



DIOCESE  OF PUEBLO



Meeting Jesus in the Mass

A Deeper Look at the Kerygma

‘I AM THE LIVING
BREAD THAT CAME
DOWN FROM
HEAVEN;
WHOEVER EATS
THIS BREAD WILL
LIVE FOREVER;
AND THE BREAD
THAT I WILL GIVE IS
MY FLESH FOR THE
LIFE OF THE WORLD.’

JOHN 6:51

This page intentionally left blank.

Table of Contents

- 03 Using this Booklet
- 04 Meeting Jesus
A 7-Week Kerygmatic Walk Through the Mass
- 05 Introduction and Preparing for Mass
- 07 The Introductory Rites
- 10 The Liturgy of the Word
- 14 The Liturgy of the Eucharist, Part A
- 17 The Liturgy of the Eucharist, Part B
- 21 The Liturgy of the Eucharist, Part C
- 25 The Concluding Rites

The Kerygma is, simply speaking, the proclamation of the Good News, the Story of Salvation. This Kerygma underlines the totality of the Christian journey: the goodness of creation, the fall into sin, the redemption in Jesus Christ, and our response as disciples in proclaiming the Good News of hope in happiness here on earth, and in certainty of eternal life to come. Hearing the Kerygma, understanding and internalizing it is essential to understanding our past, present, and future in faith. This is the gift of the Kerygma, expounded in the gift of the Eucharist.

A desire to learn more about the Mass, its meaning, and prayers, was universally expressed by parishioners throughout the Diocesan synodal process. Our recent Eucharistic Congress studied and prayed in discernment for a response. As a result, a Diocesan Eucharistic Revival Team was formed, and a process developed to create a catechetical “Kerygmatic Walk Through the Mass.” This little booklet, “Meeting Jesus in the Mass,” is the result of that process, and is now presented for use in your parish.

The contents are intended to inspire parishioners to learn and enter more deeply into the mysteries of the Mass and to connect more fully with Jesus and one another, through the sacred story of the Kerygma. While the liturgical rites and rubrics cannot be exhaustively explored in a simple “walk through” over a limited period, a deeper sense of the prayers, actions and mystery of the Mass is certainly attainable.

Following the process below, efforts in the parish for greater understanding and appreciation of the Eucharist are worthy of our complete attention. By engaging this topic formally, we are calling on the Holy Spirit to increase our receptivity, personally and communally, to the graces given in abundance in the celebration of the sacred mysteries, which is the Mass.

A 7-Week Kerygmatic Walk Through the Mass

1. This process will involve a weekly presentation at each Sunday Liturgy for seven consecutive weeks. This booklet contains the seven presentations, each to be read or presented by a priest or deacon just prior to the processional hymn of the Mass:

Week 1 – I. Introduction and Preparation for Mass

Week 2 – II. The Introductory Rites

Week 3 – III. The Liturgy of the Word

Week 4 – IV. The Liturgy of the Eucharist, Part A

Week 5 – V. The Liturgy of the Eucharist, Part B

Week 6 – VI. The Liturgy of the Eucharist, Part C

Week 7 – VII. The Concluding Rites

2. Incorporating one or more points of the weekly section/lesson will strengthen parish formation in the Kerygma. Keep in mind that the Kerygma encompasses four basic moments of Salvation History:

- The goodness of Creation
- The disruption of Sin
- The saving action of Jesus Christ
- Our response as Missionary Disciples.

3. Material from each corresponding section of this booklet will be available on the diocesan website for in advance of the weekly parish presentations.



Introduction and Preparation for Mass

The Sacred Liturgy is an invitation to enter more deeply into the truth of who we are in relationship with Our Lord. Deeply wounded by sin and fallen from original harmony with God and one another, God's loving faithfulness is seen in His plan for the One who would restore all that was lost in Original Sin. In the fullness of time, God sent His son, Jesus, who offered himself in supreme sacrifice on the Cross, reconciling all humanity with Our Lord.

The Liturgy of Mass is an invitation to respond to what God has done for us in Christ. In short, it is our opportunity to praise and thank God for the gift of salvation by participating in the Paschal Mystery (the Passion, Death, and Resurrection) of Jesus.

