

# The Holy Mass:

## Prayer and Understanding



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ARCHDIOCESE OF  
**NEW ORLEANS**

Office of Worship

## PARTS OF THE ORDER OF MASS

### Introductory Rites

1. When the people are gathered, the Priest approaches the altar (*i*) with the ministers while the Entrance Chant is sung. When he has arrived at the altar, after making a profound bow with the ministers, the Priest venerates the altar with a kiss (*ii*) and, if appropriate, incenses the cross and the altar. Then, with the ministers, he goes to the chair. When the Entrance Chant is concluded, the Priest and the faithful, standing, sign themselves with the Sign of the Cross (*iii*), while the Priest, facing the people, says:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (*iv*)

The people reply:

Amen.

2. Then the Priest, extending his hands, greets the people, saying:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all. (*v*)

Or:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ. (*vi*)

Or:

The Lord be with you. (*vii*)

The people reply:

And with your spirit. (*viii*)

In this first greeting, instead of *The Lord be with you*, a Bishop says:

Peace be with you. (*ix*)

3. The Priest, or a deacon, or another minister, may very briefly introduce the faithful to the Mass of the day.

*i.* “Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp; and he called it the tent of meeting. And every one who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose up, and every man stood at his tent door, and looked after Moses, until he had gone into the tent. When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the door of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses. And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the door of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, every man at his tent door” (Exodus 33:7-9).

(see also Psalm 43, the Psalm prayed as priest ascended the Altar)

*ii.* “When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne; they cried out with a loud voice, ‘O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?’ Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been” (Revelation 6:9-11).

Blood and water from altar in O.T. sacrifices.

“So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who had been crucified with him; but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water” (John 19:32-34).

*iii.* “Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherubim on which it rested to the threshold of the house; and he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his side. And the LORD said to him, ‘Go through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it’” (Ezekiel 9: 3-4).

*iv.* “And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age’” (Matthew 28: 18-20).

*v.* “Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Corinthians 13: 12-14).

*vi.* Romans 1:7 ; 1 Corinthians 1:3 ; Colossians 1:2 ; among many other passages

*vii.* “And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem; and he said to the reapers, ‘The LORD be with you!’ And they answered, ‘The LORD bless you’” (Ruth 2:4).

*viii.* “The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you” (2 Timothy 4:22). “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen” (Galatians 6:18). **Theodore of Mopsuestia:** this greeting is an epiclesis, invocation of the Spirit to come upon priest and people just as like over bread and wine. **John Chrysostom:** “By this cry, you are reminded that he who stands at the altar does nothing, and that the gifts that repose there are not the merits of a man; but that the grace of the Holy Spirit is present and, descending on all, accomplishes this mysterious sacrifice. We indeed see a man, but it is God who acts through him. Nothing human takes place at this holy altar.”

*ix.* “On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you’” (John 20:19).

## Penitential Act\*

4. Then follows the Penitential Act, to which the Priest invites the faithful, saying:

Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins,  
And so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

A brief pause for silence follows. Then all recite together the formula of general confession (x):

I confess to almighty God  
and to you, my brothers and sisters,  
that I have greatly sinned  
in my thoughts and in my words,  
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,

And, striking their breast, they say:

through my fault, through my fault,  
through my most grievous fault;

Then they continue:

therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,  
all the Angels and Saints,  
and you, my brothers and sisters,  
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

The absolution of the Priest follows:

May almighty God have mercy on us  
Forgive us our sins,  
And bring us to everlasting life.

The people reply:

Amen.

\* From time to time on Sundays, especially in Easter time, instead of the customary Penitential Act, the blessing and sprinkling of water may take place as a reminder of Baptism.

7. The Kyrie invocations follow, unless they have just occurred in a formula of the Penitential Act (xi).

V. Lord, have mercy. R. Lord, have mercy.  
V. Christ, have mercy. R. Christ, have mercy.  
V. Lord, have mercy. R. Lord, have mercy.

Or:

x. “He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others: ‘Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank thee that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get.’ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted’” (Luke 18:9-14).

The Jewish Confiteor – The offerer lays hands on the sacrifice while saying the following prayer: “I entreat, O Lord, that I have sinned, I have done perversely, I have rebelled, I have committed (naming the sin, trespass, or in the case of a burnt-offering, the breach of a positive or negative command); but I return in repentance, and let this be for my atonement.” (Edersheim, *The Temple*, 82)

Didache: an early Christian document likely older than most of the New Testament emphasizes first, we confess our sins, then, we worship God rightly.

**xi.** Man, blinded by sin, needs God’s redemption.

“And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed him, crying aloud, ‘Have mercy on us, Son of David.’ When he entered the house, the blind men came to him; and Jesus said to them, ‘Do you believe that I am able to do this?’ They said to him, ‘Yes, Lord.’ Then he touched their eyes, saying, ‘According to your faith be it done to you.’ And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly charged them, ‘See that no one knows it’” (Matthew 9:27-30).

“And as they went out of Jericho, a great crowd followed him. And behold, two blind men sitting by the roadside, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, ‘Have mercy on us, Son of David!’ The crowd rebuked them, telling them to be silent; but they cried out the more, ‘Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!’ And Jesus stopped and called them, saying, ‘What do you want me to do for you?’ They said to him, ‘Lord, let our eyes be opened.’ And Jesus in pity touched their eyes, and immediately they received their sight and followed him.” (Matthew 20:29).

V. Kyrie, eleison. R. Kyrie, eleison.  
V. Christe, eleison. R. Christe, eleison.  
V. Kyrie, eleison. R. Kyrie, eleison.

