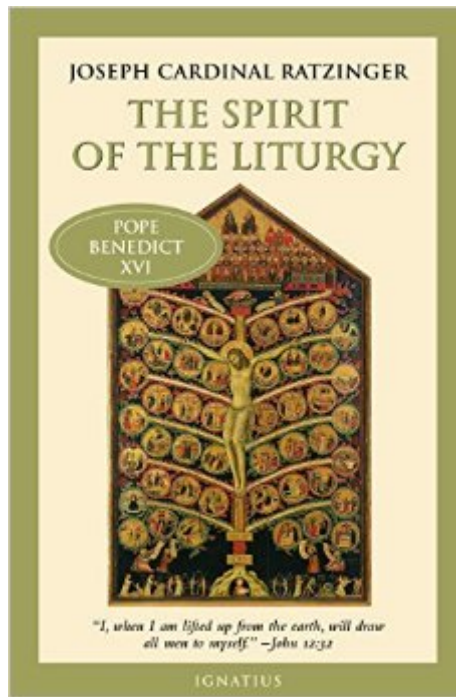


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The Spirit Of The Liturgy



Synopsis

New Softcover Edition with Index! Considered by Ratzinger devotees as his greatest work on the Liturgy, this profound and beautifully written treatment of the "great prayer of the Church" will help readers rediscover the Liturgy in all its hidden spiritual wealth and transcendent grandeur as the very center of our Christian life. Among the many liturgical issues that he covers in this work, Cardinal Ratzinger discusses fundamental misunderstandings of the Second Vatican Council's intentions for liturgical renewal, especially the orientation of prayer at the Eucharistic sacrifice, the placement of the tabernacle, and the posture of kneeling. Other important topics he discusses include the following: the essence of worship; Jewish roots and new elements of the Christian Liturgy; the historic and cosmic dimensions of the Liturgy; the relationship of the Liturgy to time and space; art, music, and the Liturgy; active participation of all the faithful; gestures, posture, and vestments. "My purpose here is to assist this renewal of understanding of the Liturgy. Its basic intentions coincide with what Guardini wanted to achieve. The only difference is that I have had to translate what Guardini did at the end of the First World War, in a totally different historical situation, into the context of our present-day questions, hopes, and dangers. Like Guardini, I am not attempting to involve myself with scholarly discussion and research. I am simply offering an aid to the understanding of the faith and to the right way to give the faith its central form of expression in the Liturgy." - Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, from the preface

Book Information

Paperback: 260 pages

Publisher: Ignatius Press; Second edition (August 31, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1586179977

ISBN-13: 978-1586179977

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.9 x 7.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars See all reviews (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #75,993 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Worship & Devotion > Rites & Ceremonies #630 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Catholicism #1157 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects

Customer Reviews

I have had The Spirit of the Liturgy on my reading list for some time now, and finally purchased it for

Kindle as I was about to board a coast-to-coast flight. Like all of Joseph Ratzinger/ Benedict XVI's scholarship, it is excellent, deep and merits reading slowly and carefully. There is a great deal of research, discussion and analysis on the origins and developments of the Mass. My favorite feature of this book is its deep reflection on the Eucharist. The Spirit of the Liturgy also provides a balanced perspective on some of the liturgical trends and controversies of the post Second Vatican Council era, cautioning us to keep our perspective focused on the person of Jesus Christ in the Mass and not allow liturgy, or forms of liturgy, to become something of an idol. While some of the more egregious "Simon & Garfunkle go to Mass" trends of the past half-century are addressed quite frankly (even sternly), neither is this book intended as ammunition for Latin Mass controversialists. Readers who draw such a controversy from this book are missing the point, as Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI's scholarship and conclusions look constantly toward the Lord, not to which way the Priest faces. I highly recommend this book to anyone who attends or ever did attend Mass-- it is a great help in coming to know the Lord Jesus even more deeply at Mass. Even if you are not Catholic and you only went to Mass once or twice for a wedding or funeral, this will help you understand why Catholics do what we do and increase your understanding of the deep significance, history and origins of the Liturgy.

If you want to understand the liturgy, this book is a must. Ratzinger explains how the liturgy developed, how it relates to Scripture, history, and the cosmos, and the difference between those aspects of the liturgy that are central and irreducible and those that may develop further. If you ever wonder whether the liturgy is more or less randomly formed according to people's preferences or whether it has connections to objective realities, this is the book to clarify those questions. It's not just an abstract thesis. Ratzinger explores questions of the placement of the altar, the difference between sacred and merely religious art, the quality of the music used in the liturgy, and other ultimately practical questions. Maybe there are things that give you anxiety in your parish church and you are not sure why. This book will help you articulate your thoughts and perhaps lead others to a more authentic celebration.

Pope Benedict is a deep thinker and a skilled theologian. This book is sometimes a challenge to get through, but also regularly provides gems that even non-theologians like me can appreciate and love.

This is an uplifting meditation on the Catholic Mass. I read it months ago; it seems that it had a lot of

good things in it. You'd wish that every american catholic would read this.

Excellent explanation of the liturgy and its symbolic richness.

Absolutely amazing. Ratzinger shows one of the best explanations of everything that has to do with the liturgy in a way that will humble anyone next time they go to mass

Excellent instruction from a brilliant Catholic mind. This book should be required reading for every seminarian, Priest and Bishop; not to mention laymen.

This is a phenomenal work of Liturgical Theology, yet accessible to most. It will be a classic if it is not already. Long Live Pope Benedict!

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