

# An Instructed Holy Eucharist



ALL SAINTS CATHEDRAL  
IN THE CITY OF LONG BEACH



Lower register, center panel of the Ghent altarpiece, alternatively known as the *Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*, by Hubert and Jan van Eyck, 1432.

Hubert and Jan van Eyck’s captivating, four-paneled altarpiece, marking the beginning of a significant transition from medieval to renaissance religious artwork, is an imaginative depiction of the ingathering of the nations to the marriage banquet of the Lamb: “Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. 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 clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure.’” (Revelation 19:6-8; ESV). Early Christian reflection on the celebration of the Eucharist also draws connections between the gathering of the whole congregation from the world to the altar, symbolized in the procession, and the prophetic hope of the Hebrew prophet Malachi: “For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a pure offering.” (Malachi 1:11). From the *Didache*, a second-century Christian instructional resource, to the Fathers of the 4<sup>th</sup> century, Malachi is one of the most cited texts from the scriptures for describing what is happening when the Church gathers for worship.

# THE HOLY EUCHARIST

*Renewed Ancient Text*

## THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

### THE PROCESSIONAL

*A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.*

#### **We Enter into Worship**

*Processional:* Processions serve as both a witness to the world of the Church triumphant and as a hopeful vision of the future entry of the saints into the new Jerusalem, the restored creation. The procession is usually accompanied by a song of worship, sparking in our minds such images as we find in Revelation 19:6-8.

*Note:* The instructions, called “rubrics,” were written in red ink in the time before the printing press. In our day they are in italics and smaller print. The word *Celebrant* refers to the Bishop or Priest who is presiding at the Eucharist. the *Celebrant* is the chief worship leader in all Anglican worship and the icon of Christ at the altar.

### THE ACCLAMATION

*The People standing, the Celebrant says this or a seasonal greeting*

Blessed be God: † the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

*People* **And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

Having gathered the scattered Church to one place for worship and fellowship, we are reminded in *The Collect for Purity* of the testimony of St. John, that all who “walk in the light, as he is in the light” have fellowship with one another and “the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”  
(1 John 1:7)

### THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

*The Celebrant prays (and the People may be invited to join)*

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### THE SUMMARY OF THE LAW

*Then follows the Summary of the Law or the Decalogue.*

Jesus said: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.

MATTHEW 22:37-40<sup>T</sup>

*Kyrie Eleison*: A Greek phrase meaning “Lord, have mercy,” used in Christian worship since the 4<sup>th</sup> century. We entreat the Lord to empower us to love God and neighbor, and to show us mercy where we have not.

*Note*: During penitential seasons (such as Lent and Advent) it is customary to omit the *Gloria in Excelsis* that follows, placing the *Confession of Sin* here to be followed by the *Kyrie*.

### THE KYRIE

*The Celebrant and People pray*

Lord, have mercy upon us.		Lord, have mercy.		Kyrie eleison.
<b>Christ, have mercy upon us.</b>	<i>or</i>	<b>Christ, have mercy.</b>	<i>or</i>	<b>Christe eleison.</b>
Lord, have mercy upon us.		Lord, have mercy.		Kyrie eleison.

*or this*

### THE TRISAGION

Holy God,  
Holy and Mighty,  
Holy Immortal One,  
**Have mercy upon us.**

*Gloria in Excelsis*: This ancient hymn with its roots in the Bible (E.g., Luke 2:14) has been sung or said down through the ages as God's people gather to worship to ascribe praise and adoration to the Trine God.

## GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

*The Gloria may be sung or said, all standing.*

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you,  
we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

*Collect*: An occasional prayer associated with Sundays and other feast days of the Church year. These "prayers of the day" typically follow a fourfold structure: ascription (of God's character or attributes), petition, purpose, and doxology (praise of the Triune God).

## THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

*The Celebrant says to the People*

The Lord be with you.

*People*           **And with your spirit.**

*Celebrant*       Let us pray.