8. Then, when it is prescribed, this hymn is sung or said:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will (*xii*).  
We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God (*xiii*), Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,  
have mercy on us.  
For you alone are the Holy One (*xiv*),  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High (*xv*),  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

9. When this hymn is concluded, the Priest, with hands joined, says:

Let us pray.

And all pray in silence with the Priest for a moment.  
Then the Priest, with hands extended, says the Collect prayer, at the end of which the people acclaim:

Amen.

## **Gloria: the Song of the Angels**

*xii.* “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!’” (Luke 2:13-14).

*xiii.* “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’” (John 1:29).

*xiv.* “Who shall not fear and glorify thy name, O Lord? For thou alone art holy. All nations shall come and worship thee, for thy judgments have been revealed” (Revelation 15:4).

*xv.* “Let them know that thou alone, whose name is the LORD, art the Most High over all the earth” (Psalm 83:18).

## **Collect (Opening Prayer)**

Although there is no such thing as a theme Mass, for the Paschal Mystery is the “theme” of every Mass, the prism by which the Church wishes us to view the Paschal Mystery can be found in the Collect.

## The Liturgy of the Word

10. Then the reader goes to the ambo and reads the first reading (*xvi*), while all sit and listen.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The Word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

11. The psalmist or cantor sings or says the Psalm (*xvii*), with the people making the response.

12. After this, if there is to be a second reading (*xviii*), a reader reads it from the ambo, as above.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The Word of the Lord.

All reply:


Thanks be to God.

13. There follows the *Alleluia* (*xix*) or another chant laid down by the rubrics, as the liturgical time requires.

14. Meanwhile, if incense is used, the Priest puts some into the thurible. After this, the deacon who is to proclaim the Gospel (*xx*), bowing profoundly before the Priest, asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice:

Your blessing, Father.

The Priest says in a low voice:

May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips that you may proclaim his Gospel worthily and well, in the name of the Father and of the Son  and of the Holy Spirit.

The deacon signs himself with the Sign of the Cross and replies:

Amen.

If, however, a deacon is not present, the Priest, bowing before the altar, says quietly:

Cleanse my heart and my lips, almighty God,  
that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel (*xxi*).



**xvi.** “And Moses wrote this law, and gave it to the priests the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, ‘At the end of every seven years, at the set time of the year of release, at the feast of booths, when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place which he will choose, you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing. Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law, and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land which you are going over the Jordan to possess” (Deuteronomy 31: 9-13).

**xvii.** Psalms sung throughout the entirety of day, and during the temple sacrifices. The Levites, the Jewish people, and Jesus Christ prayed the psalms daily. They have been referred to as “the masterwork of prayer.”

**xviii.** “Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near” (Revelation 1:3).

**xix.** “After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for his judgments are true and just; he has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants.’ Once more they cried, ‘Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever.’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’ And from the throne came a voice crying, ‘Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great.’ Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns” (Revelation 19:1-6).

**xx.** “And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had given to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month. And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden pulpit which they had made for the purpose ... And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people; and when he opened it all the people stood. And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God; and all the people answered, ‘Amen, Amen,’ lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground ... And they read from the book, from the law of God, clearly; and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, ‘This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.’ For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, ‘Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions to him for whom nothing is prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.’ So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, ‘Be quiet, for this day is holy; do not be grieved.’ And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them” (Nehemiah 8:1-12).

**xxi.** “And I said: ‘Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!’ Then flew one of the seraphim to me, having in his hand a burning coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth, and said: ‘Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven” (Isaiah 6:5-7).

15. The deacon, or the Priest, then proceeds to the ambo, accompanied, if appropriate, by ministers with incense and candles. There he says:

The Lord be with you.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

The deacon, or the Priest:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to N.

and, at the same time, he makes the Sign of the Cross on the book and on his forehead, lips, and breast.

The people acclaim:

Glory to you, O Lord.

Then the deacon, or the Priest, incenses the book, if incense is used, and proclaims the Gospel.

16. At the end of the Gospel, the deacon, or the Priest, acclaims:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All reply:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Then he kisses the book, saying quietly:

Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away (*xxii*).

17. Then follows the homily, which is to be preached by a Priest or deacon on all Sundays and holy days of obligation; on other days, it is recommended.

18. At the end of the homily, the Symbol or Profession of Faith or Creed (*xxiii*), when prescribed, is sung or said:

I believe in one God,  
the Father almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all things visible and invisible (*xxiv*).  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,

## The Gospel

How do we show reverence for the Gospel?

- Book of the Gospel
- Procession
- Sanding
- Gospel acclamation
- Incense
- Candles
- Reverence
- Ask for Blessing just to proclaim

Why? According to Sacrosanctum Concilium, Christ is present in the Mass in the Eucharist and Sacraments, in the Priest, in the praying community, and in the proclaimed Word.

**xxii.** “Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the Church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5: 25-27).

**xxiii.** "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD; and you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. And you shall bind them as a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates” (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

**xxiv.** “For in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities -- all things were created through him and for him” (Colossians 1:16).

NOT JUST SEEN AND UNSEEN!

the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,

**At the words that follow up to and including *and became man*, all bow.**

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate  
of the Virgin Mary,  
and became man.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.  
And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
And one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.  
I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins  
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**20. Then follows the Universal Prayer, that is, the Prayer of the Faithful or Bidding Prayers (xxv).**

**xxv.** “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. This is good, and it is acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, the testimony to which was borne at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarreling ...” (1 Timothy 2:1-8).

Universal Prayer returned in the Missal of Pope Paul VI, had been missing for centuries.

## The Liturgy of the Eucharist

21. When all this has been done, the Offertory Chant begins. Meanwhile, the ministers place the corporal, the purificator, the chalice, the pall, and the Missal on the altar.

