26 – The Mass Part 3: The Eucharistic Prayer

I. Presentation of the Gifts and Preparation of the Altar

A. While the Priest or Deacon arranges the sacred vessels on the Altar, the faithful begin to prepare themselves to offer to God their gifts

B. The offertory

C. The bread and wine are brought forth as a symbol of everything else the faithful are offering to God in prayer and action.

D. The money placed in the collection is a symbol of your offering.

II. Prayer over the Offerings

A. This prayer, said by the Priest on our behalf, is specific to the day the Mass is said.

B. The celebrant blesses and praises God for these gifts and places them on the altar, the place of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

C. In addition to the bread and wine, monetary gifts for the support of the Church and the care of the poor may be brought forward.

III. Eucharistic Prayer

A. This is the heart of the Mass; the offering of Jesus Christ on the cross to the Father in the Holy Spirit

B. The Priest gathers not only the bread and the wine, but the substance of our lives and joins them to Christ's perfect sacrifice, offering them to the Father.

C. There are several Eucharistic prayers the Priest can choose from, but all have the same essential elements

D. The first Eucharistic prayer (Roman Cannon) was the only one for hundreds of years

E. Preface Dialogue:

1. Priest: The Lord be with you. People: And with your spirit.

2. Priest: Lift up your hearts. People: We lift them up to the Lord.

3. Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. People: It is right and just.

F. Preface (giving praise and thanks to God)

G. There are lots to choose from, some dictated by the Mass of the day such as Easter or a saint’s feast, but the priest usually has choices

H. Sanctus ("Holy, Holy"; based on the praise of the Seraphim in Isa 6:3 and Rev 4:8):

All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

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.

I. Then comes various prayers depending on which Eucharistic prayer is used

1. EP I: To you, therefore, most merciful Father, we make humble prayer and petition through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord: that you accept and bless + these gifts, these offerings, these holy and unblemished sacrifices, which we offer you firstly 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.

Remember, Lord, your servants N. and N. and all gathered here, whose faith and devotion are known to you. For them, we offer you this sacrifice of praise or they offer it for themselves and all who are dear to them, for the redemption of their souls, in hope of health and well-being, and paying their homage to you, the eternal God, living and true.

\* 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, her Spouse, 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: we ask that through their merits and prayers, in all things we may be defended by your protecting help. (Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

\*\* 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. (Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

2. EP 2-4: Thanksgiving

J. EP1: Quam oblationem ("Be pleased, O God..."):

K. EP 2-4: Epiclesis (calling upon the Holy Spirit):

L. Institution narrative

1. This is My Body…. this my Blood

2. During this part of the Mass, the Eucharist is confected; consecrated – transubstantiation occurs

3. The bread and wine become the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus the Christ

4. Mystery of Faith (formerly called the Memorial Acclamation):

5. Priest: The mystery of faith:

6. People: A - We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

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

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

M. Anamnesis ("remembering"), Epiclesis

1. Calling upon God to accept these gifts (the offering of Jesus on the Cross) for the forgiveness of our sins

2. Connects this sacrifice with those of the past

Specific Intercessions (as opposed to the general intercessions)

3. Prayers are offered for the living and the dead

4. Saints are asked for their intercession, and we ask the Angels to bring these gifts before God’s throne

5. EP 1: 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. Grant them, O Lord, we pray, and all who sleep in Christ, a place of refreshment, light, and peace. (Through Christ our Lord. Amen.)

To us, also, your servants, who, though sinners, 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 beseech you, into their company, not weighing our merits, but granting us your pardon, through Christ our Lord.

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

N. The Lord's Prayer

O. Sign of Peace

1. The Priest prays that the peace of Christ will fill our hearts, our families, our Church, our communities, and our world.

2. As a sign of hope, the people may be asked to extend to those around them a sign of peace

P. Fraction Rite

1. In the Fraction Rite, the celebrant breaks the consecrated bread as the people sing the Agnus Dei or "Lamb of God."

2. The action of breaking the bread recalls the actions of Jesus at the Last Supper, when he broke the bread before giving it to his disciples.

3. One of the earliest names for the Eucharistic celebration is the breaking of the bread (Lk 24:35; Acts 2:42, 46)

Q. Communion Rite

1. Starting with the admission that we are unworthy to receive Jesus, we symbolically receive as the Priest does, then those who are in a state of grace come forward and receive communion

2. When the Priest receive from the Chalise, the sacrifice is ended

R. Prayer after Communion

S. After a period of silent thanksgiving for such a great gift, the priest, on our behalf, says a prayer of thanksgiving