

# Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy

## Study Guide

### Key Words and Concepts

**aggiornamento:** The word *aggiornamento* is an Italian word, meaning “bringing up to date.” *Aggiornamento* was one of the principles of the Second Vatican Council.

**assembly:** The members of the faithful who gather for worship is called the liturgical assembly. The assembly includes everyone present, including the priest celebrant, deacons, and ministers, as well as those who are in the pews.

**Book of the Gospels:** A large ceremonial book containing the Sunday Gospel for proclaiming the Gospel on Sundays and used during ordinations of deacons and bishops.

**Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy:** The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* was the first document of the Second Vatican Council, on December 4, 1963. It is also sometimes called by its Latin title: *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. It focuses on the renewal of the liturgy in order to increase active and conscious participation of the faithful.

**Council of Trent:** The Council of Trent was an Ecumenical Council that took place between 1545 and 1563. It is considered to be one of the Church’s most important Councils. It established the norms for liturgy that existed until the Second Vatican Council.

**ecumenism:** Ecumenism is the promotion of the restoration of unity among Christians of different denominations. The Second Vatican Council document *Unitatis Redintegratio*, the *Decree on Ecumenism*, provides a charter for ecumenical efforts.

**Ecumenical Council:** An Ecumenical Council is a gathering of all of the bishops of the world, in order to deliberate on matters of great importance to the Church. Ecumenical Councils are called by the pope. The Second Vatican Council was an Ecumenical Council.

**epistle:** Epistles are communications from the Apostles written to the various communities whom they served, such as the letters from Paul to the Corinthians and Colossians. The Second Reading at Sunday Mass often comes from one of the epistles in the New Testament.

**inculturation:** *Inculturation* refers to the way in which the Church inserts itself into the culture of the people. According to *Redemptionis Missio*, inculturation “means the

intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity” (52).

**Lectionary:** The Lectionary contains all the Scripture readings for Mass for the entire liturgical year. There are three cycles of Sunday readings (A, B, C) and two for weekday readings (I, II) as well as readings indicated for other rites (e.g., funerals, religious professions, etc.).

**Liturgical Movement:** The Liturgical Movement was a twentieth-century movement working for liturgical renewal. The Liturgical Movement can be seen as a precursor of the work of the Second Vatican Council.

**liturgy:** The word *liturgy* originally meant a public service or work done on behalf of the people. The official, public worship of the Church is called liturgy. Liturgy includes both the seven rites of the Church called the sacraments and non-sacramental rites, such as the Liturgy of the Hours, blessings, and funerals.

**Paschal Mystery:** The term used to refer to the “Christ event” or the core mystery of faith—Christ’s Passion, Death, Resurrection, and glorification (i.e., the Ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit). The Paschal Mystery is celebrated in each liturgy and sacrament celebrated in the Church.

**Pope John XXIII:** Pope John XXIII lived from 1881 until 1963, and was elected as pope in 1958. He called the historic Second Vatican Council, but did not live long enough to see its completion. He was beatified in 2000 by Pope John Paul II.

**Pope Paul VI:** Pope Paul VI lived from 1897 until 1978. He was elected pope in 1963, upon the death of his predecessor, Pope John XXIII. He continued the work of the Second Vatican Council, begun by Pope John XXIII.

**ressourcement:** The word *ressourcement* is a French word that means “going back to the source.” *Ressourcement* was one of the principles of the Second Vatican Council.



CONSTITUTION ON  
THE SACRED LITURGY  
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**Roman Missal:** The Roman Missal is the large book that contains the texts and rubrics for the celebration of the Mass. The third typical edition of the English translation of the Roman Missal was promulgated in 2012, which resulted in some changes to the words that we speak and sing at Mass.

**Second Vatican Council:** The Second Vatican Council, the twenty-first Ecumenical Council, was begun under the pontificate of Pope John XXIII in October of 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI in 1965. The Council formulated sixteen important documents, including the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, that renewed Catholic worship and life.

**vernacular:** Using the vernacular means choosing to use the language or dialect that is native to a particular nation or region.

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