*The Celebrant prays the Collect.*

*People*           **Amen.**

## THE LESSONS

### The First Lesson

*The People are seated.*

*The first Lesson is read, the Reader first saying*

A Reading from \_\_\_\_\_,

*After the Lesson, the Reader says*

The Word of the Lord.

*People*

**Thanks be to God.**

*Silence may follow.*

### The Psalm

*The People stand while the Psalm is said or sung.*

### The Second Lesson

*The People are seated.*

*The second Lesson is read, the Reader first saying*

A Reading from \_\_\_\_\_,

*After the Lesson, the Reader may say*

The Word of the Lord.

*People*

**Thanks be to God.**

*Silence may follow.*

### The Gospel

*All standing, the Deacon or Priest reads the Gospel, first saying*

*Priest*

The Holy Gospel of our Lord  
Jesus Christ according  
to \_\_\_\_\_,

*People*

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

*After the Gospel, the Reader says*

The Gospel of the Lord.

*People*

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## THE SERMON

## We Proclaim and Respond to the Word of God

The calendar of the Lectionary readings is followed by Anglicans and many mainline Christian Church congregations. Each Sunday, congregations around the world are hearing the same or similar lessons. The Lectionary is arranged in a 3-year cycle and covers large portions of the Bible.

Each week we read an Old Testament Lesson (also called the Hebrew Scriptures), a Psalm (written as Hebrew worship songs), a New Testament Lesson or Epistle (early Christian letters to the churches), and a Gospel Lesson (an account of the deeds and words of Jesus). As we listen to the word read, hear the Holy Spirit inviting us to live in God's unfolding story. We rest in him and listen for his invitation to align ourselves with and follow him.



The Gospel is given a special place of honor in the service. For Christians, the Gospel Procession symbolizes the "Good News" of Jesus Christ going out to the people. We all stand during the gospel procession. We turn our bodies, facing the gospel book. A Deacon (or a Priest if no deacon is present) reads the gospel from the center of the community as a visual reminder that Christ, the Living Word, became human and dwelt among us. He is still in the midst of his community through the Holy Spirit. Those who wish to do so make a sign of the cross with the right thumb, on the forehead, lips, and heart, when the gospel is announced, praying silently, "God be on my mind, on my lips, and on my heart."



## WORD AND TABLE

From very early on, the twofold structure of Christian worship is attested. Justin Martyr (pictured left), writing in the second century, describes as normative the worshipping patterns of Christians in various locations throughout the Roman Empire: “On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or countryside gather in one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits. Then, when the reader has finished, the president instructs and exhorts them to imitate these good things... When our prayer is ended, bread and wine with water are brought forth, and the president offers prayers and thanksgivings...” (*First Apology*, 67). Though Justin writes before the formalization of the Biblical canon, the “memoirs of the apostles” is no doubt referential to the writings we would recognize in our New Testament. When Justin speaks of a

“president,” he refers to the clergyperson presiding over worship; that is, the *celebrant*, to use the vernacular of today. At the time of Justin, the role of president would ordinarily be filled by a bishop, with priests and deacons serving beside him.

The theological significance of Christian worship on Sundays is also well-reasoned by Justin Martyr, who places side by side for consideration the worship of the saints on the first day of the week, the creation of the cosmos, and the resurrection of the Lord at the beginning of a new week: “Sunday is when we hold our assembly because it is the first day, on which God brought forth the world from darkness and matter. On the same day, Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead” (*First Apology*, 67).

Preceding the writings of the Church Fathers, Biblical evidence suggests some precedent for Christian worship in Jewish gatherings at synagogues where it was customary to read portions of the Torah, Prophets, or Writings: “And as was his [Jesus’] custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and he stood up to read. And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him” (Luke 4:16, 17). Developing from that point, in the apostolic age, instructions were given by the apostles for their own letters to be read in the hearing of the congregation while they meet: “And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea” (Colossians 4:16).