"Kerygma" is the proclamation of the Good News, the story of salvation in Christ. This is our story:

- ***God has created us wonderfully good and in His image and has created a beautiful world for us.***
- ***Sin separates us from God, from one another, from Creation and from the goodness God intends.***
- ***Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has become man, suffered, died, risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven that we might be reconciled to the Father.***
- ***We are invited to respond to this loving act of Jesus by committing to following Jesus with our lives as His disciples, and by proclaiming the Good News to those we encounter as Missionary Disciples by lives of charity, inviting others into salvation they will find Jesus.***

(Throughout this booklet, some obvious points of connection between Mass and Kerygma are emphasized in bold italics. These points of connection reflect encounters with Jesus where we enter into the Good News proclaimed in the Eucharistic celebration. As you see these connections, reflect on your personal comprehension of the Kerygma and how this is being deepened.)

We begin our attention in this process by recalling the four complementary aspects of the presence of Christ in the liturgy. We see His presence in:

- ***the proclamation of the Word***
- ***the gathered assembly***
- ***the person of the priest***
- ***and especially the Body and Blood of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist.***

In response to requests throughout the Diocese to have the opportunity to consider more deeply our celebration of the Mass, over the next 7 weeks, we will be addressing the different parts of the Mass and how they put us in touch with the loving mercy of God.

Today we begin with the question, “When does the Mass begin?” The Mass begins when we are preparing ourselves to come to church. It is important even as we arise and organize ourselves and family that ***we are intentionally transitioning from the experience of the worldly environment into the realm of God's Kingdom.*** Many things distract us from the effects of God’s presence during the week. Our minds and hearts are focused on everyday tasks of work or school, troubles, doubts, and other situations. We want to open ourselves to gratitude, which is the key disposition for entering into the Eucharist.

We should be conscious of emptying ourselves of worldly concerns by observing the one-hour fast requirement before receiving Holy Communion. ***The Mass is an encounter with the Living God and so we begin to transition our hearts and minds into this heavenly encounter. The Eucharist is the place where heaven meets earth. As we enter the church, we sign ourselves with holy water, recalling our being chosen by Jesus through our baptism.***

As we worship God today in the Mass, you are invited to ask God these questions:

1. How could my process of transition from home to Church change to dispose me to be ready to celebrate when I arrive? Would a specific routine such as reading the readings ahead of time help focus my attention on the mystery of Who I am about to encounter?
2. As I sign myself with holy water upon entering sacred ground, how do I renew my decision to accept Jesus as the Lord of my life?

The Introductory Rites

This second week of our examination of our encounter with Jesus in the Mass focuses on the Introductory Rites which continue the process of transition which began with our preparation for Mass, as we reflected upon last week. We have prepared ourselves since arising from sleep. Today we will review the Introductory Rites. The Introductory Rites include:

- a) The Entrance Procession with Antiphon or Hymn
- b) The Sign of the Cross and Greeting
- c) The Penitential Act
- d) The Gloria
- f) The Opening Prayer or Collect.

a) Entrance Procession with Antiphon or Hymn

The purpose of the Entrance Antiphon or Hymn is to open the celebration, foster unity of those who gather, introduce the mystery of the liturgical time or season, and to accompany the procession of the priest and ministers. There are many ways that we participate in the Mass and ***singing together is a primary way that we share our joy and gratitude for God's gifts.*** As the presiding priest approaches the altar with the deacon, they reverence the altar with a kiss. ***The altar is both a table of worship and sacrifice, where Our Lord will make Himself present to us.***

b) Sign of the Cross and Greeting: “The Lord be with you”

The Sign of the Cross is not to be taken lightly. Together as the Body of Christ, priest and people, we sign ourselves because we gather in the Name of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. ***We mark ourselves to show that we belong to Christ, and, by this sign, we acknowledge that we are members of the one Body of Christ, bound to Him through our baptism.*** We begin and end the Mass with the Sign of the Cross. The whole Mass takes place under the Sign of the Cross.

The presiding priest greets the assembled people formally, “The Lord be with you,” coming directly from Scripture (2 Timothy 4:22) calling us into solidarity as God’s people with the Lord. We

respond, “And with your Spirit.” ***The priest is acting in Persona Christi (in the Person of Christ), and we are now united in Spirit as the Body of Christ.***

c) Penitential Act: “I Confess to Almighty God Lord, Have Mercy”

We now acknowledge our sins and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the Sacred Mysteries. Most importantly, both priest and people, in a shared act of humility, remind themselves of their failings. ***The Penitential Act is meant to call to mind that we are sinful people who seek the Lord's mercy as we cry out, “Lord, Have Mercy....”*** We may be reminded here that sacramental confession outside of Mass is needed for reconciliation of grave sins, for sacramental forgiveness, healing, and grace.

