

Lesson 11

The Mass



The Mass is the ultimate form of worship and prayer in the Catholic Church. It is our way of renewing the Covenant with Christ established in the Eucharist. The Mass is the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross made for the salvation of the world.

God is present in four places during the Mass: in the Word (*Scriptures*), in the Eucharist, in the Priest, and in the People. We should be ready to encounter Christ in these four places and to do that we must take some time before Mass beginnings to prepare ourselves through prayer.

The following three books are used throughout the Mass:

1. the Lectionary

The Lectionary contains the readings for the Mass.

2. the Book of the Gospels

The Book of the Gospels contains only the Gospel readings and is usually carried in at the beginning of Mass and placed on the altar until the time of the Gospel reading.

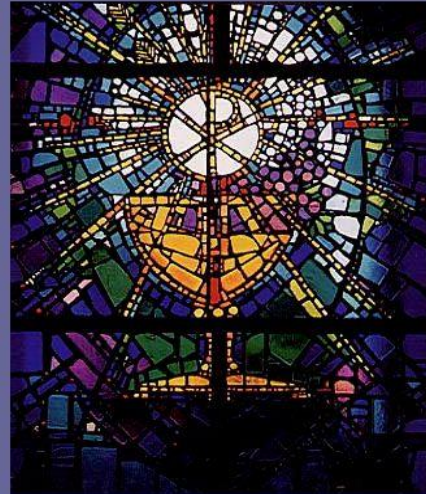
3. the Roman Missal

The Roman Missal contains all the prayers for the Mass. This book is used at the Chair and at the Altar.

The Mass is divided into four parts: the **Introductory Rites**; the **Liturgy of the Word**; the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**; and the **Concluding Rites**. The word “liturgy” means “public work.” This means that the congregation is required to participate in the Mass as the public work of the people. In other words, the work of the people is their full and active participation at Mass. This is how we are called to worship God in a spirit of thanks and adoration.

Four Primary Parts of the Liturgy

1. Introductory Rites
2. Liturgy of the WORD
(Biblical Readings, Homily, Creed, Intercessions)
3. Liturgy of the EUCHARIST
(Preparation, Eucharistic Prayer; Communion Rite)
4. Concluding Rite



The Introductory Rites

The Introductory Rites gather the community and allow the people to unite in mind, heart, and spirit. The parts of the Introductory Rites are as follows:

1. Entrance Song and Procession

The Entrance Song is the opening hymn which is sung by the congregation. During the song, the procession takes place in which the priest and altar servers enter the sanctuary and take their place for the start of the Mass.

2. Veneration of the Altar

The Altar servers and Priest bow to reverence the altar (*which represents the cross of Christ*). The Priest will kiss the altar at the beginning and end of the Mass as a sign of reverence.

3. Sign of the Cross

The Cross of Christ goes before us always as we journey toward the kingdom of heaven.

4. Greeting

When the priest uses the New Testament greeting of "*The Lord be with you.*" To which the congregation responds, "*And with your spirit.*"

5. Penitential Rite

Gives us the opportunity to admit that we are sinners in need of God's mercy and to ask for His forgiveness. There are two forms for this rite: the Confiteor (*"I confess to almighty God..."*) or the Kyrie (*"Lord, have mercy..."*).

6. Gloria

Allows us to join in singing God's praise with the choirs of angels gathered around His throne.

7. The Opening Prayer (also called the "Collect")

This prayer gives us the theme of the Mass and "collects" the congregation into a single focus.



The Liturgy of the Word

The Liturgy of the Word focuses on the readings from Sacred Scripture and their meaning in our lives. The parts of the Liturgy of the Word are as follows:

1. The First Reading

This reading usually comes from the Old Testament.

2. The Responsorial Psalm

One of the 150 Psalms is used for this portion of the Mass. The Psalm is usually sung with the refrain sung by the congregation.

3. The Second Reading

This Reading usually comes from one of the New Testament Letters.

4. The Gospel Acclamation

The singing of the “Alleluia.” The Alleluia is not sung during the seasons of Advent (*four week season that prepares us for the Christmas season*) or Lent (*the 40 day period that prepares us for the Easter season*).

