

**RECOVERING THE FULL
CELEBRATION OF THE LITURGY
PARTICIPATION**

*The Church earnestly desires that
all the faithful be led to that full, conscious,
and active participation in liturgical celebrations
called for by the very nature of the liturgy.*

—Sacrosanctum Concilium, 14

The outbreak of the Covid-19 Pandemic in 2020 required a temporary reduction of liturgical practices in the celebration of the Eucharist and administration of the sacraments. With almost all aspects of life returning to normalcy, it seems opportune for the Archdiocese of Newark to foster a renewed fullness in liturgical celebrations.

That all the baptized share in the one priesthood of Jesus Christ is the key to understanding the Church's call for full, conscious and active participation—thus transforming liturgical assemblies from passive congregations to dynamic worshipers.

Full participation means that every member of the community has a role in the liturgy; it does not mean that everyone does everything. Liturgy, like the Church, respects the different roles assigned by Christ; it allows all the different voices to blend in one great hymn of praise.

Active participation certainly means that, in gesture, word, song and service, all the members of the community take part in the act of worship, which is anything but inert or passive. Yet active participation does not preclude the active passivity of silence and listening: indeed, it demands it when listening to the readings or the homily or internalizing the prayers of the celebrant and the chants and music of the liturgy. These experiences are in their own way profoundly active.

Conscious participation calls for the entire community to be properly instructed in the mysteries of the liturgy. But it does not mean a constant attempt within the liturgy itself to make the implicit explicit, which may trivialize the act of worship. Nor does it mean the suppression of all subconscious experience, which is vital to liturgy which thrives on symbols.

Above all, the faithful form one body by the common offering of the Sacrifice and by participating together at the Lord's table. The role of the assembly cannot be underestimated, nor diminished. It is their right and duty by virtue of their Baptism.