

The primary symbols and gestures of liturgy also both form and transform us, the people of God. We are people of the *assembly* who *gather* to form the one Body of Christ. We are people of the *light* who proclaim our belief in “Christ, the light of the world” and *pass* this light on to others. We are people of the *cross* who, *marked* with this sign, live out this mystery in our daily lives.

We are people of the *water*, *immersed* forever into the Paschal mystery. We are people of the *oil*, *anointed* as Christ-figures in this world. We are people who have been *claimed by Christ and continue to be reconciled* and made one with him in the *laying on of hands*. We are people of the *white garment* who have *put on Christ*. And we are

people of the *bread and wine*, *nourished* on the Body and Blood of Christ, who are *sent forth* to be a eucharistic people in the world. These symbols and gestures continually appear throughout our many liturgical celebrations. Our full, conscious, and active participation in these symbols and gestures never ceases to form and transform us as the people of God and followers of Christ.

Thus, liturgy is considered the most powerful formative experience of Church. Both the General Directory for Catechesis (1998) and the U.S. National Directory for Catechesis (2005) call knowledge and participation in liturgy and sacraments one of the most important tasks of catechesis. (See *GDC* 87 and *NDC* 20).

For Reflection

What have you learned from this article about the powerful role liturgy plays in the spiritual formation of a Christian?