

Pastor's Message

In our reflections on the Mass we have come to the end of the Eucharistic Prayer (EP). This part of the Mass: "Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, forever and ever. Amen!", is called the Great Doxology (*doxa* means praise and *logos* means word in Greek). This Great Doxology is the acclamation of the people of the words the priest has spoken on their behalf in the EP. It is meant to be a shout of praise and agreement with all that has been spoken beforehand. The Great Doxology should be sung because of its importance not only as the conclusion of our joint prayer to God but also as an acknowledgement that we are one in our prayer. Once again the singing of this Great Amen indicates clearly that this prayer of the Mass is not just what the priest says, does and believes but rather is the prayer of all of us gathered together as the family of God.

This ending also reminds us of our core belief, i.e., that God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are three, co-equal persons in the Trinity of the Godhead. As Paul writes to the Corinthians *There is only one God and Father through whom everything comes, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom everything exists* (I Cor. 8:6). St. Justin the martyr around 150 AD writes: "When the prayer is ended, bread, wine, and water are brought up. The one who presides then prays and gives thanks according to his ability, and all the people respond with the acclamation 'Amen!'" This Great Amen is meant to be a shout that raises the roof as we together give praise to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for all that we have been given.

The priest holds up the bread and the wine, now the Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, as he sings these words of the doxology. This elevation of the Body and Blood of the Lord is meant to show that all of creation born of the Father, living in Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit is destined for eternal glory. The bread and wine, which symbolizes all of God's creation has been transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ and changed into Eucharist (thanksgiving and praise to God) and now goes up to God for all eternity. We have found our meaning and purpose in God through Christ and that destiny is eternal life "through, with, and in him".

Now that we know what we have celebrated, we are ready to receive the Body and Blood of Christ in communion.

Fr. Chris