

Pastor's Message

In this our series on the Mass, we will continue to look at the first part of the liturgy of the Eucharist: the preparation of the gifts. The prayers over the bread and wine, which can be said aloud or silently by the priest, are modeled on the Kiddush which is the ancient Jewish ceremony which begins the Sabbath (on a Friday night) or a holy day. This blessing over wine is said by the head of a Jewish household at the meal which separates secular time from sacred time as the sun sets and the evening candle is lit.

The blessing over the wine reads:

Blessed are you, Lord our God,
you who created the fruit of the vine.

The prayer for the sabbath day reads:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe.
You have sanctified us by your commandments,
you have given us an inheritance, the Sabbath of your holiness,
out of love and good will,
as a memorial of the works of your creation (Lev. 23:3).
This day is the first of your holy convocations.
It is the memorial of the exodus from Egypt.
You have chosen us among all the peoples.
You have sanctified us
You have given us as an inheritance, the Sabbath of your holiness,
out of love and good will.
Blessed are you, O Lord, who sanctifies the Sabbath!

The blessing for the bread of the Sabbath reads:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, King of the universe,
you who have brought bread forth from the earth.

As we begin our holy sacrifice of the Mass we use these ancient Jewish prayers to mark off our time between the secular and the sacred as well. As we begin our celebration of the Eucharist we bless our gifts of bread and wine which will become for us the body and blood of Jesus Christ. We begin to enter sacred time in our worship. The priest says:

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have this bread (and wine) to offer,
fruit of the earth, work of human hands.
May they become for us our spiritual food and drink.

The people respond:

Blessed be God forever!

Fr. Chris