22. It is desirable that the faithful express their participation by making an offering, bringing forward bread and wine (*xxvi*) for the celebration of the Eucharist and perhaps other gifts to relieve the needs of the Church and of the poor.

23. The Priest, standing at the altar, takes the paten with the bread and holds it slightly raised above the altar with both hands, saying in a low voice:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,  
for through your goodness we have received  
the bread we offer you:  
fruit of the earth and work of human hands,  
it will become for us the bread of life (*xxvii*).

Then he places the paten with the bread on the corporal.

If, however, the Offertory Chant is not sung, the Priest may speak these words aloud; at the end, the people may acclaim:

Blessed be God for ever.

24. The deacon, or the Priest, pours wine and a little water into the chalice, saying quietly:

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 (*xviii*).

25. The Priest then takes the chalice and holds it slightly raised above the altar with both hands, saying in a low voice:

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,  
for through your goodness we have received  
the wine we offer you:  
fruit of the vine and work of human hands  
it will become our spiritual drink (*xix*).

Then he places the chalice on the corporal.

If, however, the Offertory Chant is not sung, the Priest may speak these words aloud; at the end, the people may acclaim:

Blessed be God for ever.

**xxvi.** The Jewish people would offer sacrifices of bread and wine regularly at the Temple, especially at the Passover festival, blessing these offerings with these words: “Blessed are You, Lord God, who creates the fruit of the vine” and “Blessed are You, Lord God, who brings forth bread from the earth” (Mishnah, *Berakhot*, 6:1).

**xxvii.** “I am the bread of life” (John 6:48).

**xviii.** “he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4)

In this mixing of water and wine in the chalice, the prayer explains the symbolism to be the coming together of the divinity of Christ (symbolized by the water) and humanity (symbolized by the wine).

**xix.** “and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was the Christ” (1 Corinthians 10:4).

26. After this, the Priest, bowing profoundly, says quietly:

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 (*xx*).

27. If appropriate, he also incenses (*xxi*) the offerings, the cross, and the altar. A deacon or other minister then incenses the Priest and the people.

28. Then the Priest, standing at the side of the altar, washes his hands, saying quietly:

Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin (*xxii*).

29. Standing at the middle of the altar, facing the people, extending and then joining his hands, he says:

Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters),  
that my sacrifice and yours (*xxiii*)  
may be acceptable to God,  
the almighty Father.

The people rise and reply:

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.

30. Then the Priest, with hands extended, says the Prayer over the Offerings, at the end of which the people acclaim:

Amen.



**xx.** “But with contrite heart and humble spirit let us be received ... So let our sacrifice be in your presence today as we follow you unreservedly” (Daniel 3:39-40)

**xxi.** “And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God” (Revelation 8:3-4).

There are clouds in heaven – clouds of incense as described in Revelation.

Things which are incensed – gifts, altar, cross, priest, people. Why? We incense that which is to be offered in sacrifice (notice we are among these things!).

**xxii.** “Wash away all my guilt; from my sin cleanse me” (Psalm 51:4).

“When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they [priests] come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering by fire to the Lord, they shall wash with water, lest they die” (Exodus 30:20).

**xxiii.** Notice “my sacrifice and yours”. One sacrifice of Christ offered in distinct ways depending on one’s participation in the priesthood of Christ. The ministerial priest offers the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, on the cross. The royal priests offer themselves, their lives.

## THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

31. Then the Priest begins the Eucharistic Prayer.

Extending his hands, he says:

The Lord be with you.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

The Priest, raising his hands, continues:

Lift up your hearts (*xxiv*).

The people:

We lift them up to the Lord.

The Priest, with hands extended, adds:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

The people:

It is right and just.

The Priest, with hands extended, continues the Preface.

At the end of the Preface he joins his hands and concludes the Preface with the people, singing or saying aloud:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory (*xxv*).

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest (*xxvi*).

32. In all Masses, the Priest celebrant is permitted to sing parts of the Eucharistic Prayer provided with musical notation below, pp. 545ff., especially the principal parts.

In Eucharistic Prayer I, the Roman Canon, the words included in brackets may be omitted.

**xxiv.** “Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the LORD! Let us lift up our hearts and hands to God in heaven” (Lamentations 3:41).

Dialogue has been part of Christian liturgy from the earliest centuries.

“For truly we should in that most awe-ful hour to have our heart on high with God, and not below, thinking of earth and earthly things. The Priest then in effect bids all in that hour to abandon all worldly thoughts, or household cares, and to have their heart in heaven with the merciful God” (Cyril of Jerusalem)

**xxv.** Isaiah in the Heavenly Temple. The Song of the Seraphim. “In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim; each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.’ And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke” (Isaiah 6:1-4).

St John in the heavenly Temple. “And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all round and within, and day and night they never cease to sing, ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!’ And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever” (Revelation 4:8-9).

**xxvi.** Messiah comes to his temple. “Save us, we beseech thee, O LORD! O LORD, we beseech thee, give us success! Blessed be he who enters in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD. The LORD is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar! Thou art my God, and I will give thanks to thee; thou art my God, I will extol thee. O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever!” (Psalm 118: 25-29).

Jesus’ triumphal entrance into Jerusalem. “The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!’” (Matthew 21:6-9).

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER I (xxvii)**

**OR THE ROMAN CANON**

84. **The Priest, with hands extended, says:**

To you, therefore, most merciful Father,  
we make humble prayer and petition  
through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord:

**He joins his hands and says**  
that you accept

**He makes the Sign of the Cross once over the bread and chalice together, saying:**

and bless ✠ these gifts, these offerings,  
these holy and unblemished sacrifices,

**With hands extended, he continues:**

which we offer you first of all  
for your holy catholic Church.  
Be pleased to grant her peace,  
to guard, unite and govern her  
throughout the whole world,  
together with your servant **N.** our Pope  
and **N.** our Bishop,\*  
and all those who, holding to the truth,  
hand on the catholic and apostolic faith.

