

Discovering The Riches of The Mass
Session # 3: The Liturgy of the Eucharist Part 1 – DVD Notes

T1. Introduction to the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

Now we are going to draw our attention to the Heart of the Mass as we come to the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Chart shows Liturgy of Eucharist contains three parts:

Elements of the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

A. Preparation of the Gifts

- Preparation of the Altar and Presentation of the Gifts
- Prayers at the Preparation of the Gifts
- Mixing Water and Wine
- Washing Hands
- Prayer over the Offerings

B. Eucharistic Prayer

- Preface
- *Sanctus*: “Holy, Holy, Holy Lord”
- *Epiclesis*
- Words of Institution and Consecration
- Mystery of Faith
- *Anamnesis*, Offering, Intercessions & Final Doxology

C. Communion Rite

- Lord’s Prayer
- Rite of Peace
- The Fraction, Commingling & “Lamb of God”
- Holy Communion
- Prayer after Communion

In this Session (3), we will focus on the first two parts of the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

T2. The Preparation of the Gifts:

S1. Presentation of the Gifts: Where some representatives from the congregation and people at the Mass will process up the aisle bearing gifts of bread and wine to present to the Priest who brings them to the altar.

A. Ritual reflects a very ancient practice in the Church. In the early Church, Christians would not just bring bread and wine, but bread and wine that many of them had made themselves on their own farms, their own fields. They also brought other gifts such as honey, wool, flax, flowers, fruits, and other various gifts - The work of human hands - hours and hours of their lives. Many toils, many labors went into these gifts, and then they were presented up the aisle to the Priest and up to the altar.

1. This great ritual was to symbolize a self-gift from the people – that in the bread, in the wine, in the wax, in the flowers, and in these gifts were hours and hours of work of these people’s lives. It symbolized their very giving of their selves to God. Joining their lives in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ that is being made present for us in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

B. Not let us talk about the two principle gifts being brought up today - two gifts of bread and wine.

1. In the Bible, bread was not simply a side dish. You go to Italian restaurant and get your pasta and some bread on the side. That is not how bread was understood in the Biblical world.

a) Bread was a most basic type of food. It was fundamental for sustaining life. It was called the “Staff of Life.” Noting how bread supported human life.

b) This very important part of an ancient person’s food was offered up as sacrifice, in the Israelite tradition. Exodus 29:2 is example where Israelites were called to offer up bread as a sacrifice.

2. Wine was also a common part of Israelite meals and wine was also offered up as a sacrifice (Exodus 29:38-41 and Numbers 15:2-15).

- C. This tradition we have of bring up gifts is meant to express a certain sacrifice on the peoples part. You may not be the ones chosen to bring gifts up, but that person is representing the whole community. So as they are processing up to the altar, think of it as – our whole lives.
- D. We are uniting our joys, our sufferings, our works, our fears, our successes, our failures, our whole lives – we are uniting in those gifts of bread and wine. We are offering them as a sacrifice; we are joining our lives to Jesus Christ in His sacrifice that is about to made present before us sacramentally in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

S1. Priest washing his hands. We are watching this happen – this is not for hygiene. This was a Biblical practice.

