

Newman Center Teaching Mass

A KEY FOR UNDERSTANDING THIS GUIDE:

Anything spoken (either privately or publicly) is italicized.

Red indicates words that the priest says out loud.

Blue and bolded are the responses of the congregation (You!).

BEFORE MASS:

The Priest's Vestments:

- Amice: symbolizes a helmet for battle – the priest is entering a spiritual war.
- Alb: symbolizes the purity of the Christian soul, having been washed in His Blood.
- Cincture: symbolizes the chastity of the priest.
- Stole: symbolizes the immortality of the Christian soul.
- Chasuble: symbolizes the “yoke” of Christ (Matthew 11:29)

Two Parts:

The Mass is composed of 2 major parts: The Liturgy of the Word and The Liturgy of the Eucharist:

1. Liturgy of the Word: the Word of Christ is proclaimed to us to receive.
2. Liturgy of the Eucharist: the Word is realized (made flesh) for us to worship.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Procession: The priest processing in symbolizes Christ “traveling” from Heaven to Earth. There, on Earth, He prays to the Father.

- The priest is Christ in the Mass – this is the main purpose of his priesthood: to be Christ.
- The Mass is one, beautiful prayer of the Son to the Father.

Entrance Antiphon: We begin with the praying of a Psalm or verse of Scripture.

- This comes from the way Jews would pray the Psalms & how the Early Church and monks would pray.

Sign of the Cross: One of the oldest symbols our faith. We make the Sign of the Cross to remember our Baptism, by which the Cross was placed upon our souls (spiritual tattoo, if you will).

- **Priest:** *“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”*
- **People:** *“Amen.”*

Greeting: *“The Lord be with you / and with your spirit”:*

- *The Lord be with you:* the priest is expressing his desire that the dynamic activity of the Holy Spirit be stirred up in all.
- *And with your spirit:* the people respond that they desire that the priestly spirit (given in ordination) be stirred up within the priest.

Confiteor: “Confiteor” is Latin for “I confess,” which calls us to admit we’ve sinned by our own free will (“through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault”). We follow the

example of the tax collector in Luke 18:10-14, who Christ commended for approaching God by first crying out, “O Lord, have mercy on me a sinner,” by striking our breasts 3 times.

People: *“I confess to almighty God and to you my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and what I have failed to do, We strike our breast during the next line: through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.”*

Priest: *“May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.”*

People: *“Amen.”*

Kyrie: *“Kyrie Eleison, Christe Eleison, Kyrie Eleison” – “Lord, have mercy.” “Lord, have mercy” “Christ, have mercy.” “Christ have mercy.” “Lord, have mercy” “Lord, have mercy.”*

- While Mass in the Roman Catholic Church is primarily in Latin, this phrase is Greek (Mass was originally said in Greek, as the New Testament was written in Greek).
- The word “mercy” in English is the translation of the Greek word “eleos.” This word comes from the word for olive oil: a substance which was used extensively as healing for bruises and minor wounds. The oil was poured onto the wound and gently massaged in, thus soothing, comforting and making whole the injured part. The Hebrew word which is also translated as eleos and mercy is “hesed,” and means “steadfast love.” The Greek words for ‘Lord, have mercy,’ are ‘Kyrie, eleison’ that is to say, ‘Lord, soothe me, comfort me, take away my pain, show me your steadfast love.’ (cf. Orthodox Worship)

Collect: The opening prayer, addressed to God the Father (as the whole Mass is a prayer to the Father). The prayer is made *to* the Father, *through* Christ, *in* the Holy Spirit.

READINGS FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE

We next hear salvation proclaimed to us through the Holy Scriptures. What we hear proclaimed here, we see realized in the next part of the Mass. Scripture is still the primary way that God speaks to us, so this part of Mass is important for letting the grace-infused words of God work on our hearts and minds.

First Reading: The first reading is from the Old Testament. We read the Old Testament at Mass because Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Covenant – the promises made by God to the people Israel. Hearing from the Old Testament reminds us of the radical fulfillment of God’s promises, all wrought through Jesus the Christ.

- We respond at the end of the reading with *“Thanks be to God.”* We respond in this way to recall how incredibly blessed we are that God has spoken to us. The Scriptures flow from His very Heart, and it is a supreme blessing that He’s revealed Himself in this way.

Responsorial Psalm: We pray the Psalm in the same way that Jesus would have prayed them with Jewish congregations. In Ancient Israel, a leader would sing the psalms & the congregation

would respond with a response from that Psalm. Our Blessed Mother & St. Joseph would have prayed this way with Jesus.

Gospel: We stand to hear the Gospel proclaimed. We do this as a sign of special respect for the very words & actions of Jesus Himself.