*\* Mention may be made here of the Coadjutor Bishop, or Auxiliary Bishops, as noted in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, n. 149.*

85. **Commemoration of the Living.**

Remember, Lord, your servants **N.** and **N.**

**The Priest joins his hands and prays briefly for those for whom he intends to pray. Then, with hands extended, he continues:**

and all gathered here,  
whose faith and devotion are known to you.  
For them and all who are dear to them  
we offer you this sacrifice of praise  
or they offer it for themselves

## *xxvii. The Eucharistic Prayer*

GIRM 78. Now the center and high point of the entire celebration begins, namely, the Eucharistic Prayer itself, that is, the prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. The Priest calls upon the people to lift up their hearts towards the Lord in prayer and thanksgiving; he associates the people with himself in the Prayer that he addresses in the name of the entire community to God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the meaning of this Prayer is that the whole congregation of the faithful joins with Christ in confessing the great deeds of God and in the offering of Sacrifice. The Eucharistic Prayer requires that everybody listens to it with reverence and in silence.

GIRM 79. The main elements of which the Eucharistic Prayer consists may be distinguished from one another in this way:

- a) The **thanksgiving** (expressed especially in the Preface), in which the Priest, in the name of the whole of the holy people, glorifies God the Father and gives thanks to him for the whole work of salvation or for some particular aspect of it, according to the varying day, festivity, or time of year.
- b) The **acclamation**, by which the whole congregation, joining with the heavenly powers, sings the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy). This acclamation, which constitutes part of the Eucharistic Prayer itself, is pronounced by all the people with the Priest.
- c) The **epiclesis**, in which, by means of particular invocations, the Church implores the power of the Holy Spirit that the gifts offered by human hands be consecrated, that is, become Christ's Body and Blood, and that the unblemished sacrificial Victim to be consumed in Communion may be for the salvation of those who will partake of it.  
**(Lev 9:22-24 ; 2Chron 7:1-2 ; 1Kgs 18 ; Acts 2:1-13)**
- d) The **institution narrative** and Consecration, by which, by means of the words and actions of Christ, that Sacrifice is effected which Christ himself instituted during the Last Supper, when he offered his Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine, gave them to the Apostles to eat and drink, and leaving with the latter the command to perpetuate this same mystery.
- e) The **anamnesis**, by which the Church, fulfilling the command that she received from Christ the Lord through the Apostles, celebrates the memorial of Christ, recalling especially his blessed Passion, glorious Resurrection, and Ascension into heaven.
- f) The **oblation**, by which, in this very memorial, the Church, in particular that gathered here and now, offers the unblemished sacrificial Victim in the Holy Spirit to the Father. The Church's intention, indeed, is that the faithful not only offer this unblemished sacrificial Victim but also learn to offer their very selves, and so day by day to be brought, through the mediation of Christ, into unity with God and with each other, so that God may at last be all in all.
- g) The **intercessions**, by which expression is given to the fact that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the whole Church, of both heaven and of earth, and that the oblation is made for her and for all her members, living and dead, who are called to participate in the redemption and salvation purchased by the Body and Blood of Christ. Asking for intercession of the saints who worship with us in this celebration. Prayer for the dead is important here as well as it implicitly refers to our Catholic belief in Purgatory.
- h) The concluding **doxology**, by which the glorification of God is expressed and which is affirmed and concluded by the people's acclamation Amen. (Rev. 5:13-14)

The **First Eucharistic Prayer / Canon**. The Canon was the only Eucharistic Prayer that was said in the Latin Rite from the time of the Counter-Reformation until Vatican II. It is rich in the history of the People of God, it calls on our Jewish heritage, it reminds us of our Heavenly goal, it calls on each of the Apostles and the Saints and the Martyrs of the Early Church, each by name, to intercede for us.

The **Second Eucharistic Prayer** (one of the new ones introduced by Pope Paul VI after Vatican II) is based on the Eucharistic Prayers in use in the very early Church (Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus). It is beautiful in its simplicity and many appreciate how it links us to the prayer of the early Church. Many also appreciate that it is so much shorter than the others! (It is certainly the most often used, the "default" Eucharistic Prayer, if you like!)

The **Third Eucharistic Prayer** draws greatly on the liturgical traditions and imagery of the Eastern Church.

The **Fourth Eucharistic Prayer** based on early Easter Prayers; very beautiful with its own Preface.

and all who are dear to them,  
for the redemption of their souls,  
in hope of health and well-being,  
and fulfilling their vows to you,  
the eternal God, living and true.

86. **Within the Action.**

In communion with those whose memory we venerate, especially the glorious ever-Virgin Mary, Mother of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ,  
† and blessed Joseph, Spouse of the same Virgin,  
your blessed Apostles and Martyrs,  
Peter and Paul, Andrew,  
[James, John,  
Thomas, James, Philip,  
Bartholomew, Matthew,  
Simon and Jude:  
Linus, Cletus, Clement, Sixtus,  
Cornelius, Cyprian,  
Lawrence, Chrysogonus,  
John and Paul,  
Cosmas and Damian]  
and all your Saints:  
through their merits and prayers,  
grant that in all things we may be defended  
by your protecting help.

87. **With hands extended, the Priest continues:**

Therefore, Lord, we pray:  
graciously accept this oblation of our service,  
that of your whole family;  
order our days in your peace,  
and command that we be delivered from eternal damnation  
and counted among the flock of those you have chosen.

