

Parent's Session Five: Confirmation & Holy Eucharist Preparation Liturgy & Introductory Rites

Opening Prayer: Gather to Worship

“Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart, always and for everything giving thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.”

(Ephesians 5:188-20)

The Road to Emmaus: Luke 24:13-35

That very day, the first day of the week, two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. He asked them, “What are you discussing as you walk along?” They stopped, looking downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, said to him in reply, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know of the things that have taken place there in these days?” And he replied to them, “What sort of things?” They said to him, “The things

This story takes place on Sunday, the day of the resurrection.

Emmaus is a Judean village, referred to in 1 Macc 9:50.

These two are disciples (followers of Jesus), but are not apostles (the 12)

Jesus' resurrection appearances demonstrate that in His glorified state, he has the ability to control whether he is recognized or not; just as he can appear in a room despite locked doors, etc.

Luke reminds us that the disciples were in mourning, shocked and confused about all that had happened

Cleopas is most likely the disciple named “Clopas” elsewhere; early Christian tradition identifies him as the

<p>that happened to Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, how our chief priests and rulers both handed him over to a sentence of death and crucified him. But we were hoping that he would be the one to redeem Israel; and besides all this, it is now the third day since this took place. Some women from our group, however, have astounded us: they were at the tomb early in the morning and did not find his body; they came back and reported that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who announced that he was alive. Then some of those with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women had described, but him they did not see!” And he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory!”</p> <p>Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the Scriptures. As they approached the village to which they were going, he gave the impression that he was going on farther. But they urged him, “Stay with us, for it is nearly evening and the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them. And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other,</p>	<p><i>brother of Joseph (foster father of Jesus).</i></p> <p><i>“mighty in deed and word” are words used to describe Moses—and the long-awaited for Messiah that Moses prophesies about (Deut 18:15).</i></p> <p><i>The disciples still interpret Jesus mainly as the Messiah who would free them from the oppression of the Romans—the militaristic savior.</i></p> <p><i>The disciples do not believe the women—they do not consider them reliable messengers.</i></p> <p><i>Even Peter’s confirmation of the empty tomb does not lead them to believe—they cannot get their heads and hearts to move past the horrible crucifixion and death of their Master.</i></p> <p><i>Jesus chides them for only seeing part of the story—for not discerning wisely all that they should have remembered.</i></p> <p><i>Jesus gives an overview of salvation history from the Old Testament. This is part of the “deposit of faith” that was handed down through Apostolic Tradition—Jesus’ teaching isn’t recorded here in the scriptures, but is preserved in the heart and memory of the Church.</i></p> <p><i>The disciples extend hospitality to the stranger—a key part of Middle East culture.</i></p> <p><i>Jesus’ actions perfectly echo his actions at the Last Supper (see Luke 22:17-20; Mt 26:26).</i></p> <p><i>The structure of the Emmaus journey reflects the structure of Mass: greeting, scripture, Eucharist, dismissal.</i></p>
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<p>“Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the Scriptures to us?” So they set out at once and returned to Jerusalem where they found gathered together the eleven and those with them who were saying, “The Lord has truly been raised and has appeared to Simon!” Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.</p>	<p><i>“hearts burning within us” describe the effect of Jesus’ teaching and the action of the Holy Spirit to enflame in us the fire of love and wisdom.</i></p> <p><i>Having a true encounter with Jesus motivates the disciple to share the experience—they travel the 7 miles journey back to Jerusalem because they must share the good news!</i></p> <p><i>The Church gains strength and wisdom by the act of sharing stories—revealing God’s actions and presence in the lives of individual disciples.</i></p> <p><i>“breaking of the bread”—the term used in Acts of the Apostles for the Eucharistic Liturgy (the Mass).</i></p>
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“Why were their hearts burning? They were burning because in Jesus the disciples caught a glimpse into the heart of God and found their world made new. They saw for an instant the full scope of the Father’s loving plan and its high point in Christ’s death and resurrection. In that perspective, the pathway of their lives opened from confusion and despair into conviction and hope, and they began to grasp the height and depth of God’s mysterious love.”

*Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us,
A Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation in the United States, U.S. Catholic Bishops (1999)*

For your reflection:

- Why does Luke want to tell us that this encounter happened on a Sunday?
- Jesus begins by asking them a question—“what are you discussing?” So they tell Jesus all about what they have gone through. How might this relate to the opening parts of the Mass?
- Jesus “unpacks” the Scriptures for them—He explains how the promises and stories all connect to Him. How does this relate to the Liturgy of the Word at Mass?