In part two of St. Luke’s account of the Gospel, the *Acts of the Apostles*, worship at the Table is explicitly named as normative for the gatherings of the primitive Church: “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the *breaking of bread* and the prayers” (Acts 2:42; emphasis added).



Ambo (pulpit) recovered from Acheiropoietos Church, Thessaloniki (5<sup>th</sup> century).

## THE NICENE CREED

*All stand to recite the Nicene Creed, the Celebrant first saying*

Let us confess our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed:

*Celebrant and People*

**We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, visible and invisible.**  
**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father, God  
from God, Light from Light, true God  
from true God, begotten, not made, of  
one Being with the Father; through  
him all things were made. For us and  
for our salvation he came down from  
heaven, was incarnate from the Holy  
Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and was  
made man. For our sake he was  
crucified under Pontius Pilate; he  
suffered death and was buried. On the  
third day he rose again 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.**  
**We believe 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 worshiped and  
glorified, who has spoken through the  
prophets. We believe in one holy  
catholic and apostolic Church. We  
acknowledge one Baptism for the  
forgiveness of sins. † We look for the  
resurrection of the dead, and the life  
of the world to come.**  
**Amen.**



The Creed: As a response to the Word of God read and proclaimed, we stand to affirm our faith in the words of the Nicene Creed.

At the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, in response to heresies that were circulating in the young Christian churches, the Council of Bishops met in Nicaea, in what is modern day Turkey, to determine a concise summary of the Christian faith. Whereas certain voices in the Church resisted affirmation of the complex unity of the Godhead, particularly regarding the person of Jesus and his united God/human nature, those orthodox bishops present at the council maintained that Jesus' twofold, undivided nature is indispensable in the Church's confession of God's redemptive purposes in the Gospel.

This, their statement of core truths concerning God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, is still held by all who are Christian. We express it communally, that is by saying, "We believe..." because it is the Church's received faith. The creed unites the Church across time and space, a tremendous celebration of catholicity (unity). We clearly state, "the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints" and we joyfully declare what we believe.

## The Prayers of the People

In the first few centuries, Christians began including prayers for all sorts of human needs and for the work of the Church as part of the Holy Eucharist. The tradition arose that the Deacon, whose ministry is intended to have a special concern for the poor and the needy (Acts 6:1-7), often acted as a kind of custodian of the prayers, keeping them in some written form and inviting the congregations to add their prayers as well. The Deacon will say, "Let us pray for the Whole State of Christ's Church and the World," thus inviting the people to pray. However, it is also common in many churches to have lay people lead in these prayers.

### THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*The Deacon or the person appointed says these prayers. The reader pauses after each bidding, and the people may add petitions, either silently or aloud.*

Let us pray for the Church and for the world, saying, "hear our prayer."

For the peace of the whole world, and for the well-being and unity of the people of God.

*Reader* Lord, in your mercy:

*People* **Hear our prayer.**

For N., our Archbishop, and N., our Bishop, and for all the clergy and people of our Diocese and Congregation.

*Reader* Lord, in your mercy:

*People* **Hear our prayer.**

For all those who proclaim the Gospel at home and abroad; and for all who teach and disciple others.

*Reader* Lord, in your mercy:

*People* **Hear our prayer.**

For our brothers and sisters in Christ who are persecuted for their faith.

*Reader* Lord, in your mercy:

*People* **Hear our prayer.**

For our nation, for those in authority, and for all in public service [especially \_\_\_\_\_].

*Reader* Lord, in your mercy:

*People* **Hear our prayer.**

For all those who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity [especially \_\_\_\_\_].

*Reader* Lord, in your mercy:

*People* **Hear our prayer.**

For all those who have departed this life in the certain hope of the resurrection, [especially \_\_\_\_\_,] in thanksgiving let us pray.