Further, only an ordained minister proclaims the Gospel. This is different than simply reading the Scriptures. We believe that Christ Himself is proclaiming the Gospel through the ordained minister, which is why only the ordained proclaim the Gospel (since they are “another Christ” through ordination).

- Before proclaiming the Gospel, the priest says a prayer quietly: *“Cleanse my heart and my lips, almighty God, that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel.”*
- The priest begins by saying: *“The Lord be with you.”* And the people respond: *“And with your spirit.”* The priest announces which Gospel the reading is from by saying, *“A reading from the Gospel according to _____”*, and the people respond, *“Glory to you, O Lord.”* Then he traces the sign of the cross on the Gospel book and then makes three small crosses, one on his forehead, lips and heart. He does this to ask the Lord to enlighten his mind, open his lips (to proclaim God’s Word), and cleanse his heart.
- At the end of the Gospel, the priest or deacon says, *“The Gospel of the Lord.”* As one community, we respond *“Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ”* as a sign of thanksgiving and acceptance of God’s Word that we have received in our ears and in our hearts.
- The priest then kisses the Book of the Gospels and silently prays: *“Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away.”*

Homily: Following Christ’s example on the Road to Emmaus (Lk. 24), the priest explains and interprets the Scriptures. Like at Emmaus, where Christ “was made known ... in the Breaking of the Bread”, the homily should prepare the congregation for what is about to follow: the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Altar: The Liturgy of the Eucharist is prepared for by unveiling the chalice; this is a subtle, yet beautiful, part of the Mass. We are seeing the mysteries of salvations being unveiled before our very eyes.

Offertory: The gifts that we have received from God, we now bring to the altar for them to be transformed into God’s very self.

- The priest now offers up the bread & wine, and he proclaims a blessing over them. The blessing, which begins, *“Blessed are you, Lord of all creation...”* echoes the blessing Jesus pronounced at the Last Supper (the blessing of the Passover meal)
- “Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the universe, creator of the fruit of the vine.” It also echoes the blessing of Melchizedek in Genesis 14:19-20. We respond, *“Blessed be God forever.”*
 - This is a special chance to offer yourself & your intentions onto the paten & into the chalice, there to be transformed.

- The priest then pours wine with a drop of water into the chalice. The wine represents Jesus' Divine Nature, while the drop of water that is mixed with it represents His Human Nature – and, with it, our nature. Just as the wine & water can no longer be separated, so too we pray that our human nature can become one with Christ in the Eucharist. We respond, ***“Blessed be God forever.”***
 - While he does this, the priest prays silently: *“By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.”*
- After offering the wine, the priest bows low to the altar (a sign of humility) and prays: *“With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God.”* This prayer is drawn from the Book of Daniel 3:39-42, which the 3 men who were cast into the fire by King Nebuchadnezzar pray to the Lord.
- The priest's hands are then washed, asking the Lord that the hands which hold Our Lord will be made clean and pure. As his hands are washed, the priest prays silently the words of Psalm 51: *“Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.”* This was the Psalm that David prayed after he sinned greatly with Bathsheba & had her husband murdered.
- The priest then prays: ***“Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father.”*** The people respond: ***“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.”***
 - Something beautiful is stated here: the sacrifice of the Mass – while being Christ's sacrifice – is also our sacrifice. Place your hearts before the Lord to both glorify God and receive His goodness abundantly.

Prayer Over the Offerings: The priest then offers a final prayer of the offerings to conclude the Offertory.

Preface: The Preface (***“The Lord be with you, and with your spirit...”***) introduces the Canon of the Mass – the most important part of the Mass. The Preface has remained virtually unchanged for the past 1800 years (St. Hippolytus in Rome & St. Cyprian in North Africa mention it in the early 200's). The (priest) ***“Lift up your hearts”*** (people) ***“We lift them up to the Lord.”*** and (priest) ***“Let us give thanks to the Lord our God”*** (people) ***“It is right and just.”*** reminds Christians that “wherever your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Mt 6:21).

Sanctus: “Sanctus” is Latin for “Holy.” We are reminded here that we are in the presence of the angels and saints.

- The ***“Holy, holy, holy”*** is from both Isaiah's (6:2-3) and St. John's (Rev. 4:8) visions of Heaven.
- ***“Hosanna”*** is Aramaic Hebrew, and it literally means “Save me! I pray!”

People: ***“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.”***

- The congregation then falls to their knees as a sign of worship and reverence.