The Penitential Act can be done three ways:

- The Penitential/Confiteor prayer (“I confess to Almighty God”) followed by “Lord, Have Mercy,” etc.
- A three-part Penitential Invocation which calls us to mind our dependence on Christ, in our sinfulness, with the repetition of “Lord, Have Mercy,” etc.
- A Rite of Sprinkling of Holy Water upon the congregation, a reminder of our baptism.

d) Gloria: “Glory to God in the Highest”

We now join the angels and saints in proclaiming the Gloria. The Gloria was first announced at the birth of Jesus by the heavenly choir. This ancient hymn invites us into the awesome vision of the heavenly realm of God’s Kingdom, now joined to earth through the Eucharist. **Heaven and earth are united as we join the heavenly choir in this hymn of gratitude, thanksgiving, awe, and praise. We proclaim the glorious Hour of Jesus and the coming of the Kingdom of God in us and in our midst.**

e) Opening Prayer or Collect: “Let us pray”

The Opening Prayer or Collect is a specific prayer that fosters a gathering of the faithful into the sacred mysteries of the Mass. The presiding priest invites the faithful into prayer, and this pause is

important. We silently gather our minds and hearts together into the mystery of God's presence. It is appropriate now to briefly reflect on the liturgical season or day and ***join our personal intentions for this Mass into the prayer of the Church.*** The priest collects the prayer of the people into the spoken prayer, specifically chosen for that particular Sunday.

During Mass today, ask the Lord these questions:

1. Am I aware that the Penitential Act forgives venial sin? Am I moved to participate in the grace available to me in sacramental confession for the forgiveness of all my sins, mortal and venial, and reconciliation between myself, Our Lord, and His Church?
2. In the brief moment after the words "Let us pray," do I privately offer God my personal intention for this Mass, joining it to the prayer of the Church?

Having looked at the Introductory Rites of the Mass, we are now prepared to hear the words of sacred Scripture, the Liturgy of the Word. We will turn next week to how Jesus is present to us in the Liturgy of the Word, the second part of the Mass.

“***Blessed be the God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him.***”

Ephesians 1:3-4

The Liturgy of the Word

For the past two weeks we looked at how we prepare for the action of the Mass before Mass begins and how we enter the liturgy through the Introductory Rites of the Mass. Today we turn to our encounter with Jesus in the Liturgy of the Word.

The Sunday Liturgy of the Word consists of:

- a) First Reading: Old Testament
- b) Responsorial Psalm
- c) Second Reading: New Testament
- d) Gospel Acclamation
- e) Proclamation of the Gospel
- f) Homily
- g) Creed, Profession of Our Faith
- h) Prayers of the Faithful.

We recognize that all of the Bible, the Word of God, the Old and New Testament, the Creed, and our Prayers for Intercession, lead us to Jesus, our Eucharist.

a) First Reading: Old Testament

Our faith is rooted in God's call to Israel. It is here that we learn our earliest history: ***the beauty of creation, the origins of sin, the struggles and joys of the chosen people of Israel, and the promise of the Messiah.*** The Old Testament reading is chosen to complement and contextualize the Gospel as well as serving as an entry point for better understanding the Good News of Jesus Christ.

b) Responsorial Psalm

The Responsorial Psalm is chosen to serve as a bridge, looking back to the First Reading, and guiding us into the Gospel. ***It helps us to prepare and be disposed to listen well to the instructions of Jesus.*** By responding to the psalm, we enter more completely into the Word of God.

c) Second Reading: New Testament

The New Testament reading is taken from a letter of St Paul or one of the Apostles and is meant to instruct and encourage us in

following the teachings of Jesus. ***The Second Reading relates to the journey of discipleship and helps us to grow into a moral life of humility, courage, and love, in response to Christ in the Eucharist.***

While the Second Reading does not always appear to be directly related to the Gospel passage, often it is here that the Holy Spirit enters in, amplifying the Gospel message. The Holy Spirit makes connections even outside our expectations!

d) Gospel Acclamation: “Alleluia!” “Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ!”

