

Pastor's Message

Remember that the Eucharistic prayer (EP) is the prayer of us all prayed through the voice of the priest. It is ultimately the prayer of all of us as the Body of Christ, the Church, praying to God the Father. In the EP we have acknowledged the presence and glory of God. We have invoked the Holy Spirit to come upon our gifts of bread and wine to change them into the Body and Blood of Christ. And we have invoked the Holy Spirit to come upon each and everyone of us to change us into the Body of Christ. Now that we have acknowledged who we truly are as the Body of Christ we are ready to ask God for what we need. The next paragraphs of our EP are prayers of intercession, requests for our needs.

Just as we do in our Prayer of the Faithful, first we pray for the Church. EP II states "Remember, Lord, your Church, spread throughout the world, and bring her (us) to the fullness of charity, together with Francis, our Pope and Edward, our Bishop...". I add "and all the peoples and leaders of every religious tradition." I do so because I have spent so much of my life in ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue that I both feel the need to pray for our sisters and brothers of other faith traditions and also because I think that if we pray for each other then we will be able to work harder for both Christian unity and inter-religious accord. This part of our EP makes us aware that we are part of a much larger community than simply our own parish or even our diocese. We belong to a worldwide community of all who believe in Christ Jesus.

Next in our EPs we pray for all those who have gone before us, the communion of the saints. Once again in the words of EP II "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. In this part of our EP we remember that we are part of a much larger community than just the living. We believe that our community includes all who have died in the mercy of God and are now part of the community of all the saints.

Lastly we pray for ourselves. In EP II we say "Have mercy on us all, we pray, that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and with her husband, Joseph, with the blessed Apostles, and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, **we** may merit to be coheirs to eternal life, and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Next time you are praying the Mass listen to the intercessions in the EPs, all worded slightly differently but all asking for the same things, i.e., that God might intercede for the entire Church, for our beloved dead, and for ourselves as we try to be God's presence in our place and time.

Fr. Chris