- A. There was a great tradition in the OT of priests washing their hands before they entered the Tabernacle Exodus 30:17-21.
 - 1. The priest was getting ready to enter the Tabernacle, the portable sanctuary in the desert, where God’s holy presence had dwelt. Later in Exodus, we read about the glory cloud of God coming down into the Tabernacle, filling it - God manifesting His presence. This is where God met His people.
 - 2. Before the priest could enter that sacred space, he preformed this ritual purification rite – this rite of washing of hands because he was about to draw near the place where God met His people.
- B. So when we are watching the Priest wash his hands, if we are watching this ritual from the Biblical perspective, that should signal something dramatic is about to take place now. This Priest is preparing to enter a new Tabernacle, a new Temple, a new Holy of Holies. Indeed that is what happens in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
 - 1. In the OT, God dwelt with His people. He manifested Himself in the form of a cloud on various occasions. Every time we go to Mass, we have something so much greater than what ancient Israel had. Something that would surpass their imaginations that the God of the Universe, the Son of God Himself would come before us under the appearances of bread and wine - Not just on our altars, but actually enter us in Holy Communion.
 - 2. What an amazing gift this is – and the Priest is getting ready for this profound action. It is going to be through his action as a Priest – through his words – in repeating the Words of Institution - those Words of Consecration. Through his hands this Bread and Wine, which is our gifts, our whole lives summed up in the Bread and Wine are going to be changed into the very Body and Blood of Christ, which is offered up to the Father. So the Priest symbolically washing his hands, signals to us that this profound encounter with God is about to take place.

T3. Eucharistic Prayer:

S1. Preface:

- A. The Priest says the Lord be with you and we say And with your spirit. Then the Priest says Lift up your hearts. This is a Biblical summons, you find this call in:
 - 1. Lamentations 3:41 – Let us lift up our hearts and hands to heaven.
 - 2. Colossian 3:1-2 – Set your minds on the things that are above. Lift up your minds; lift up your hearts to the things that are above.
 - 3. The heart in the Bible was the center of all our human attentions – our desires, our thoughts, our feelings – the human heart. From a Biblical perspective, the Priest is calling us to lift up our hearts now to heaven, to lift them up to God. Lift them up to the most important things because now we are about to enter this most sacred moment of the Liturgy.

- B. St. Cyril of Jerusalem said, “For in this sublime moment, the heart should be lifted up to God and not be allowed to descend to the earth and earthly concerns.”
1. Do you ever get distracted at Mass? Does your mind ever wander? You hear yourself thinking about things you have to do that day. Projects you got to get done around the house, the brunch you are going to make, the people coming over later in the week. You think about all these other things when we should be thinking about what is happening in the Mass; and we feel bad about that. We want to concentrate more, but we find our minds wandering.
 2. St. Cyril of Jerusalem understands that we are human, it is very difficult for us to give God our fullest attention at every moment of our lives. We should have minds lifted up to heaven, but we have these human concerns and endeavors that we need to take care of. He understands that, but yet, he does say, if there is ever a moment where we want to give God our fullest attention, when we want to try our hardest to give Him all of our thoughts, give Him our hearts it is right now at the Eucharistic Prayer. As we enter this most profound moment in the Liturgy
 - Listen to what St. Cyril goes on to say, “With all possible emphasis, the sacrificing Priest exhorts us in this hour to lay aside all the cares of this life, all domestic worries, and direct our hearts to God in heaven who has loved men.... Let there be none among you who shall confess with his lips: We have lifted up our hearts, and allow his thoughts to remain with the cares of this life.”
- C. How many times have we ever done this? The Priest says Lift up your hearts and we say, We lift them up to the Lord, and then two seconds later we are thinking about something someone said to us earlier that week. Or we are thinking about some project at work or we are looking around and noticing who is at church. We just said that we are lifting them up to the Lord, yet we remain on this human level.
1. God is very merciful and He understands our human weakness, but at the same time this is the moment we want to give God our best.
 2. Cyril goes on to say, ‘We should indeed think of God at all times, but this is impossible because of our human frailty, but in this holy time, especially our hearts should be with God.’
- D. So when we hear the Priest summon us Lift up your hearts, let that be a big reminder for us now is the time I want to give God my best, I am not going to be looking around, I am not going to be looking at my watch, I am not going to be thinking about other things. I really want to focus on these prayers; I want to give God my heart, here at this moment in the Liturgy.

S2. The Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy): Here we are acclaiming God the thrice Holy One. In Scripture, when you have something repeated 3 Times that is the Hebrew expression of the superlative. We are not just saying God is Holy, we are saying that God is Holy, Holy, Holy – the all Holy One! This is right before we kneel down again – to hear the actual words of Institution where the Bread and Wine will be changed into the Body and Blood of Christ.