Jesus will speak to us now. directly, personally, and communally. We rise in anticipation and prepare for His message with the Alleluia Verse or Gospel Acclamation.

e) Proclamation of the Gospel

Jesus proclaims His word through the priest or deacon. ***In the Gospel we hear the story of our salvation, which is God's own Word, Jesus Christ. Jesus speaks directly to us. He reveals the will of the Father and challenges us to respond to His Word in discipleship. He reveals to us our salvation and the path to eternal life. We stand as we receive His Word and the empowering grace to become His heart and hands in the world.***

As the Gospel unfolds, Jesus makes known the will of the Father through healing, forgiving sins, challenging hypocrisy, and explaining the commandments. Whether instructing us directly, or through parables or performing miracles, His message is always that ***we are called to see ourselves and others, especially the poor, as God sees, not as the world would have us see.*** The Gospel as a “two-edged sword” is meant to cut to the heart of the matter, and to be the Living Word of our lives.

f) Homily

The presider opens the readings for further reflection. We discover how the readings, and particularly the Gospel, can be applied in our lives. ***We should be prepared to be converted, to renew our commitment to discipleship, to see the action of Jesus in our lives, and to respond.*** The homily builds a bridge of connection between the

Liturgy of the Word and the Table of the Eucharist. The homily offers possibilities of catechesis, challenges, encouragement, and ***is always a call to conversion. As we listen, we are opened further to the power of the Holy Spirit.***

g) Creed, Profession of Our Faith: “I Believe in One God”

We now make a corporate profession of faith. ***This is a response not only to doctrinal truths but also to the Person of Christ in Word and Sacrament. We proclaim before God and the world what we believe.*** Take some time and study the Creed for yourself. It reveals a beautiful progression of mysteries which comprise the foundation of the Catholic Faith: ***the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus, the Ascension of Jesus into heaven, the Eternal Presence of the Holy Spirit, all of the revealed truths and mysteries of our Catholic Faith.*** It is a beautiful text to be imprinted into our hearts.

h) Prayers of the Faithful: “Let us Pray to the Lord”

Instructed and moved by the Word of God, which brings Christ into our midst, and renewed in faith, ***we are now ready to exercise our priestly function by interceding for the needs of the Church, the world, our parish and ourselves. Take a moment and consider this priestly function given to you through your baptism and your duty to intercede and make sacrifices on behalf of the world.*** The Catechism reminds us “The intercession of Christians recognizes no boundaries: ‘for all people, for kings and all those in high positions,’ for persecutors, for the salvation of those who reject the Gospel” (CCC 2636).

To more fruitfully enter into the Liturgy of the Word, ask yourself these questions:

1. How do I prepare to listen attentively to the proclamation of God’s Word? Could I use a reflective guide such as Give Us This Day, Magnificat, or other Catholic resources, to deepen my understanding of the Word of God?
2. Do you remember where Jesus was and what He taught in last week’s Gospel? How closely are you following His journey/narrative?

3. Might an onsite or online Bible study such *Formed* or *Ascension Press* help you deepen your love for the Word and your participation in the Eucharistic Liturgy?
4. How is my encounter with Jesus in the Liturgy of the Word a transformative encounter with the Kerygma (see page 5 for a description of the Kerygma)?

We are now prepared to enter into the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the third part of the Mass, which we will begin to look at next week.

“*In the Gospel we hear the story of our salvation, which is God’s own Word, Jesus Christ. Jesus speaks directly to us. He reveals the will of the Father and challenges us to respond to His Word in discipleship.*”



Over the past three weeks we have seen how we prepare ourselves to meet Jesus in the Mass, how we enter through the Introductory Rites humbly as forgiven sinners and move to encounter Jesus' presence in the Liturgy of the Word. This week we begin a 3-part study of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the celebration of the Real Presence of Jesus.

Sharing a meal is something we do always look forward to with regularity. The Eucharist is such a meal with an incredible dimension; ***it is God's joining Himself to us, in perfect divinity and humanity, through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ.*** How does one share such a meal and such a sacrifice? Now we approach God's table, His holy altar which is truly sacred ground.