*Reader* Lord, in your mercy:

*People* **Hear our prayer.**



*Additional petitions may be added. Thanksgivings may also be invited.*

*The Celebrant concludes with this or some other appropriate Collect.*

Heavenly Father, grant these our prayers for the sake of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## THE CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION OF SIN

*The Deacon or other person appointed says the following*

Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

*Silence*

*The Deacon and People kneel as able and pray*

**Most merciful God,**

**we confess that we have sinned against you**

**in thought, word and deed,**

**by what we have done, and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;**

**we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,**

**have mercy on us and forgive us;**

**that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways,**

**to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*The Bishop or Priest stands and says*

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in his great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all those who sincerely repent and with true faith turn to him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## THE COMFORTABLE WORDS

*The Celebrant may then say one or more of the following sentences, first saying*

Hear the Word of God to all who truly turn to him.

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

MATTHEW 11:28

God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

JOHN 3:16<sup>r</sup>

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

1 TIMOTHY 1:15

If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

1 JOHN 2:1-2<sup>r</sup>



## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

We are now beginning to make our way to the Table. Our approach strikes a chord with the Biblical narrative pronounced in the reading of the scriptures, a turbulent story of humanity bound by an impulse to seize control of what can only be received as a gift, proximity to the life of the Creator, the Tree of Life (Genesis 2:8, 9; Revelation 22:1, 2), the Bread of Life (Exodus 16; John 6:28-40). As we turn to the Table, we stand in the line of humanity who has despaired to rule over sin at the door to the Garden (Genesis 4:6), only now as a people who have been united to a renewed humanity, a New Creation, the person Jesus who empties himself to gain the whole world (Philippians 2:5-11). In Christ's triumphant surrender to the wisdom of the Creator, his humbled frame heals the sin-sick posture of humanity, raising sons and daughters who will receive from the Tree rather than take.

In our corporate *Confession of Sin*, we answer the call of God, "Where are you?... What have you done?" (Genesis 3:9; 4:10) We admit before God and his Church that we have colluded with and been complicit in the pollution of God's creation with sin (Romans 3:23, 24). We admit to the ways we have failed to live as though we believe that Jesus is King. We pray, "We confess..." in solidarity with the human family, recognizing our collective contributions to the pain of the world. As we confess corporately, we also make our personal confessions to God, bearing our conscience before the Creator for examination before receiving Holy Communion.

The Priest, as the icon of Christ, pronounces *Absolution*, the forgiveness of sins to all those who repent that they might enter through the "door to the garden," approach the "Tree," come to the Table (that is, the altar). The authority to forgive sins is traced to Christ himself, who delegated such weighty a responsibility to his apostles (John 20:21-23), whose successors are the bishops. The priest represents before the assembly the bishop, who is himself the sign of unity within the Church. Thus, in the absolution, the entire Church is present, with the priest exercising such apostolic authority given them by the Lord, through the bishop, to forgive sins and restore the penitent.

Having been released from guilt by grace signaled in the pronouncement of the priest, we prepare to make peace with one another, reversing the trajectory of animosity between brothers (Genesis 4:1-16), and readying ourselves to go to the Table.