- A. We are recognizing God’s awesome holiness at this moment. These words come to us from the Liturgy in Heaven.
1. If you were to look in the Book of Isaiah 6, the prophet was given this vision of the Heavenly Liturgy - where he sees the Angels, Cherubim, and Seraphim bowing down before God. Their faces are covered - they are so close to God. It as if they do not feel worthy to be in His presence. Even these awesome angels did not feel worthy to be in God’s presence. They just bow down and never cease to say, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of Hosts - God who is the God of all the hosts of

angels. Isaiah sees this and when we go to Mass, we repeat those words that were spoken by the angels in Isaiah 6.

2. This quite fitting because if the all beautiful angelic beings, the great hosts of heaven, if they do not feel worthy to be in God's presence, if they are humbly, reverently, turning their faces and bowing down before Him and repeating these words. How much more so we fallen, sinful human beings as we are about to approach the Almighty presence of God, how much so should we bow down in reverence.
 3. These words are also in the NT in the Book of Revelation 4 in the Heavenly Liturgy. St. John sees the four living bowing down and never ceasing to say, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord. Here this prayer also reminds us of our worship here on earth is a participation in something so much bigger than what we can see with our human eyes. Are participation in the Liturgy is really a sharing in the Heavenly Liturgy. In the worship of God around His Throne in Heaven and all the angels and all the saints,
 4. This prayer helps us to remember if we could see with the eyes of the angels what was happening at Mass, we would want to respond like those angelic beings in great humble reverence and say these words. This is a window into how our earthly Liturgy as the Catechism teaches is a participation in the Heavenly Liturgy.
- B.** The second half of this prayer, we echo the words that were used to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem the week that He died.
1. On the day, we now know as Palm Sunday. The people said - Hosanna to the Son of David, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord - Hosanna in the highest. They welcomed Jesus with these words recognizing Him as their King.
 2. It is fitting that we repeat those words as we are entering the heart of the Eucharistic Prayer, as we are preparing to welcome our King, Jesus, into our own souls in Holy Communion. So we welcome Him with those joyous words, those words of praise of Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

S3. Words of Consecration (This is my body ... This is my blood) Do this in Memory of me. What did these sacred words mean in the original context? These words will shed a lot of light on our understanding of the Mass as Sacrifice. How many have heard the Mass describe as Sacrifice – The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

- A.** In what sense is the Mass a Sacrifice? In the OT sacrifice, the Levites would take a bull or some goat, cut it up or burn it up. When we see Father come to say Mass, we do not see all these animals, nor knives or smoke – in what sense is the Mass a Sacrifice? These words of Consecration need to be understood in their original context. On the night before Jesus died, I want you to image what it would have been like to be Peter, James, John, or Philip or Andrew – there at the Last Supper in the context of this Passover Meal and hear Jesus say these words. What if we were hearing these words for the first time?
1. All this took place in the context of a Passover Meal. Remember the Passover was that fateful night when the Jews were liberated from Egypt. That is the night they took a lamb, sacrificed it, put the blood of the lamb on the doorpost, ate of the lamb, and then they were spared from that Tenth Plague, the death of the first-born. And they fled that night and escaped from Egypt.
 2. Now all subsequent generations from that moment onward celebrated the Passover Meal. They re-enacted the Passover Meal, the re-told the story, then they sacrificed lambs and ate of those lambs. Most significantly, they celebrated the Passover Meal as a memorial. This word Memorial biblically (Hebrew *zikaron*,

and Greek anamnesis) did not mean simply to remember or to recall, it meant literally “making the past present.”