"Eucharist," of course, is derived from the Greek word which means "Thanksgiving." ***We gather to "give thanks" to God as we enter into His communion. In celebrating the Eucharist, we are lifted up into a disposition of gratitude, for this is our salvation.***

A) Preparation of the Altar and Gifts

1) Offertory & Collection

The bread and wine for the Eucharist, along with our gifts for the Church and the poor, are brought to the altar in praise and thanksgiving. These gifts are symbols of our inner commitment to return to God all of ourselves: our hopes and disappointments, our work and leisure, our joys and the whole of our everyday lives. We renew our hearts through song or silence according to the season. ***We prayerfully project our gifts and our needs forward into the offering. We offer ourselves completely and wholly. God will include and change our humble offerings, through the action of the priest, and return our offerings to us as the Precious Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus.*** The gathered faithful – members of God's one family – are spiritually united with the priest as he lifts the bread and prays, "Blessed are you, Lord God of all Creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you..."

The priest or deacon prepares the chalice, pouring a few drops of water into the wine in the chalice, praying silently: "By the mystery of

this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.” The priest then raises the chalice, praying, “Blessed are you, Lord God of all Creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer....”

2) Washing of Presider's Hands

The presiding priest bows profoundly and silently prays on behalf of the people: ***“With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God.”*** Mindful of his own unworthiness, the priest then stands by the side of the altar and washes his hands as he prays quietly: ***“Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.”***

3) Prayer over the Gifts: “Pray, Brothers and Sisters, that my sacrifice and yours....”

The priest, speaking in our name, asks the Father to bless and accept these gifts, and we give our assent to this prayer. ***“May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.”***

Today, reflect on the gifts you have been given by God and ask yourself and God:

1. What are the gifts that God has given me? Am I thankful for all gifts?
2. I have nothing to offer Our Lord as a gift which is as perfect as it was originally given. . Do I realize that what I offer to God, however imperfect, is transformed and returned to me in grace as the Body and Blood of Jesus?
3. Do I also realize that those gifts which I reserve to myself become the possibility of my sin, as ingratitude is the basis of all sin?
4. Have I come to realize that all is a gift, even my disappointments and failures?

5. How does joining the offering of myself to the offerings at Mass become a transformative encounter with the Kerygma (review page 5 for a description of the Kerygma)?

These preparations for the coming of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist lead us now into the Eucharistic Prayer, which we will reflect on next week.

“*With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God.*”



Last week we arrived at the beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Today, we move to the Eucharistic Prayer, where we join in Jesus' offering of Himself to the Father on our behalf.

B) The Eucharistic Prayer

The Roman Missal offers several versions of the Eucharistic Prayer. All of these prayers follow a sequenced pattern:

1) Preface: "The Lord be with you.... Lift up your Hearts...."

Preface means "before the act." What is the act? It is the "act of thanksgiving." The Preface sets the tone for the Eucharistic Prayer.

Here, we the faithful enter into a dialogue. "The Lord be with you." "And with your spirit." "Lift up your hearts." "We lift them up to the Lord." "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." "It is right and just."

The priest then calls upon the Lord with the Preface prayer of praise and thanksgiving, which may articulate special praise for a particular solemnity or feast day.

The preface is always directed to God the Father. ***It is a proclamation of thanksgiving, both for God's Creation and the mystery of the Incarnation, giving thanks to the Father for the saving Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. This mystery is His Life, Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension to the right hand of the Father. It is the very sacrifice we are about to participate in through the power of the Holy Spirit.*** Today, when you listen to the Preface as it is prayed by the priest, reflect upon the gift that the Father has given us in Jesus Christ.

2) Sanctus: "Holy, Holy, Holy"

We join the angels and saints in praising the Father's holiness and glory, giving thanks for the saving mystery of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the one who comes in the name of the Lord, and we cry "Heaven and Earth are Filled with Your Glory!" (see Isaiah 6:3) This is our supreme acclamation, proclaimed and sung in unison. It is a

joyful and communal expression of thanksgiving and praise. We now proceed into the heart of the Mass.

3) Epiclesis: “Therefore, O Lord, We Humbly Implore You!”