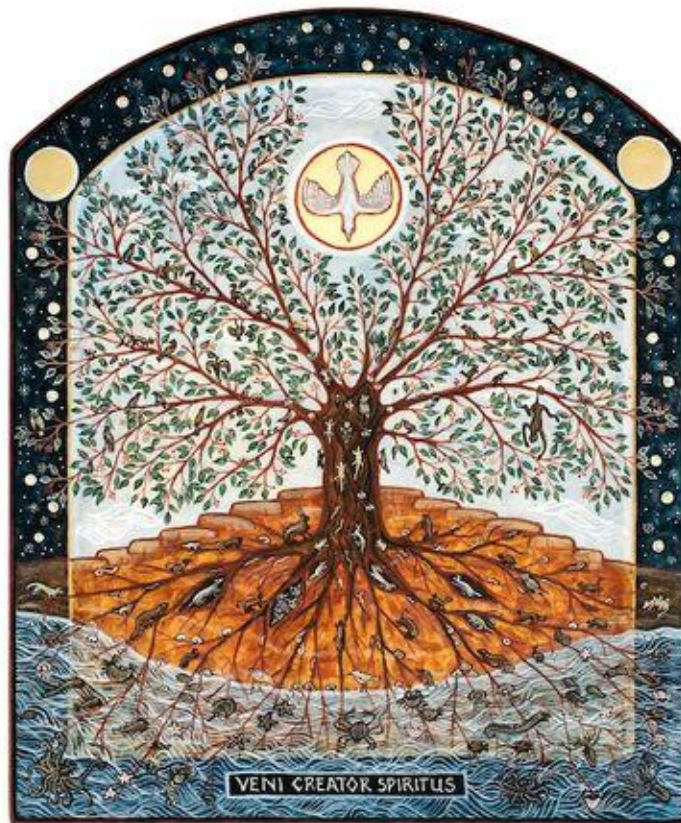
## THE PEACE

*Celebrant*      The Peace of the Lord be always with you.  
*People*            **And with your spirit.**

*Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

### **We Exchange the Peace of God**

With debts settled and enmity extinguished, we are joined to the *one* family of God, the unified Body of Christ. In offering peace to one another on our way to the altar, we properly “discern the Body” (1 Corinthians 11:29), that is we testify to the work God has done in Christ to make peace within the human family, to constitute one Body in him. We are ready to approach the “Tree” to receive the gifts of God.



## THE MINISTRY OF HOLY COMMUNION

### THE OFFERTORY

*The Celebrant begins the Offertory with the following or another of the provided sentences of Scripture.*

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

MATTHEW 5:16

*The Deacon or Priest prepares the Holy Table for the celebration. Representatives of the Congregation may bring the People's offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the Deacon or Priest.*

*The People stand while the offerings are presented.*

## **The Offertory**

The Table is being set, and we have not been left without an offering. We offer to God bread and wine, gifts of his own creation, that will be set apart for the purpose of Holy Communion. Just as we affirm that God, in the Incarnation, has determined to meet with us in space and time, so we affirm that God meets with us in the ordinariness of created things, of bread and wine.

Also, the giving of resources to one's local congregation is both a partnering together in mission and an offering of a portion of one's income as a sacramental act representing God's ownership of all things. The placement of this offering within the service reminds us that we are living the "exchanged life." We have given up ourselves to his service and entrusted him with our lives and everything we are. Nothing is left off the table. We are stewards of God's creation.



On certain occasions, such as High Holy Days, incense will be offered, symbolizing the prayers of the Church rising to heaven. The heavy covering of incense also stirs the imagination, ignites the senses, invites us to stand within the glory cloud that rested on Sinai and descended on the Temple (Exodus 19:16-20).

## **DOXOLOGY**

*The People remain standing and sing or say:*

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
praise him, all creatures here below;  
praise him above, ye heavenly host:  
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*The following may be said.*

*Celebrant* Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power,  
and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty:  
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours;  
yours is the Kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted  
as Head above all. All things come from you, O Lord,

*People* **And of your own have we given you.**

1 CHRONICLES 29:11, 14<sup>f</sup>

# THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

## THE SURSUM CORDA

*The People remain standing. The Celebrant faces them and sings or says*

*People*           The Lord be with you.  
**And with your spirit.**  
*Celebrant*       Lift up your hearts.  
*People*           **We lift them up to the Lord.**  
*Celebrant*       Let us give thanks to the  
                    Lord our God.  
*People*           **It is right to give him thanks  
                    and praise.**

*Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds*

It is right, our duty and our joy, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

*Here a Proper Preface is normally sung or said*

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

~ ~ ~



## **The Great Thanksgiving**

The table is set and the Gospel, from creation to passion to consummation, is retold. The Celebrant offers thanks for all that God has done and takes the assembly on a journey through the grand drama of the Creator's redemptive purposes in Christ, to finally invite all baptized and faithful people to receive the gifts of God.

