



## A Worshiping Community (Worship)

### Opening Prayer

*It is suggested that a prayer space be arranged for the meeting. This could consist of a cloth of the appropriate liturgical season, a candle, a Bible, a cup, a loaf of bread, chaffs of wheat or grapes, etc.*

**Leader:** We gather in the presence of our heavenly Father and ask that our prayer be pleasing to God.

**All:** May our prayer rise up like incense, our hands outstretched like an evening offering.

**Leader:** In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

**All:** Amen.

**Opening Hymn** – Song of the Body of Christ (or another appropriate communion hymn)

### Scripture Reading

**Reader 1:** “The Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.” (1Cor. 11:23-26)

**Reader 2:** “And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him” (Luke 24:30)

**Reader 3:** “Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them” (Matt 18:20)

**Reader 4:** “The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.” (1 Cor 10:16-17)

**Reader 5:** “As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Cor. 12:13)

### Faith-Sharing Question

*All are asked to reflect on the following question with a partner. The leader then brings the group together and asks individuals to share with the entire group a thought which they were discussing.*

***In what ways are you the Body of Christ in the world?***

*This process is meant as a planning and brainstorming tool for Parish Pastoral Councils and parish members. In using this process to brainstorm objectives for a pastoral plan, it is suggested that you especially invite those members who are active leaders in the worship life of the parish. Also, it is important to record substantial points of the conversation and/or insights by using newsprint or other means.*

### **Reflecting on Church Teaching**

*Several individuals are asked to read the following statements for the group. After reading the quotes, discuss the reflection question in terms of the parish as a whole, making reference to the pastoral goals if possible.*

“The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed; it is also the source from which all its power flows. For the goal of the apostolic endeavor is that all who are made children of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his church, to take part in the sacrifice and to eat the Lord’s Supper.” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 10)

“The Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism. Full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else, for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 14)

“In the celebration of Mass, the faithful form a holy people, a people whom God has made his own, a royal priesthood, so that they may give thanks to God and offer the spotless Victim not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him, and so that they may learn to offer themselves. They should, moreover, endeavor to make this clear by their deep religious sense and their charity toward brothers and sisters who participate with them in the same celebration.” (General Instruction on the Roman Missal, 95)

#### **Reflection Question**

*Looking back at the Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist in our parish, remember a Sunday in which you felt most alive, most fulfilled, or most excited. Describe the liturgy in detail. What evoked that response in you?*

*In what ways does the parish encourage full, active, and conscious participation in the liturgy?*

#### **Brainstorming Objectives**

*At this point, the facilitator reads the goal which has been established around Worship. The goal should also be clearly posted in the room somewhere so that all can reflect on it.*

*The focus now is for all members to brainstorm ideas to accomplish the stated goal.*

*This begins by all individuals stating ideas that they have to accomplish the goals. These can be very specific.*

*All of these ideas are recorded on newsprint as people say them.*

*To get the conversation going, you may wish to have individuals talk with a partner first for a few minutes and then come together as a large group.*

## Finding the Common Threads

*Take a moment to read the following passages. Then based upon your conversation, answer the following focus questions and make a record of any consensus beginning to emerge among the group regarding future actions.*

“Write down the vision clearly upon the tablets, so that one can read it readily. For the vision still has its time, presses on to fulfillment, and will not disappoint; if it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late.” (Habakkuk 2:2-3)

“It is not therefore a matter of inventing a ‘new program’. The program already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition, it is the same as ever. But it must be translated into pastoral initiatives adapted to the circumstances of each community. It is in the local churches that the specific features of a detailed pastoral plan can be identified – goals and methods, formation and enrichment of the people involved, the search for necessary resources – which will enable the proclamation of Christ to reach people, mold communities, and have a deep and incisive influence in bringing Gospel values to bear in society and culture. What awaits us therefore is an exciting work of pastoral revitalization – a work involving all of us.” (Novo Millennio)

“Christ has no body now on earth but yours; yours are the only hands with which we can do his work, yours are the only feet with which he can go around the world, yours are the only eyes through which his compassion can shine forth upon a troubled world. Christ has no body on earth but yours.” (attributed to St. Teresa of Avila)



### Focus Questions

*Of all the ideas that have been mentioned here, choose three that would enable us to foster and nurture more vibrant liturgies and worship for all parishioners and accomplish our goal for the future. (This question is asked of all participants)*

*Are there specific ideas that are emerging as a clear consensus among the group? Which of the ideas are emerging as a consensus?*

*Which part of these common ideas can be brought to life? What resources will the parish need to achieve these goals? Who are the individuals and groups within our parish, our cluster and/or within the Diocese that need to be involved in making these goals a reality?*