The priest invokes the Holy Spirit and implores the Holy Spirit to sanctify our gifts. ***The Holy Spirit descends upon the offerings of bread and wine*** with the extension of the priest’s hands, as he calls on God the Father to “graciously make holy these gifts we have brought to you for consecration.” ***Here our offering becomes a sacrifice united to Christ’s body. In this moment, the Holy Spirit moves so that “those who take part in the Eucharist may be one body and one spirit.”*** (CCC, No. 1353)

4) Institution Narrative and Consecration: “On the Night He was Betrayed”

These words of betrayal lead us into the very heart of the Eucharistic Prayer in which ***“the power of the words and the action of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, make sacramentally present under the species of bread and wine Christ’s Body and Blood, his sacrifice offered on the cross once for all”*** (CCC, No. 1353). During the Consecration, our Roman Missal quotes directly from three of the four Gospels and from the earliest written account of the Last Supper, written by St. Paul. “Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is my body, which will be given up for you.” ***“Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me.”*** After the bread and wine have each been consecrated as the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the priest elevates each and then genuflects. This elevation is a sacred moment of ocular adoration, that is, ***a connection through our eyes with the Holy Spirit into the mystery of Jesus Himself.***

5) Anamnesis: “Therefore, O Lord, as we celebrate the memorial of your Son our Lord.”

As Jesus commanded, “Do this in memory of me,” we enter the process of anamnesis. “The Eucharistic prayer is ‘anamnesis,’

memorial. Liturgical memorial is reality. ***By the almighty power of God it makes real what we recall. Liturgical memorial makes present what it memorializes.***" ¹

To "remember," in this sense, is to actively participate in the saving events of our "Salvation History" made present now in our celebration of the Mass. We are now present at the Last Supper, the foot of the Cross, and the Resurrection.

6) Oblation: "Look, we pray, upon the oblation of your Church"

The priest offers this oblation, this sacrificial offering, of Christ to the Father. ***"Recognizing the sacrificial Victim by whose death you willed to reconcile us to yourself...." We are now more deeply joined into this offering of Christ.*** "This offering, this giving of ourselves as a gift to the Father, tells us that to live the Paschal Mystery – to make it the foundation of our spirituality – ***we must do by intention what Christ did by his actions; we must place ourselves completely into the hands of God our Father.***" ² In asking that we ourselves be accepted as an offering, we petition that we be included in the eternal inheritance of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, St. Joseph, the Apostles and Martyrs, and with all the saints.

7) Intercessions : "May this Sacrifice of our reconciliation, we pray, O Lord, advance the peace and salvation of the world...."

The priest intercedes for us and the world. These intercessions "reflect and express our unity with the whole body of Christ on earth, in purgatory, and in heaven. ... The Intercessions remind us that the Catholic faith is not an individualistic religion."³ As the Church has expressed it, ***God does not make us holy or save us only as individuals. He gathers us into one people who know, love, and serve Him as the People of God.*** Here we pray for our Church, our Pope, our Bishop, clergy, and the entire People of God.

8) Concluding Doxology: "Through Him, with Him, and in Him...."

¹ Fr. Charles E. Miller, CM, "The Eight Beatitudes of the Eucharistic Prayer," *In Book of Readings on the Eucharist, Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, USCCB*, p. 62.

² Miller, 63.

³ Miller, 64

The priest elevates the Body and Blood of Christ. Our joyful “Amen” affirms that we are bound together in this prayer. ***It is through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ that we are able to praise God.***

Reflecting upon the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass today and this week, ask yourself these questions:

1. Have I allowed myself to be prepared by the Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, and Offertory for this most important moment of Eucharist?
2. When the Body and Blood of Christ are lifted up by the priest, do I make a silent profession of faith, such as “My Lord and my God”? Could this help me to enter more deeply in His Real Presence?
3. In the Eucharistic Prayer, we beseech the Lord Jesus to come to us again, confident that He will. Do I beseech Jesus to enter more fully into my life? Am I confident that He answers my plea?
4. How is my encounter with the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist a transformative encounter with the Kerygma (see page 5 for a description of the Kerygma)?

Jesus Christ is present to us now in the Blessed Sacrament, and next week we will look at how we receive Him in Holy Communion.



Last week we looked at the Eucharistic Prayer. Today, we explore how we encounter Jesus in Holy Communion.

C) Communion Rite

At the heart of the word “communion” is the word “union,” for the ultimate goal of the Communion Rite is a multi-faceted union. ***It is about union with the Holy Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Secondly, it is also about union in the Body of Christ, including those gathered in the assembly, the universal Church on earth, the choirs of angels and saints in heaven, our Blessed Mother, and, of course, Jesus Himself.***

1) The Lord’s Prayer: “Our Father....”

