

Part Two

THE PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

- 327 Part Two of the Catechism presents the liturgical life of the Church, that is, the Church's prayerful gathering in Christ. This gathering, or assembly, takes place in the power of the Holy Spirit in order to give praise and thanksgiving to the Father. This assembly constitutes a communication of God with his people. Here the Lord continues to speak and here he renews his salvific deeds for his people. At the same time, it is also the response of the Church to all the Lord's deeds and words revealed in the history of salvation, and recognized and received by the Church in faith.
- 328 Chapter One, "The Prayer of the Ecclesial Community," describes the following aspects of the Church's liturgical life: The Divine Liturgy, the Holy Mysteries (Sacraments), and the Liturgy of the Hours, as well as various consecrations and blessings. Liturgical services accompany each Christian from birth to death. With the light of Divine Grace, they permeate every daily need, both material and spiritual. Through visible, earthly services—inseparably bound to the invisible and heavenly—the community of the faithful enters into communion with God and shows itself to be a single family of God, "with one heart and one voice."
- 329 Chapter Two, "The Time and Space of the Church's Prayer," explains how the prayer of the Church, closely bound to the rhythms of nature, fills the daily, weekly, and yearly cycles with celebration of the feasts of the Lord and the Mother of God, as well as memorials of the saints. As they pray, God enters into the time of people's lives. He places them within salvation history, the heart of which is the mystery of Christ's Pascha. The church building, sacred places, and the homes of Christians are the space designated for the prayer of the Church community. The furnishings of the church, iconography, church vessels, liturgical chant, and the domestic icon-corner—all of these are arranged so as to reveal the presence and the acts of God among his people. Within this sacred time and space Christians offer God spiritual sacrifice.
- 330 Chapter Three, "The Personal Prayer of the Christian," explains the place of the Christian's prayer within the prayer of the Church as a whole. Every Christian, as he or she takes part in the prayer of the Church community, also fills his or her everyday life with personal prayer. Precisely in this way is revealed our complete and committed response to the Father's call to be his sons and daughters. The Holy Spirit inspires Christian prayer. The Spirit unites those in prayer with Christ, and unites all personal prayer into a single voice of the Church.