth, in hope, the seed of the body that will rise in glory. This offering is fully celebrated in the Eucharistic sacrifice; the blessings before and after Mass are sacramentals.

1684 The Christian funeral is a liturgical celebration of the Church. The ministry of the Church in this instance aims at expressing efficacious communion with the deceased, at the participation in that communion of the community gathered for the funeral, and at the proclamation of eternal life to the community.

1685 The different funeral rites express the Paschal character of Christian death and are in keeping with the situations and traditions of each region, even as to the color of the liturgical vestments worn.

1686 This order of celebration is common to all the liturgical traditions and comprises four principal elements:

1687 The greeting of the community. A greeting of faith begins the celebration. Relatives and friends of the deceased are welcomed with a word of “consolation.” The community assembling in prayer also awaits the “words of eternal life.” The death of a member of the community is an event that should lead beyond the perspectives of “this world” and should draw the faithful into the true perspective of faith in the risen Christ.

1688 The liturgy of the Word during funerals demands very careful preparation because the assembly present for the funeral may include some faithful who rarely attend the liturgy, and friends of the deceased who are not Christians. The homily in particular must “avoid the literary genre of funeral eulogy” and illumine the mystery of Christian death in the light of the risen Christ.

1689 The Eucharistic Sacrifice. When the celebration takes place in church, the Eucharist is the heart of the Paschal reality of Christian death. In the Eucharist, the Church expresses her efficacious communion with the departed: offering to the Father in the Holy Spirit the sacrifice of the death and resurrection of Christ, she asks to purify his child of his sins and their consequences, and to admit him to the Paschal fullness of the table of the Kingdom.

1690 A farewell to the deceased is his final “commendation to God” by the Church. It is “the last farewell by which the Christian community greets one of its members before his body is brought to its tomb.”