The Lord’s Prayer is positioned between the Eucharistic Prayer and reception of Holy Communion. It both sums up all the petitions that have preceded and knocks at the door of the Banquet of the Kingdom that Communion anticipates. In the Lord’s Prayer, we ask for our daily bread, and, more urgently, ***for the food that gives access to eternity, the Bread of Life.*** We offer this prayer in solidarity with all Christian brothers and sisters in universal worship and praise of our Father. ***This is the prayer that Jesus Himself taught us.***

2) The Sign of Peace: “Peace be with you....”

It is fitting now that this rite takes place after we have prayed together the Lord’s Prayer. The exchange of “peace” expresses a sincere wish for the well-being of one another. ***This heartfelt exchange of concern and charity opens us to the grace of humility to share in our one communion.*** It is a ritual act of reconciliation. “If you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift” (Mt 5:23-24).

3) Fraction Rite: “Lamb of God....” “Agnus Dei....”

We often refer to the Mass as “The Breaking of the Bread.” This actually happens at the Fraction Rite when the presiding priest breaks

the host and puts a small piece of the consecrated Body of Christ in the chalice while praying silently: ***"May this mingling of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it."***

During this action, the "Lamb of God" strophe is sung or recited three times. This prayer is an act of "adoration of the Lamb" who was slain for our salvation. ***We join our adoration to that of the saints and angels in heaven who shout, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!"*** (Revelation 5:12) as we ask for His mercy and peace.

As the Lamb of God is sung, the priest prays quietly: ***"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who, by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit, through your Death gave life to the world, free me by this, your most holy Body and Blood, from all my sins and from every evil; keep me always faithful to your commandments and never let me be parted from you"*** or a variant. This beautiful prayer can be a wonderful silent preparation for each of us gathered at this most solemn moment.

4) Presentation of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus: "Behold the Lamb of God"

We kneel, and the sacred Body and Blood of Christ are presented, as the priest invites us to "Behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb." ***At this moment, we participate with the lifting up of Christ on the Cross.*** This elevation is another sacred moment of ocular adoration where we connect through our eyes with the Holy Spirit into the mystery of Jesus. We recall the words of Jesus, "when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself" (Jn 12:32). The congregation - together with the presiding priest - responds with this acclamation: ***"Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed,"*** recalling the words of the centurion whose servant was healed in the Gospel of Matthew 8:5-13.

5) Reception of Holy Communion

After the Lamb of God invocation, the priest joins his hands, bows before the altar and prays quietly: ***"May the Body of Christ keep me safe for eternal life."*** After reverently consuming the Body, he similarly prays: ***"May the Blood of Christ keep me safe for eternal life"*** and reverently consumes the Blood of Christ.

The priest then begins the distribution of Holy Communion. From the altar, the Communion pours forth into the community. ***For his disciples and, now, for us to receive His Body and Blood means that we are conformed to Christ in the most intimate and complete way possible.*** Our response to the statement "The Body/Blood of Christ" is a simple "Amen." St. Cyprian instructs us to "Remember that it is not idly that you say 'Amen.' You are professing that you receive the Body of Christ ... You answer 'Amen,' that is It is true! Thus, keep in your heart what you profess with your lips!" **There is no more intimate and complete act on earth than for Christ Himself to nourish us with His own Body and Blood.**

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our Christian life. Receiving Communion is the high point of the entire celebration of the Mass. We must also keep in mind that each of us - including the presider - are duty-bound to receive Holy Communion reverently and in good conscience.

6) Purification of the Sacred Vessels

After Communion is distributed and while the sacred vessels are being purified, the priest or deacon prays quietly: ***"What has passed our lips as food, O Lord, may we possess in purity of heart, that what has been given to us in time may be our healing for eternity."*** Pope Francis had this in mind when he wrote in *The Joy of the Gospel* that the Eucharist is not a prize for the perfect but a medicine for the weak. Admittedly, that applies to all of us! The sacred vessels are purified by water which is consumed by the minister. This activity at the altar presents an opportunity for silent prayer, reflection, and gratitude on the part of the congregation.

7) Prayer After Communion: "Let us pray...."