5. Gospel

This reading is taken from one of the four Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

6. Homily

The priest takes the time to teach the congregation about the Scripture readings of the day and how they apply to our daily lives.

7. Profession of Faith

The recitation of the Creed. All should bow during the words “*and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man*” in honor of the Mystery of the Incarnation (*when the Son of God became man*).

8. Prayers of the Faithful

The intercessions in which we ask God to care for the needs of the Church and the world.



The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Eucharist focuses on the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. The parts of the Liturgy of the Eucharist are as follows:

1. Presentation of the Gifts and the Altar

The gifts of bread and wine are now taken to the altar; they represent our offerings and gifts to God. The altar is prepared with the placement of the Roman Missal, the Chalice, and the other vessels used for the Mass.

2. Prayer over the Gifts

The priest says, *"Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father."* The congregation responds, *"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."* A prayer which is specific to that day follows.

3. The Eucharistic Prayer

This is the center and summit of the entire celebration of the Mass. There are several different Eucharistic Prayers to choose from; however, they all contain the following parts:

A. Preface

Begins with the following dialogue:

Priest: *"The Lord be with you"*

People: *"And with your spirit"*

Priest: *"Lift up your hearts"*

People: *"We lift them up to the Lord"*

Priest: *"Let us give thanks to the Lord our God"*

People: *"It is right and just"*

Then the priest continues with the prayer

B. Sanctus

The "Holy, holy, holy" song which reminds us of Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

C. Epiclesis

The invocation (*calling upon*) of the Holy Spirit.

D. Narrative of Institution

This is where the **Consecration** (*changing of bread and wine into Body and Blood of Christ*) takes place. **Transubstantiation** (*the changing of the substances from bread and wine into the Body and Blood*) is the name of the process that occurs during the Consecration.

Transubstantiation occurs when the priest says:

*"Take this, all of you and eat it: this is my body
which will be given up for you"*

AND

*"Take this, all of you, and drink it: this is the cup
of my blood, the blood of the new and
everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you
and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Do
this in memory of me."*

E. Anamnesis

The word "Anamnesis" means "memory." We fulfill Christ's command to remember what he did for us: to die for our sins and bring us the gift of salvation. The priest says: *"Do this in memory of me."*

F. Memorial Acclamation

When priest states, "*Let us proclaim the mystery of faith.*"

G. Offering

Part of Eucharistic Prayer in which we are offering the Body and Blood.

When the priest says: "*this life-giving bread.. this saving cup.*"

H. Intercessions

Part of the Eucharistic Prayer where the priest prays for the Church, the pope, the local bishop, members of the living and those assembled, the saints, and the dead.

I. Final Doxology

A doxology is a statement of praise and thanksgiving in awe of the Trinity.

It is when the priest says: "*Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.*"

J. Great Amen

This is our response to the final doxology and a personal profession of faith.

4. Communion Rite

The Communion Rite contains the following parts:

A. Lord's Prayer

When the Our Father prayer is sung or recited.

B. Rite of Peace

When we offer each other the peace of Christ by shaking hands.

C. Breaking of the Bread

When the priest breaks the host in two.

D. Commingling

When the priest drops a small piece of the host into the chalice and says:

"May this mingling of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it."

E. Lamb of God

When the Priest elevates the Host and says, "*Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb.*"

F. Communion (*Distribution of the Eucharist*)

A **Eucharistic Fast** from food and water for one hour is required in order to receive Holy Communion.

G. Purification of the Vessels

While cleaning the chalice, the priest prays the following in silence: "*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.*"

The Concluding Rites

The Concluding Rites consist of the following parts:

1. **Prayer after Communion**

Often referred to as the Closing Prayer.

2. **Greeting and Blessing**

The Greeting begins with the phrase: "*The Lord be with you.*" The priest blesses the people: "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*"

3. **Dismissal**

When the Priest says: "*The Mass has ended. Go in peace.*"

4. **Recessional Hymn and Veneration of the Altar**

A hymn is sung as the priest kisses the altar and leaves the sanctuary along with the altar servers.



The celebration of Holy Mass is
as valuable as the death of
Jesus on the cross.

~ Thomas Aquinas