



## FR. DANIEL'S CORNER

Mass Moment: Part 25

### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER: FROM ANAMNESIS TO DOXOLOGY.

Not only did Jesus tell the apostles “do this,” but he also said, “do this in *remembrance* of me” (Luke 22:19; emphasis added). The Greek word for *remembrance/memorial* is *anamnesis*, which has sacrificial overtones in both the New and Old Testaments. For example, in the Septuagint, (the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament) Moses tells the Israelites that their burnt offerings and peace offerings would serve as an *anamnesis* (“remembrance”) before God (see Numbers 10:10). The author of the letter to the Hebrews sees the Old Testament sacrifices in the same light: “But in these sacrifices there is a reminder [*anamnesis*] of sin year after year” (Heb. 10:3). This helps us to understand the Last Supper is a sacrifice.

So, after the acclamation (the mystery of faith) the Eucharistic Prayer continues with the *Anamnesis* – the recalling of the memorial of Christ, especially his blessed Passion, glorious Resurrection and Ascension into heaven. In all four of the Eucharistic Prayers, this part of the prayer begins with “therefore” and is followed by another part known as the *offering*. In it the Church offers the unblemished sacrifice of Christ to the Father and invites us to offer ourselves too. When *we* offer it, this is our communion in the sacrifice of Christ, our share in his priesthood.

As the prayer progresses, the priest enters a part known as the *intercessions*. He prays for all who will be nourished from the altar with the body and blood of Christ that they may all become “one body, one spirit in Christ” (cf Eucharistic Prayer III). This prayer reflects on the words of St. Paul, “because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (I Cor 10:17). The priest requests of the Father that those who participate in this holy sacrifice may become “an eternal offering” to God (cf Eucharistic Prayer III) and “a living sacrifice” (cf Eucharistic Prayer IV). Prayers are then offered for the universal Church, including the Holy Father, the pope, the Diocesan Bishop, the clergy and the entire people of God, the living and the dead.

The Eucharistic Prayer is concluded with the *doxology*— the glorification of God is affirmed by which the people respond with the great and resounding AMEN. The doxology closes the whole prayer. And so, the priest lifts the bread and wine transformed into the body and blood of Christ and presents them to God the Father saying: “Through him, and with him and in him...” Doxology, therefore, summarizes perfectly what we have remembered (*anamnesis*) and what we have asked for (*epiclesis*). This is always the full shape of Christian prayer: remembering what God has done, we ask him for what we desire, and we finish by praising him.

The gesture of the doxology is particularly interesting; in raising up the body and blood of Christ the whole world is coming toward the Father through Christ, and the work of the Church in a resounding AMEN. The people validate the prayer by their yes. Similar words of validation are found through the scriptures, “blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting, and the people joined in blessing God by exclaiming, ‘Amen’” (1 Chr 16:36). When Ezra read the book of the Lord to the people from morning till night, the people responded, “Amen, Amen” (Neh 8:6).

*And that is your Mass Moment for the week.*