The priest rises and invites us to stand with the words, "Let us pray." The words of the Prayer after Communion are formulated around the

theme of the celebration. ***This prayer asks God that our participation in these sacred mysteries will bear fruit in our daily lives and contribute to the life of the world.*** This prayer gathers all of the prayers that we have prayed at this Mass, communally and individually, and brings us to conclusion in Eucharistic thanksgiving.

Reflecting on the Communion Rite, ask yourself and the Lord these questions:

1. What does it mean to me and my life that I receive the Real Presence of Jesus Christ when I receive Holy Communion? Am I growing in wonder and awe of the Lord?
2. In receiving Holy Communion, I am brought into deeper union with Jesus Christ and with all who have ever been and will ever be in union with Him. How does knowing this change my appreciation of the Eucharist and my relationship to others?
3. Has the Eucharist renewed and strengthened me in the life of Jesus and my resolve to bring this life to the poor?
4. How is my encounter with Jesus in Holy Communion a transformative encounter with the Kerygma (see page 5 for a description of the Kerygma)?

We have encountered the Living God in a most profound way, and this encounter is meant to continue after the Mass concludes, as we will see next week when we look at the Concluding Rites of the Mass.



Final Blessing and the Sending Forth: “The Lord be with you.”

“Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations.” - Mt 28:19a

Up to this point, we have looked at how we encounter Jesus in the preparation for Mass, in the Introductory Rites, in the Liturgy of the Word, and in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Today we will conclude our series on encountering the transformative love and Good News of Jesus Christ by looking at the Concluding Rites of the Mass, the Final Blessing and the Sending Forth.

When we keep in mind the living liturgy, ***the concluding rites are a commissioning to go forth from the Mass and bring the Good News into the world.*** We are now called and commissioned to go out into the world with the words, “The Lord be with you.” Blessed by the presider, “May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” ***we are sent by a formal dismissal to live out our baptismal call and to proclaim the Good News to the world.***

From early times, it has always been understood that the blessing and dismissal which concludes the formal celebration of Mass carries the liturgical celebration outside and beyond the doors of the church into the world. ***Having been fed by the Body of Christ and enlivened by the Holy Spirit we are dismissed to serve God and neighbor. The continuing celebration outside the Mass in our daily lives is our very participation in living out the Gospel. These values are seen through active charity toward one another as we are truly glorifying God by our lives*** (see CCC 1070).

After the formal dismissal “Go in peace” the Recessional Hymn affirms our solidarity in our Eucharistic mission. The Recessional Hymn expresses praise or reflects the particular day or season. Then we depart to live out the Eucharistic commission in our lives. As we have seen over the past seven weeks, at every point of the Mass, Jesus is drawing close to us and drawing us into the Good News – the Kerygma which we encounter, learn, internalize, and proclaim to the world:

- ***God has created us good and in His image and has created a good world for us.***

- ***Sin separates us from God, from one another, and from one another, and from the goodness God intends for each one of us.***
- ***Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has become man, suffered, died, risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven that we might be reconciled to God.***
- ***We are invited to respond to this loving act of Jesus by committing to following Jesus with our lives as His disciples and by proclaiming the Good News to those we encounter as Missionary Disciples by lives of charity and by inviting them into the salvation they can find in Jesus.***

In taking little steps to get closer to God through the Eucharist, place yourself in the presence of God and ask yourself these questions:

1. How did God speak to me at Mass? May I ask others how He spoke to them, possibly even someone I have never met?
2. How does celebration of the Sunday Eucharist carry me through the week that follows? How does it guide me into a deeper life of prayer and service?
3. How is my encounter with Jesus throughout the Mass and in my missionary sending a transformative encounter with the Kerygma (see above for a description of the Kerygma)? How is the Eucharist the “source and summit” of my life?
4. Do I understand better my human need for observing the regular Sunday attendance at Mass?

Final wrap-up thoughts:

- Because of my reflecting on the Mass in the way that we have during these past few weeks, how would I complete the following sentence, “From this moment forward, I will_____ to glorify God.”
- How well have you internalized the Kerygmatic dimension of our weekly Eucharist? Would I be able to guide a fallen-away Catholic through the use of this booklet, knowing that this may be the key to their re-encountering Jesus in the Mass?



STAY CONNECTED WITH US

- *Phone*

 719-544-9861

- *Website*

 www.diopueblo.org/eucharistic-revival

- *The Living Garden e-news*

 sign up at: www.diopueblo.org