

Fr. Romeo Evangelista Homily  
Weekday Mass – Thursday, June 18, 2020  
Cycle A

There were several principles that guided the liturgical reform of the church in Vatican II. In fact, the first of the sixteen documents of Vatican II, the 21<sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council in the history of the Church, is the constitution of the Sacred Liturgy that is known by its Latin title *Sacrosanctum Consilium*. First, the Church fathers wanted the liturgy to be a true prayer of the entire community as the Body of Christ. Hence, the Mass parts and the readings were authorized to be translated into dialects and vernaculars. Liturgical ministries, such as assisting at the altar; proclaiming the Word, and distributing Holy Communion, were opened to lay persons after proper preparation. Songs had to be participative. Liturgy had to be living, a real lifting up of hearts and lives to God. Inculturation, to a certain point, and contextualization were encouraged.

Our Lord Jesus Christ's lesson on prayer makes us understand that the liturgical reform of the Church is not a fad. It is Gospel-based. Jesus himself wanted all prayers to be more than a following of prescribed forms and texts, but one that makes us aware of our true relationship with God.

I think it can be helpful for us to imagine in prayer how Jesus would feel when He facilitates a renewal recollection for lectors, commentators, and extraordinary ministers of the Holy Eucharist. What would He probably underscore in His teaching? He would most likely repeat His words: "When you pray – whether on your own, or with community liturgy – do not babble, do not simply stand in public, but enter your room, that is your heart, and lift up your hearts...." It is hearts over hands. It is spirit over form. It is truth over formularies.