3. We have various celebrations in our culture today, Memorial Day, July 4th, so we remember the day. For the Jews when they celebrated a memorial, they did something very different than what we do, we may just remember the day, but they believed that the past event was made present. So for example if you are celebrating the 4th of July the way the Biblical Jews celebrated Passover, your would be doing this:
 - You would be reading the Declaration of Independence in a solemn proclamation, and you would probably sign your name on some document and you would believe that the past event of the original signing was mystically made present for you. It would be as if Thomas Jefferson, John Hancock were mystically made present with you as you were celebrating the 4th of July, if you celebrated it like a Biblical Memorial or Liturgical Memorial
 4. We know that some ancient Jews at the time of Christ were writing about happened at Passover, some of them said this, When we celebrate Passover, it is as if we are walking out of Egypt with our ancestors. The past is made present so that the Jews could celebrate and participate in that founding event of their nationhood. That is what it means to celebrate a liturgical memorial.
- B.** Now you are one of those twelve Apostles, you are showing up at this Passover Meal. Here you are at the Last Supper, you gather around the Table and there is something utterly shocking. From a biblical perspective, what would be the main course of a Passover Meal – the Lamb? When you read Matthew, Mark, or Luke do they mention anything about a Lamb at the Last Supper?
1. To celebrate Passover without a lamb would be like celebrating Thanksgiving without football. Imagining you are ready this great account about the Passover in Jerusalem at the climax of Jesus ministry (many messianic hopes around Passover) and there is not mention of a lamb. But there is subtly a mention of a lamb. It is Jesus identifying Himself with the Passover Lamb.
 2. On of the things you would notice if you were one of the twelve Apostles listening to Jesus’ words, you would notice that Jesus was talking about Sacrifice. He was talking about some type of Sacrifice taking place.
 - a) He said, “This is my Body, this is my Blood.” In first century, when you hear body and blood you are thinking about sacrificial language. Then Jesus speaks of His Body being offered up – that is technical biblical language to describe sacrifice. Blood being poured out for the forgiveness of sins, recalls the blood rituals of the blood being poured out on the altar.
 - b) This is all language taken from the sacrificial cult of the Temple. What is startling is Jesus is taking that sacrificial language and using it not to describe to what is happening to some animal, but takes that language and applies it to Himself. To His Body being offered up, His Blood being poured out like a Lamb in sacrifice. Jesus is the Passover Lamb.
- C.** He clearly speaks of His sacrifice at the Last Supper and then at the end of this Meal what does Jesus say - Do this in Memory of Me. This is the Biblical notion of Memorial. When Jesus is saying, “Do this in Memory of Me”, is He just saying remember Me. No – He is saying, “Make this present.” This Sacrifice of My Body and Blood – make this present. Make this Sacrifice of My Body and Blood present for future generations.

1. That is why the Apostles and future generations carried out Jesus' command to Do this in Memory of Me in the sense of a Liturgical Biblical Memorial. Making Christ's Sacrifice Body and Blood present for later generations.
2. So they could enter into the Sacrifice, participate in it, and receive all the blessings of that Sacrifice. That is why the Catechism has described the Mass as a Sacrifice. It is not a bloody sacrifice, it is not about re-sacrificing Jesus Christ, but it is a representation of Christ's one true Sacrifice. Not a representation, not just a symbolic reminder, but a re-presentation. A making Present once again of the Sacrifice of Jesus.
 - a) So every time we go to Mass, the event of Calvary is made present to us sacramentally. Why is the Sacrifice made present to us? **So we can join our lives, our hearts, our minds, our hopes, our fears, our works, our joys, our sufferings, our entire lives we unite with Jesus.**
 - b) **CCC1368:** *The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church.* The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. With him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She unites herself to his intercession with the Father for all men. In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value. Christ's sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering.
3. That was already foreshadowed in the Presentation of the Gifts; remember the bread and wine symbolizing our lives and that is what is changed into the Body and Blood of Christ that is offered up to the Father. We are uniting our lives with Jesus' Sacrifice. This is beautiful to think about – this is a climatic moment in the Liturgy – we give Jesus everything. That is why in some Churches you may hear bells rung at these various moments of the words of Consecration. To remind us of this sacred moment here where we give Christ are all in His Sacrifice.