**He joins his hands.**

88. **Holding his hands extended over the offerings, he says (xxviii):**  
Be pleased, O God, we pray,  
to bless, acknowledge,  
and approve this offering in every respect;  
make it spiritual and acceptable,

This initial list of names is a list of the earliest martyrs including all of the Apostles.

*xxviii.* The Epiclesis (Calling down of Holy Spirit)

“Then Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people and blessed them; and he came down from offering the sin offering and the burnt offering and the peace offerings. And Moses and Aaron went into the tent of meeting; and when they came out they blessed the people, and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people. And fire came forth from before the LORD and consumed the burnt offering and the fat upon the altar; and when all the people saw it, they shouted, and fell on their faces” (Leviticus 9:22-24).

“When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. And the priests could not enter the house of the LORD, because the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house. When all the children of Israel saw the fire come down and the glory of the LORD upon the temple, they bowed down with their faces to the earth on the pavement, and worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, ‘For he is good, for his steadfast love endures for ever.’ Then the king and all the people offered sacrifice before the LORD” (2 Chronicles 7:1-4).

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (Acts 2:1-4).

so that it may become for us  
the Body and Blood of your most beloved Son,  
our Lord Jesus Christ.

He joins his hands.

89. In the formulas that follow, the words of the Lord should be pronounced clearly and distinctly, as the nature of these words requires.

On the day before he was to suffer

The Priest takes the bread and,  
holding it slightly raised above the altar, continues:

he took bread in his holy and venerable hands,

He raises his eyes.

and with eyes raised to heaven  
to you, O God, his almighty Father,  
giving you thanks he said the blessing,  
broke the bread  
and gave it to his disciples, saying:

He bows slightly.

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT,  
FOR THIS IS MY BODY,  
WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU (*xxix*).

He shows the consecrated host to the people, places it again on the paten, and genuflects in adoration.

90. After this, the Priest continues:

In a similar way, when supper was ended,

He takes the chalice and, holding it slightly raised above the altar, continues:

he took this precious chalice  
in his holy and venerable hands,  
and once more giving you thanks, he said the blessing  
and gave the chalice to his disciples, saying:

He bows slightly.



**xxix.** Words of Consecration/Institution.

“Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body.’ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom’” (Matthew 26:26-29).

“And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ And likewise the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood’” (Luke 22 19-20).

“For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself (1 Corinthians 11:23-29).

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.

The Priest shows the chalice to the people, places it on the corporal, and genuflects in adoration.

91. Then the Priest says:

The mystery of faith (xxx).

And the people continue, acclaiming:

We proclaim your death, O Lord,  
and profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.

Or:

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,  
we proclaim your death, O Lord,  
until you come again.

Or:

Save us, Savior of the world,  
for by your Cross and Resurrection  
you have set us free.

92. Then the Priest, with hands extended, says:

Therefore, O Lord,  
as we celebrate the memorial of the blessed Passion, the Resurrection from the dead,  
and the glorious Ascension into heaven  
of Christ, your Son, our Lord,  
we, your servants and your holy people,  
offer to your glorious majesty  
from the gifts that you have given us,  
this pure victim,  
this holy victim,  
this spotless victim,  
the holy Bread of eternal life  
and the Chalice of everlasting salvation.

**xxx.** “Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our religion: He was manifested in the flesh, vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, preached among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory” (1 Timothy 3:16).

93. Be pleased to look upon them  
with serene and kindly countenance,  
and to accept them,  
as you were pleased to accept  
the gifts of your servant Abel the just,  
the sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith,  
and the offering of your high priest Melchizedek (*xxxi*),  
a holy sacrifice, a spotless victim.

94. **Bowing, with hands joined, he continues:**

In humble prayer we ask you, almighty God:  
command that these gifts be borne  
by the hands of your holy Angel  
to your altar on high  
in the sight of your divine majesty,  
so that all of us who through this participation at the altar receive  
the most holy Body and Blood of your Son

**He stands upright again and signs himself with the Sign of the Cross, saying:**

may be filled with every grace and heavenly blessing.

**He joins his hands.**

95. **Commemoration of the Dead (*xxxii*)**

**With hands extended, the Priest says:**

Remember also, Lord, your servants **N.** and **N.**,  
who have gone before us with the sign of faith  
and rest in the sleep of peace.

**He joins his hands and prays briefly for those who have died and for whom he intends to pray.**

**Then, with hands extended, he continues:**

Grant them, O Lord, we pray,  
and all who sleep in Christ,  
a place of refreshment, light and peace.

**He joins his hands.**

96. **He strikes his breast with his right hand, saying:**

To us, also, your sinful servants,

**xxxi.** Jesus' sacrifice, the sacrifice the priest offers *in persona Christi*, fulfills forever those sacrifices of the Old Testament.

**xxxii.** Prayer for the Souls in Purgatory

“On the next day, as by that time it had become necessary, Judas and his men went to take up the bodies of the fallen and to bring them back to lie with their kinsmen in the sepulchres of their fathers. Then under the tunic of every one of the dead they found sacred tokens of the idols of Jamnia, which the law forbids the Jews to wear. And it became clear to all that this was why these men had fallen. So they all blessed the ways of the Lord, the righteous Judge, who reveals the things that are hidden; and they turned to prayer, beseeching that the sin which had been committed might be wholly blotted out. And the noble Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves free from sin, for they had seen with their own eyes what had happened because of the sin of those who had fallen. He also took up a collection, man by man, to the amount of two thousand drachmas of silver, and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. In doing this he acted very well and honorably, taking account of the resurrection. For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. But if he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. Therefore he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin (2 Maccabees 12:39-45).