## **Sursum Corda**

*Sursum Corda* is a Latin phrase meaning "Lift up your hearts." The use of these words in the Mass finds precedent quite early in the worship of the Church. In a liturgical manual attributed to St. Hippolytus of Rome in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, parts of what we now call the Eucharistic Canon (the prayers said at the celebration of the Eucharist) are disclosed with instructions, including the words that occur in Western liturgies to this day: "The Lord be with you. And with your spirit. Lift up your hearts. We lift them up to the Lord" (*Apostolic Tradition*).

## **Proper Preface**

The *Proper Preface* is a prayerful summary of the redemptive activity of God through Christ in his passion and resurrection. The text for the Preface rotates with the seasons in the Church calendar, reflecting the emphases and themes of each season.

## THE SANCTUS

*Celebrant and People together say or sing*

Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

† Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.



*Tutti i Santi, Kostandin Zografi, 1778.*

### Sanctus

*Sanctus* is the Latin word for "Holy." We join the song sung from all eternity by the whole company of heaven and with Christians around the world – Holy, Holy, Holy (Isaiah 6:1-3; Revelation 4:1-11). The veil between time and eternity has been drawn back and we see reality: Christ exalted, Holy, Sovereign, Lord, full of glory.

The Church has long associated the worship of the saints on earth with worship in the heavenly throne room, seeing them as mirror images of each other (Origen, *On Leviticus* 9-10). Thus, when we sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy," we believe that we are joining the unceasing chorus in the divine throne room.

## THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

*The People stand or kneel as able.*

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and when we had sinned against you and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent your only Son Jesus Christ into the world for our salvation. By the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary he became flesh and dwelt among us. In obedience to your will, he stretched out his arms upon the Cross and offered himself once for all, that by his suffering and death we might be saved. By his resurrection he broke the bonds of death, trampling Hell and Satan under his feet. As our great high priest, he ascended to your right hand in glory, that we might come with confidence before the throne of grace.

*At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it, and here\* may break the bread; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing the wine to be consecrated.*

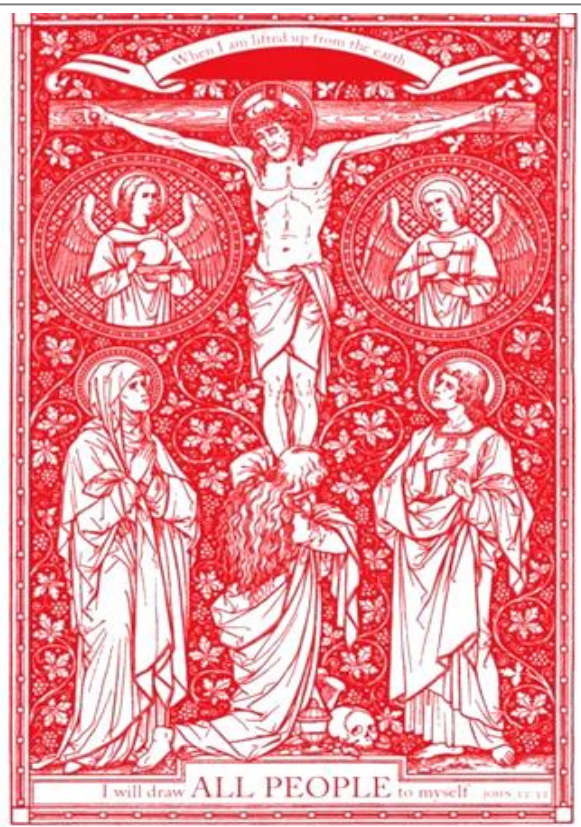
On the night that he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it,\* and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is my Body, which is given for you: Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, Jesus took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the forgiveness of sins: Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."