S4. Updated Translation

- A. Speaks of the Chalice of Christ's Blood instead of the Cup. Reflects the Latin based text, but it also highlights the Cup that we are referring to here is not any ordinary cup. This is the Eucharistic Cup, the Cup of Blessing 1 Cor 10. Traditionally this Eucharistic Cup has been called a Chalice. That is why we have it used here to show the solemnity of this particular kind of vessel used to hold the Sacred Blood of Christ.
- B. Pro Multis in Latin, which means "For Many" literally. After Vatican II, the translation in English came out and said that Christ's Blood was shed for all. Now in the new translation the text says, "The Blood was shed for you and for many." Some people have wondered – why does it say for many – is this limiting the kind of Salvation Christ is offering the world. Is it not for all or is it only for some?
 1. "For Many" is clearly an accurate translation of the Latin text that is the basis for the Mass around the world. It also a faithful rendering of the Biblical account of the Last Supper.
 2. It makes a very important theological point – and does so with incredible beautiful balance.
 - a) Cardinal Arinze said – While it is true that Jesus died for everybody (1 Tim 2:6), not everyone chooses to accept this gift. Each individual must choose to accept the gift of Salvation and live according to that grace.

- b) While saying that Jesus Blood was shed for You and for many is acknowledging that while Jesus death on the Cross has redemptive value for everybody, not everyone may choose to accept that gift.
3. Number of scripture scholars have noted that Christ's Words at the Last Supper, when He says that His Blood was shed for you and for many (MT:26:28), those words actually reflects, recall the theme of the many in a famous passage Isaiah 53:10-12. Three times in Isaiah 53, there is the mention of the "many". Isaiah 53 gives a great prophecy about a servant figure that is going to come. A servant figure that is going to offer his life as an offering for sin.
- a) The Servant of the Lord will come and be like a Lamb that is led to the slaughter and he will offer his life as a sacrifice for sin. This great prophecy, known as the prophecy of the suffering servant, talks about how servant figure bears the sins of "many". Now that does not mean that he is only bearing the sins of a couple of people, but the word "many" in Isaiah the many nations, the many peoples.
 - b) We see the servant figure has a universal scope – he is supposed to be a light to all the nations, Isaiah 42, 49, 52. The servant is coming to rescue everybody, but that there are some that may not accept it. Isaiah main point being made here is that there is one servant that is going to die, and he is going to die for the sake of the many.
 - c) Jesus at the Last Supper, when He talks about His Blood being shed for many, is recalling this tradition of the many in Isaiah. Jesus is identifying Himself as the one Servant of the Lord who dies for the many peoples, the many nations – He dies for all as the New Testament reveals. But not everyone will choose to accept that gift.

S5. The Great Amen

- A.** The word Amen affirms the validity of something that has been said – it means, "So be it (Yes). Levites gave the blessing to the Lord and the people respond Amen. In the Book of Ezra, Ezra proclaims the Law and the people respond Amen. In the Book of Revelation all the living creatures cry out - May you have blessing, glory, and honor and the other angels say Amen.
- B.** At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, we have all the people shouting out Amen. St. Jerome said that the Amen of the Christians in Rome who were celebrating the Mass, that the Amen resounded in Heaven as a celestial thunderclap. St. Augustine said that the Amen at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer was like a signature of the people on to the words of the Priest. We affirm all that the Priest has said and done.

We have come to a definite high point in the Mass at the Words of Consecration and the Sacrifice of Christ, the Body and Blood being made present to us under the appearances of Bread and Wine.

In the last Session 4, we will turn to the chief goal of the Mass, which is Holy Communion for our intimate union with our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament in the Holy Eucharist.