

Supplementary Reading

CELEBRATING THE MASS

- 186 The Eucharistic Prayer, the centre and summit of the entire celebration, sums up what it means for the Church to celebrate the Eucharist. It is a memorial proclamation of praise and thanksgiving for God's work of salvation, a proclamation in which the Body and Blood of Christ are made present by the power of the Holy Spirit, and the people are joined to Christ in offering his Sacrifice to the Father. The Eucharistic Prayer is proclaimed by the priest celebrant in the name of Christ and on behalf of the whole assembly, which professes its faith and gives its assent through dialogue, acclamations, and the AMEN....
- 187 The Eucharistic Prayer is proclaimed over the people's gifts. Through this prayer which has a rich and varied tradition, the Church gives praise and thanks for God's holiness and justice and for all God's mighty deeds in creating and redeeming the human race, deeds which reached their climax in the incarnation, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the Eucharistic Prayer the mystery of Christ's saving death and resurrection is recalled; the Last Supper is recounted; the memorial Sacrifice of his Body and Blood is presented to the Father; and the Holy Spirit is invoked to sanctify the gifts and transform those who partake of them into the body of Christ, uniting the assembly and the whole Church and family of God, living and dead, into one communion of love, service and praise to the glory of the Father.
- 190 Dialogue: Since the celebration of Mass is a communal action, the dialogue between priest celebrant and the assembly is of special value. It is not only an external sign of communal celebration, but also fosters and brings about communion between priest and people. The dialogue establishes at the outset that the Eucharistic Prayer is prayed in the person and power of the Lord who is with the Church, and in the name of the whole assembly and indeed of the whole Church in heaven and on earth. All are invited, in the biblical term, to lift up their hearts, that is, to raise up and place in God's presence their entire being, thoughts, memories, emotions and expectations, in grateful attention and anticipation.
- 191... The Eucharistic Prayer is always expressed in the first person plural. It is the whole assembly of the faithful that joins itself to Christ in acknowledging the great things God has done and in offering the Sacrifice, even when one voice speaks in the name of all. It is the responsibility of the priest, acting in the person of Christ, the head of the Church, to proclaim the prayer with and for the people, to engage their attention, and to elicit their involvement throughout.

In spirit and in truth

193 Epiclesis....

The life-giving power of the Spirit, who moved over the waters in the first days of creation and overshadowed Mary in the moment of incarnation, is vividly expressed by the ancient gesture of bringing together the hands with the palms downward and extended over the elements to be consecrated. When done with great gravity and deliberation, this gesture can reinforce powerfully the understanding of the words and of the Spirit's action. This is a laying on of hands and is the same sacramental gesture used in Ordination, Confirmation, the Anointing of the Sick, and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

MATTHEW 26:27-2

Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying 'Drink from it, all of you for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.'

MARK 14:24

'He said to them, 'this is my blood of the covenant which will be shed for many'

POPE BENEDICT XVI

'Breaking the bread is an act of communion, an act of uniting through sharing. Thus in the act itself, the intimate nature of the Eucharist is already indicated: it is agape, the meanings of the Eucharist and love intertwine. In Jesus' act of break the bread, the love that is shared has attained its most radical form: Jesus allows himself to be broken as living bread. In the bread that is distributed, we recognise the mystery of the grain of wheat that dies, and so bears fruit. We recognise the new multiplication of the loaves, which derives from the dying of the grain of wheat and will continue until the end of the world. At the same time, we see that the Eucharist can never be just a liturgical action. It is complete only if the liturgical 'agape' then becomes love in daily life. In Christian worship, the two things become one – experiencing the Lord's love in the act of worship and fostering love for one's neighbour. At this hour, we ask the Lord for the grace to learn to live the mystery of the Eucharist ever more deeply, in such a way that the transformation of the world can begin to take place.'

Homily on Holy Thursday 2009

Further Reading

Understanding the Revised Mass Texts

(Paul Turner, LTP/McCrimmons, 2011)

- Pages 24–41: The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Bibliography

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: Sacrosanctum Concilium

Liturgiam Authenticam
on the use of Vernacular Languages in the Publication of the Books of the Roman Liturgy (5th Instruction for the Right Implementation of SC)

General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)
CTS London, 2005

Celebrating the Mass
Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CTS: London 2005)