### **The Prayer of Consecration**

*The Institution Narrative* recalls the mighty act that is the focus of the Lord's Supper: the gift of Christ's body and blood to be our spiritual food and drink. Some make the sign of the cross † when the bread and wine are lifted up. *The Consecration* is the asking of the Holy Spirit to sanctify, bless, and make holy the bread and wine that it becomes the body and blood of Christ, and to bless and make us holy as we receive this holy sacrament.

The mystery of our faith in Jesus Christ is beyond comprehension, yet we receive these gifts in faith that God has determined to meet us in the sacraments. Our meal together is a foretaste of the messianic banquet (Isaiah 25:6; Revelation 19:7-9), the joyous feast when Christ returns to restore all of creation. We eat now in hope of the future.



## The Lord's Prayer

When Jesus' disciples asked the Lord how they should pray, this is the prayer he gives to them (Luke 11:1-4). With the table set and the elements consecrated by the Divine Presence, the people of God ready their posture to receive the gift of Jesus' body and blood, adopting the Lord's own posture to cooperate in the Father's rule and reign on earth as in heaven, as reflected in the prayer.

The Church has long seen in the Lord's Prayer the petition of the people of God to be fed with the sustaining food of Jesus' body and blood. Church Fathers such as Cyprian, Cyril of Alexandria, and Tertullian all hear in "Give us this day our daily bread" the heart cry of the Church to be nourished in the Eucharist.



## The Fraction: The Bread is Broken

Then proceeds the *Fraction* – the breaking of the bread. As the priest breaks the consecrated bread, we are reminded that Jesus' body was broken on the cross, thus rending the inner curtain of the temple, allowing us full access to God and His Holy place (Matthew 27:45-52). Still after Jesus' resurrection, it was yet in the breaking of bread that the Lord was recognized (Luke 24:30-31).

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

*The Celebrant then says*

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

*Celebrant and People together pray*

Our Father, 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.

For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.

## THE FRACTION

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

*Then is sung or said*

*Celebrant* [Alleluia.] Christ our  
Passover is sacrificed for us;  
*People* **Therefore let us keep the  
feast. [Alleluia.]**

*or this*

*Celebrant* [Alleluia.] Christ our  
Passover Lamb has been  
sacrificed, once for all upon  
the Cross;  
*People* **Therefore let us keep the  
feast. [Alleluia.]**



## THE PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

*Celebrant and People together say*

**We do not presume to come to this your  
table, O merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your abundant and great  
mercies.**

**We are not worthy so much as to gather  
up  
the crumbs under your table;  
but you are the same Lord  
whose character is always to have  
mercy.**

**Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son  
Jesus Christ,  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made  
clean by his body,  
and our souls washed through his  
most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in  
him, and he in us. Amen.**

## AGNUS DEI

*Celebrant and People together say or sing*

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the  
world,

**have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the  
world,

**have mercy on us.**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the  
world,

**grant us your peace.**

## The Prayer of Humble Access

The table is set, we have readied our posture to receive the gifts of God, and the heavenly meal has been made real before us by the presence of the Holy Spirit. Now, we remember our station in the divine drama of redemptive history and are humbled.

The prayer is filled with allusions to the scriptures. In it we are reminded of God's fundamental merciful character (Exodus 34:7, 8), and by virtue of his mercy, we answer the Lord's invitation to feed on him (John 6:48-58) and to abide in him (John 15:1-11).



*Agnus Dei*, by Francisco de Zurbarán, 1635-40.

## The Agnus Dei

The term *Agnus Dei* is another remnant of the Latin origins of the Western Mass and can be translated "Lamb of God."

On this side of the Incarnation, we ascribe to Jesus the title "Lamb of God," following St. John the Baptizer in the Gospel accounts (John 1:29, 30). In our petition to the Lord as the Lamb of God, we also join in the testimony of the apostles who saw in Jesus the satisfaction of all sacrifices prescribed in former times (Hebrews 9:11-14; 10:1-25).