And, with hands extended, he continues:

who hope in your abundant mercies,  
graciously grant some share  
and fellowship with your holy Apostles and Martyrs:  
with John the Baptist, Stephen,  
Matthias, Barnabas,  
[Ignatius, Alexander,  
Marcellinus, Peter,  
Felicity, Perpetua,  
Agatha, Lucy,  
Agnes, Cecilia, Anastasia]  
and all your Saints:  
admit us, we beg you,  
into their company,  
not weighing our merits, but granting us your pardon,

He joins his hands.

through Christ our Lord.

97. And he continues:

Through whom you continue to create all these good things, O Lord; you make them holy, fill them with life, bless them, and bestow them upon us.

98. He takes the chalice and the paten with the host and, elevating both, he says:

Through him, and with him, and in him,  
to you, O God, almighty Father,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
is all honor and glory,  
for ever and ever (*xxxiii*).

The people acclaim:

Amen.

Early Roman Saints are remembered here and asked for intercession.

**xxxiii.** “And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, ‘To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!’ And the four living creatures said, ‘Amen!’ and the elders fell down and worshiped” (Revelation 5:13-14).

## The Communion Rite

124. After the chalice and paten have been set down, the Priest, with hands joined, says:

At the Savior's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say:

He extends his hands and, together with the people, continues:

Our Father (*xxiv*), who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

125. With hands extended, the Priest alone continues, saying:

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, by the help of your mercy,  
we may be always free from sin  
and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

He joins his hands.

The people conclude the prayer, acclaiming:

For the kingdom,  
the power and the glory are yours  
now and for ever (*xxv*).

126. Then the Priest, with hands extended, says aloud:

Lord Jesus Christ,  
who said to your Apostles,



xxxiv. Our Father (Matthew 6:9-13).

Not a prayer foreign to Jewish people:

“Our Father who art in heaven, show mercy with us for the sake of Thy great name by which we are called; and fulfil unto us, O Lord our God, that which hath been written, ‘At that time I will bring you in, and at that time I will gather you’ (Ezek 36); Our God who art in heaven, assert the unity of Thy name, and establish Thy kingdom continually, and reign over us for ever and ever.” (Jewish Morning Prayer, *Kaddish*)

“Magnified and Sanctified be His great name in the world which He hath created according to His will. May He establish His Kingdom during your life ...” (*Kaddish* daily prayer)

“Forgive us, our Father, for we have sinned; pardon us, O our King, for we have transgressed; for Thou art gracious, who dost forgive.” (6<sup>th</sup> Benediction of *Amidah*)

“O lead us not into sin, or transgression, iniquity, temptation, or shame ...”

“May it be Thy will ... to deliver me this day, and every day, from arrogant men and from arrogance ... and from any mishap, and from the adversary that destroyeth ...”

“For the kingdom is Thine, and to all eternity Thou wilt reign in glory.”

(Jewish Prayer, *Alenu*; Idelsohn, *Jewish Liturgy*, 307-308)

“Daily Bread” – manna in the desert, daily sustenance.

– “*epi-ousios*” (Gk.): “being-above,” super-natural, super-substantial (CCC 2837)

xxxv. Prayer of King David before Solomon is commissioned to build God’s Temple.

“Therefore David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly; and David said: ‘Blessed art thou, O LORD, the God of Israel our father, for ever and ever. Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine; thine is the kingdom, O LORD, and thou art exalted as head above all’” (1 Chronicles 29:10-11).

Peace I leave you, my peace I give you,  
look not on our sins,  
but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.

He joins his hands.

Who live and reign for ever and ever.

The people reply:

Amen.

127. The Priest, turned towards the people, extending and then joining his hands, adds:

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

128. Then, if appropriate, the deacon, or the Priest, adds:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace (*xxxvi*).

And all offer one another a sign, in keeping with local customs, that expresses peace, communion, and charity.  
The Priest gives the sign of peace to a deacon or minister.

129. Then he takes the host, breaks it over the paten, and places a small piece in the chalice, saying quietly:

May this mingling of the Body and Blood  
of our Lord Jesus Christ  
bring eternal life to us who receive it.

130. Meanwhile the following is sung or said:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace (*xxvii*).

The invocation may even be repeated several times if the fraction is prolonged. Only the final time, however, is *grant us peace* said.

**xxvi.** Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14

Unity of Body and Blood: Action of Breaking piously reminds us of Sacrifice of Christ  
Commingleing piously reminds us of Resurrection

**xxvii.** “The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!’ (John 1:29).

The Scapegoat from the Jewish Festival of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, in Leviticus 16, also is referenced here.

131. **Then the Priest, with hands joined, says 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:**

May the receiving of your Body and Blood,  
Lord Jesus Christ,  
not bring me to judgment and condemnation,  
but through your loving mercy  
be for me protection in mind and body,  
and a healing remedy.

132. **The Priest genuflects, takes the host and, holding it slightly raised above the paten or above the chalice, while facing the people, says aloud:**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb (*xxviii*).

**And together with the people he adds once:**

Lord, I am not worthy  
that you should enter under my roof,  
but only say the word  
and my soul shall be healed (*xxix*).

133. **The Priest, facing the altar, says quietly:**

May the Body of Christ  
keep me safe for eternal life.

**xxxviii.** ““Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure’ -- for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. And the angel said to me, ‘Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ And he said to me, ‘These are true words of God’” (Revelation 19:7-9).

**xxxix.** “As he entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, beseeching him and saying, ‘Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, in terrible distress.’ And he said to him, ‘I will come and heal him.’ But the centurion answered him, ‘Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, ‘Go,’ and he goes, and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes, and to my slave, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.’ When Jesus heard him, he marveled, and said to those who followed him, ‘Truly, I say to you, not even in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness; there men will weep and gnash their teeth.’ And to the centurion Jesus said, ‘Go; be it done for you as you have believed.’ And the servant was healed at that very moment (Matthew 8:5-13).