- Historically, the Devil has been portrayed as having no knees, since he is now incapable of humility.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The priest, acting as Christ offering Himself to the Father, then prays the Eucharist prayer. There are 4 options for the priest to pray:

- Eucharistic Prayer 1: Virtually identical to the Eucharistic prayer used by St. Ambrose in the fourth century and St. Augustine in the fifth century.
- Eucharistic Prayer 2: drawn from the Greek liturgy of St. Hippolytus in AD 215.
- Eucharistic Prayer 3: an shorter twentieth-century version of Eucharistic Prayer 1.
- Eucharistic Prayer 4: a 20th-century prayer adapted from the ancient liturgies of the Eastern Churches.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER II

“You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body + and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

- Epiclesis: This is the sending down of the Holy Spirit upon the offerings, which makes possible the Mass.
- We ring the bells to announce the coming of the Holy Spirit.

At the time he was betrayed and entered willingly into his Passion, he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT: FOR THIS IS MY BODY WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying:

TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT: FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT, WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.”

- St. Thomas Aquinas said that the priest doesn’t simply ask the Lord to make the bread & wine the Body & Blood of Jesus, but that the priest (with the power of Christ through ordination) commands the bread and wine themselves to become the Body and Blood.

Priest: *“The mystery of faith...”*

People: *“We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.”*

- Note that the congregation is addressing Jesus (not the Father) because Jesus is now present on the altar!

“Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation, giving thanks that you have held us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you.

Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.

Remember, Lord, your Church, spread throughout the world, and bring her to the fullness of charity, together with Francis our Pope and James our Bishop and all the clergy.

- We pray for the leaders of the Church, that they may be good shepherds.

Remember also our brothers and sisters who have fallen asleep in the hope of the resurrection and all who have died in your mercy: welcome them into the light of your face.

- We pray for all those who have died, that the graces of this Mass may lead them to Heaven.

Have mercy on us all, we pray, that with the blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with blessed Joseph, her Spouse, with the blessed Apostles, and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, we may merit to be co-heirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ.”

- We pray that we may become saints!

Final Doxology and the Great Amen: At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, the Trinity is praised. With all the angels and saints, we cry out **“Amen!”** in praise to God.

Our Father: We now pray the words the Jesus taught us in order to recall our relationship to God and to receive from Him “our daily bread.”

Priest: “At our Savior’s command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

*People: **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.”***

Priest: “Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.”

*People: **“For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.”***

Sign of Peace: Christ told his followers that before they could approach the altar, they first needed to be reconciled with their brother (Mt 5:23-24). Likewise both Paul and Peter instructed the early Christians to “Greet one another with a holy kiss” (Rom 16:16; 1 Pet 5:14). In the tradition of the Church, this was passed from the altar to the congregation, showing that Christ is the source of peace.

Priest: “The peace of the Lord be with you always.”

*People: **“And with your spirit.”***

Lamb of God: In the Book of Revelation, the saints and angels worship the Lamb (Jesus), and in John 1:29 we hear John the Baptist cry, “Behold the Lamb of God.” We echo their words here.

Fracturing of the Host: The priest now breaks the host. This symbolizes Jesus' Most Sacred Heart being pierced with a lance on the Cross.

- The priest then drops a piece of the host in the Precious Blood as he silently prays: *“May this mingling of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.”*
- The priest, since he is entrusted with the weight of celebrating the Holy Mass, then makes a silent prayer for his own holiness: *“Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who, by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit, through your death gave life to the world, free me by this, your most holy Body and Blood from all my sins and from every evil; keep me always faithful to your commandments, and never let me be parted from you.”*

Behold, the Lamb of God: The priest here repeats the words of John the Baptist and Revelation 19:9: *“Behold the Lamb of God. Behold him who takes away the sin of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb.”*

- The congregation responds with the words of the centurion in Matthew 8:8: *“Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”*
 - When the priest receives the Body and Blood, he silently prays: *“May the Body/Blood of Christ keep me safe for eternal life.”*
- When the priest consumes the Precious Blood, the bells are rung a final time to indicate that the Sacrifice is now complete.

Communion Antiphon: *“Unless you run and become like children, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven, says the Lord.”*

Reception of Holy Communion: Those who are Catholic and spiritually prepared to receive Our Lord then receive Him. The Eucharist is the gift & fruit of the sacrifice which unites us more closely to Jesus!

Purifying of the Vessels: The priest, using water, purifies the vessels of any remaining species of the Blessed Sacrament.

- As he consumes them, he silently prays: *“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.”*
 - Prayer tip: purifying the vessels is symbolically Mary cleansing the Body of Jesus when she is laying Him in His tomb.

Prayer after Communion: A final prayer is made to the Father.

Blessing: The priest offers a blessing, then dismisses the congregation with the same words used since the time of Mass in the Catacombs: *“Go forth, the Mass is ended.”* And the people respond, *“Thanks be to God.”*

We pray the St. Michael Prayer, asking the Archangel to defend us from evil. This comes from Pope Leo XIII: in 1884, he had a vision during Mass of the Devil trying to destroy the Church.

“St. Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke you, we humbly pray, and do thou o prince of the heavenly hosts, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world, seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.”