

Eight signs of a healthy liturgy

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1. The liturgical action requires *little explanation or "translation"* (of its language, signs, symbolic actions, etc.) in order to, in Thomas Cranmer's words, "be understood by the people"?
2. The liturgical action constructs and presents *relationships* (in the action itself and not merely in its verbal content) in which the *dignity of every participant* is honored.
3. The liturgical action manifests the *unity* of the Body and its *diversity*, "without confusing the persons nor dividing the substance" (mirroring the Trinitarian life), so that participants are interdependent with each other in worship. No one person should be able to do everything.
4. The liturgical action employs *human elements* recognizable as human and, if possible, locally made, in order to make present the reality of God's work of sanctification, and thus reflecting the divine and human natures of Christ.
5. The liturgical action constructs and presents to the participants a *felt sense* of the Realm of God as envisioned in their given time, culture, and place.
6. The choice of elements of the liturgical action – *place and environment, ceremonial, music, objects* and their use – reflects a positive answer to the vision of the Realm of God mentioned in #4 above. Otherwise, they run the risk of acquiring a life and rationale of their own. ("Liturgy for liturgy's sake".)
7. The general structure of the liturgy clear and evident, so as to be recognized as one of a piece with other liturgies in other Christian traditions, denominations, provinces and cultures.
8. The liturgical action *embodies justice-doing*. This will not work if applied only to texts. Justice-doing must be applied to the enacted liturgy in a given time and place.



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