And he reverently consumes the Body of Christ.  
Then he takes the chalice and says quietly:

May the Blood of Christ  
keep me safe for eternal life.

And he reverently consumes the Blood of Christ.

134. After this, he takes the paten or ciborium and approaches the communicants. The Priest raises a host slightly and shows it to each of the communicants, saying:

The Body of Christ.

The communicant replies:

Amen.

And receives Holy Communion.

If a deacon also distributes Holy Communion, he does so in the same manner.

135. If any are present who are to receive Holy Communion under both kinds, the rite as described in the proper place is to be followed.

136. While the Priest is receiving the Body of Christ, the Communion Chant begins.

137. When the distribution of Communion is over, the Priest or a deacon or an acolyte purifies the paten over the chalice and also the chalice itself.

While he carries out the purification, the Priest says 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.

138. Then the Priest may return to the chair. If appropriate, a sacred silence may be observed for a while, or a psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may be sung.

139. Then, standing at the altar or at the chair and facing the people, with hands joined, the Priest says:

Let us pray.



All pray in silence with the Priest for a while, unless silence has just been observed.

Then the Priest, with hands extended, says the Prayer after Communion, at the end of which the people acclaim:

Amen.

### **The Concluding Rites**

140. If they are necessary, any brief announcements to the people follow here.

141. Then the dismissal takes place. The Priest, facing the people and extending his hands, says:

The Lord be with you.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

The Priest blesses the people, saying:

May almighty God bless you:  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit (*xl*).

The people reply:

Amen.

142. On certain days or occasions, this formula of blessing is preceded, in accordance with the rubrics, by another more solemn blessing formula or by a prayer over the people (cf. pp. 526ff).

143. In a Pontifical Mass, the celebrant receives the miter and, extending his hands, says:

The Lord be with you.

All reply:

And with your spirit.

The celebrant says:

Blessed be the name of the Lord.



*xl.* "The LORD said to Moses, 'Say to Aaron and his sons, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, The LORD bless you and keep you: The LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you: The LORD lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace. So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them'" (Numbers 6:22-26).

All reply:

Now and for ever.

The celebrant says:

Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All reply:

Who made heaven and earth.

Then the celebrant receives the pastoral staff, if he uses it, and says:

May almighty God bless you,

making the Sign of the Cross over the people three times, he adds:

the Father, ✠ and the Son, ✠ and the Holy ✠ Spirit.

All:

Amen.

144. Then the deacon, or the Priest himself, with hands joined and facing the people, says:

Go forth, the Mass is ended (*xli*).

Or:

Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

Or:

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

Or:

Go in peace.

The people reply:

Thanks be to God.

145. Then the Priest venerates the altar as usual with a kiss, as at the beginning. After making a profound bow with the ministers, he withdraws.

146. If any liturgical action follows immediately, the rites of dismissal are omitted.

*xli.* *'Ite, missa est.'* 'Go, you are sent.' Where the English word '*Mass*' comes from.

**The two ends of the Mass are the worship of God and the sanctification of man. Having been sanctified in this greatest of all prayers given by God to man, we receive a mission – we are sent into the world to bring the light and love of Christ to those we meet. Our good intentions and our faith are not to be left behind in the Church and put away until next Sunday. We must take it with us into the world and evangelize (New Evangelization). In this way we are able to “live liturgically,” meaning what we have accomplished with Christ in the Eucharist should continue in our daily lives – self-gift, sacrifice, charity, mercy, etc.**

# Liturgical Symbols:

## The Altar

### Brief History

- the use of an altar has been a constant in man's attempts to communicate with the divine.
- often built on mountain tops as these were seen as places close to God
- the Jewish cult continued to use altars in its worship of the Yahweh. In an earlier period numerous altars were established for this worship, but eventually one altar would be established at the Temple. Here all sacrificial worship would take place. If there is one God and one Priesthood, there can be only one Altar and one Place of Sacrifice.
- In the Old Testament, the altar becomes a sign of the divine presence (Gen. 12:7; 26:4 – Abraham and Isaac build altars to God after theophany).
- The altar at the Temple would be consecrated and purified annually reminding everyone of its special sanctity (we see this practice described in Ex 29:36, Lev 8:15. Interestingly blood spread on the corners, a sign of power, for this consecration (crosses of corners in our rite).
- New Testament: Although little is said directly concerning the use of altars in the NT, some references are made.
  - 1 Cor. 10:21 → the table of the Lord is contrasted with the table of demons. Here Paul is speaking of the food sacrificed to false gods.
  - Revelation 6:9 → the heavenly altar under which the martyrs reside, in the heavenly liturgy
  - Jesus the cornerstone – Matt. 21:44, Jesus as the New Temple, the New Altar of sacrifice, the New place of theophany
  - Heb. 4:14; 13:10 “we have an altar [Christ] from which those who serve the tabernacle [Jews] have no right to eat.” New Covenant v. Old Covenant
- Antiquity:
  - Only one in Church because of the symbolic connection to Christ who is one and whose sacrifice was one (this soon changes)
  - VENERATION: “What is the altar if not the seat of the Body and Blood of Christ?” (Ottatus of Milevus).
  - Ignatius of Antioch “All are directed to the one Jesus Christ who proceeds from the Father ... To him must all go as to the one temple and the one altar” (Ad. Magnes. 7).