## THE MINISTRATION OF COMMUNION

*Facing the People, the Celebrant may say the following invitation*

The gifts of God for the people of God. [Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.]

*or this*

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. JOHN 1:29<sup>T</sup>, REVELATION 19:9

*The People may come forward to receive Communion. The Bread and Cup are given to the communicants with these words*

The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven.

The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

*During the ministration of Communion, hymns, psalms, or anthems may be sung.*

*The Celebrant may offer a sentence of Scripture at the conclusion of the Communion.*



### **We Share the Communion Meal**

We are now united in the one spiritual food and drink as we share at God's table. In the meal, we are also personally strengthened to grow more into the image of Jesus. We are drawn deeper into the life of the Creator. We do not "take" Communion, we "receive" Communion, imagining ourselves kneeling at the tree of life once barred from us, or perhaps imagining ourselves before the risen Lord, like St. Thomas, seeing and touching the wounded hands and side of Jesus (John

20:26-29). As we extend our hands – one over the other – let them be for us a sign of the opening of our heart to receive Jesus. And as we receive from the Cup of Wine, let it be for us the sharing of the life of Jesus. May God feed and nourish us with himself. May we taste and see that the Lord is good!

All baptized Christians are welcome to receive Communion. If for any reason you are not prepared to receive at this time, you are invited to come to the altar, cross your arms on your chest and receive a prayer of blessing from the Priest or Bishop.

The person serving the bread will say something like, "This is the body of Christ, the bread from heaven." The customary response is, "Amen," meaning, "Yes, I agree" or "So let it be." The person serving the wine will say something like, "This is the blood of Christ, the cup of salvation." The customary response is once again, "Amen."

If you wish to receive the bread or wine only, please know it is the historic position of the Church that receiving one of the Communion elements is sufficient to complete communion, just like receiving both elements.

## THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

*Celebrant* Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People*

**Heavenly Father,**

**We thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food  
of the most precious Body and Blood  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;  
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries  
that we are living members of the body of your Son,  
and heirs of your eternal Kingdom.**

**And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have  
given us to do,  
to love and serve you as faithful witnesses  
of Christ our Lord.**

**To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

### **The Post Communion Prayer**

We have encountered God in multiple ways. Now it is time to go into the world to be on mission with God to love and serve the world. Now the baton has been passed to you to run the race with endurance and faithfulness, infused with the power of the Holy Spirit, to show and share the gospel of the Kingdom of God. We do not simply receive; we are sent to give.

## THE BLESSING

*The Bishop when present or the Priest gives this or an alternate blessing*

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung after the Blessing (or following the Dismissal).*

### **The Blessing**

*The Blessing* is an ancient custom, with precedent in the Hebrew scriptures (Numbers 6:22-27), in which the bishop or priest pronounces to the people that the comfort, protection, and presence of God is upon and remains with his people. The blessing is a sacramental moment in that with raised hands and in a clear and strong voice, the words are said over and to the people. We bow our heads and turn our hands up to receive the assuring gift of God's favor by means of the bishop or priest.

## THE DISMISSAL

*The Deacon, or the Priest, may dismiss the people with this or another dismissal.*

Let us go forth in the Name of Christ.

*People*      **Thanks be to God. [Alleluia, alleluia!]**

### **The Dismissal**

The term “Mass” as descriptive of our worship is derived from the old Latin dismissal *Ite, missa est* (“Go, it is ended”). The earliest attestation of the term “Mass” as a synonym for the celebration of the Eucharist comes from St. Ambrose in the 4<sup>th</sup> century.

The end of the service brings us again to the beginning, as the Post-Communion Prayer and Blessing imply. So, the dismissal does not end with an “Amen.” It *sends* with “Go in Peace...” Worship has no end – we continue to worship as we go where we are called to go in the name of Christ the King, whom we love and serve.