- St. Irenaeus: “He offered himself ... since he himself was the victim, the sacrifice, the priest, the altar” ((Advers. Haer.55,4)
- St. Ambrose: “What is the altar unless the figure of the body of Christ” (De Sacra 1,5,2,7)
- St. Cyril of Alexandria “He is the altar ... and High Priest” (De Oratione in spiritu et veritate)
- Eusebius: “the only begotten altar” (Hist Eccle 10, 4)
- Augustine: “we are to understand the temple and the altar as Christ himself” (Quaest evang bk 1, 34)
- THE ALTAR ALSO CONNECTED TO THE SOULS OF THE FAITHFUL B/C OF THEIR CONN. TO CHRIST: Gregory the Great: “What is God’s altar if not the souls of those who lead good lives? ... rightly then the heart of the just is said to be the altar of God.” (Hom. in Ez. 10, 19)
- Current
  - Above all, the main altar should be so placed and constructed that it is always seen to be the sign of Christ Himself, the place at which the saving mysteries are carried out, and the center of the assembly, to which the greatest reverence is due. (*Eucharisticum mysterium* 24)
  - The main altar should preferably be freestanding, to permit walking around it and celebration facing the people. Its location in the place of worship should be truly central so that the attention of the whole congregation naturally focuses there. (*Inter oecumenici* 91)
  - CCC 1383: *The altar*, around which the Church is gathered in the celebration of the Eucharist, represents the two aspects of the same mystery: the altar of the sacrifice and the table of the Lord. This is all the more so since the Christian altar is the symbol of Christ himself, present in the midst of the assembly of his faithful, both as the victim offered for our reconciliation and as food from heaven who is giving himself to us. "For what is the altar of Christ if not the image of the Body of Christ?"<sup>214</sup> asks St. Ambrose. He says elsewhere, "The altar represents the body [of Christ] and the Body of Christ is on the altar."<sup>215</sup> The liturgy expresses this unity of sacrifice and communion in many prayers. Thus the Roman Church prays in its anaphora:
 

We entreat you, almighty God, that by the hands of your holy Angel this offering may be borne to your altar in heaven in the sight of your divine majesty, so that as we receive in communion at this altar the most holy Body and Blood of your Son, we may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace. (Roman Missal, CANON)

→ here we see altar of sacrifice, table of the Lord, Christ himself, connection to the heavenly altar seen in Revelation
  - CCC 1182: The *altar* of the New Covenant is the Lord's Cross, from which the sacraments of the Paschal mystery flow. On the altar, which is the center of the church, the sacrifice of the Cross is made present under sacramental signs. The altar is also the table of the Lord, to which the People of God are invited. In certain Eastern liturgies, the altar is also the symbol of the tomb (Christ truly died and is truly risen).
    - Altar as table, Cross, TOMB

## Incense

- Reminds us that we are in heaven: “An angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar ... and the smoke of incense rose with the prayers of the saints (Rev. 8:3-4).
  - Clouds of heaven here remind us of the prayers of the saints as well as ours which are linked to them in the liturgy.
  - Psalm 141:2 “Let my prayer be counted as incense before you ...”
- A cloud (of incense) also symbolizes the presence of God himself
  - Transfiguration
  - Pillar of Smoke/Fire/Cloud in the desert in Exodus
- Smell: we are not pure spirit, but have bodies and senses. Each of these is ministered to in the liturgy of the Church. Incense provides a stimulus for the sense of smell which has its own symbolism:
  - “we are unto God a sweet savour” (Eph. 5:2).
  - “For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life” (2Cor. 2:15-16).

## Striking the Breast

WHEN the priest begins Holy Mass ... the faithful, or the servers in their stead, say "I confess to Almighty God...that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault," and each time they confess their guilt they strike their breasts. What is the significance of this striking the breast? All its meaning lies in its being rightly done. To brush one's clothes with the tips of one's fingers is not to strike the breast. We should beat upon our breasts with our closed fists. In the old picture of Saint Jerome in the desert he is kneeling on the ground and striking his breast with a stone. It is an honest blow, not an elegant gesture. To strike the breast is to beat against the gates of our inner world in order to shatter them. This is its significance ... The blow also is to wake us up. It is to shake the soul awake into the consciousness that God is calling, so that she may hear, and take his part and punish herself. She reflects, repents and is contrite. It is for this reason that priest and people strike their breasts when they confess their sins at the foot of the altar. (Romano Guardini)

## Candles

- Symbol of the Presence of God
  - Moses recognizes God's glorious presence in Exodus upon seeing the burning bush.
  - In the Holy of Holies, the tabernacle of the Jewish Temple, God demands menorah to be erected. The seven-branched lampstands provided light in the Temple and made known the presence of God (Ex. 25:31-40)
  - These candles remained burning until they were taken out as plunder by the Babylonians, and the darkness which followed symbolized the absence of God (Jer. 52:19)
  
- Symbol of Christ himself
  - "I am the light of the world" (Jn 8:12)
  - "In him was life, and the life was the light of men (Jn. 1:4)
  - 2-6 candles on the altar; tabernacle lamp; votive candles.
  - Paschal Candle: a sign of the light of Christ rising in glory scattering the darkness of our hearts and minds (USCCB)
    - Made of beeswax. Why? Pure beeswax to symbolize the purity of the flesh of Christ which comes from the Blessed Virgin Mary.
  
- Symbol of the heavenly kingdom itself.
  - "I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest (Rev. 1:12-13)
  - Even here though, it is Christ in heaven who provides the light: "And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb" (Rev. 21:23).
  
- Symbol of our life in Christ.
  - Baptismal candles: "Receive the light of Christ."
  - We must carry the light of Christ with us at all times, and always keep it burning by being prepared (the Parable of the Vigilant Virgins, Mt. 25:1-12)
  - We must sacrifice ourselves for Christ, give ourselves for him, just as a candle gives itself to maintain its light. The need for real candles, not fake ones. We should see them melt as a sign of their sacrifice for the light.