- When they invite Jesus to stay with them, He takes the bread, blessed, broke and gave it to them. The story says their eyes were opened and then Jesus vanished from their sight. What might Jesus be telling us about the Eucharist?
- The disciples journey back to Jerusalem and tell the others “how Jesus was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.” How does this relate to the conclusion of Mass?



What is “Liturgy”?

The Liturgy of the Mass

- Liturgy: **public worship and a sacred action** that becomes a channel for God’s grace
- In the Liturgy of the Mass, we do not simply remember what God HAS done in the past—we “**actualize**” the event that saved us, it **becomes present to us and we participate in it**
- “Christian liturgy is our **response of faith and love** to the spiritual blessings of God’s plan of salvation.”

WHO Celebrates the Liturgy?

- The Liturgy is the **action of the Body of Christ—united by the Holy Spirit**—it is not a private function but a celebration of the Church
- When we celebrate the Mass, we are **united with the entire Church in our worship of God**

Church triumphant in heaven
Church suffering in purgatory
Church ‘militant’ on earth

HOW do we Celebrate the Liturgy of the Mass?

- Woven from signs and symbols—”**smells and bells**”
- **Dialogue** between God and the people



- Our **words, actions and postures** become ways we actively respond to God’s initiative
- **Sacred images and icons** express the same Gospel in images as the Scriptures present in words

Diverse Liturgical Traditions

- The **mystery we celebrate is one**, but the **forms of its celebration are diverse**, arising from different cultures and times
- A **RITE** is the form and ceremonial observance used in the liturgy
- We have many different rites in the Catholic Church, including: Roman, Byzantine, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Maronite, Chaldean
- No celebrant has the authority to change the Rite of the Mass on his own

WHERE are we in the Liturgy?

- “The **whole sanctuary and the space before the altar is filled with the heavenly powers come to honor Him** who is present upon the altar. ... Think now of what kind of choir you are about to enter. Although clothed with a body, **you have been judged worthy to join the Powers of heaven in singing the praises of Him who is Lord of all!**”

(St. John Chrysostom, 5th century)

- “This is an aspect of the Eucharist which merits greater attention: in celebrating the sacrifice of the Lamb, we are **united to the heavenly ‘liturgy’** and become part of that great multitude which cries out, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb!’ (Rev 7:10). The Eucharist is **truly a glimpse of heaven appearing on earth**. It is a glorious ray of the heavenly Jerusalem which pierces the clouds of our history and lights up our journey.”

(Pope John Paul II, On the Eucharist)

Invited to Mass, Received by the Lord

- At Mass, “the whole community of the faithful **encounters the risen Lord, who invites them to his banquet**” (CCC #1166)
- “This is one of the most important things to remember about Sunday Mass: **Jesus himself invites us to be with him**. We go to church, not because of our own initiative or idea, but because **Christ himself draws us**.” (Peter J. Cameron, 2008)

Liturgy: A “Breath of Fresh Air”

“In the Church’s Liturgy, we inhale the Spirit of God’s breath. Then, when we leave, we exhale and proclaim God’s word.”

Dr. Scott Hahn

Your Turn:

- *What lessons, ideas or insights about the Liturgy stand out to you?*
- *What kinds of rituals, prayers could be/are used in your home to help your child better appreciate the Liturgy of the Mass?*



The Introductory Rites

“The *parts preceding the liturgy of the Word*, namely,

- the entrance song,
- greeting,
- penitential rite,
- Kyrie,
- Gloria and
- Collect (Opening Prayer),

have the character of a beginning, introduction and preparation.”

“The purpose of these rites is that the faithful coming together *take on the form of a community and prepare themselves* to listen to God’s word and celebrate the Eucharist properly.”

When Does Mass Begin?

- In a theological and sacramental sense, Mass begins as the faithful leave their domestic churches to travel to the place where Mass will be celebrated
- Mass begins with a kind of ‘pilgrimage’ from our homes

Entrance Procession

- After the people have assembled, the entrance song begins as the priest and ministers come in
- The purpose of the song is to open the celebration, intensify unity of the gathered people and lead their thoughts to the mystery of the season or feast
- The focus of the Entrance Procession is the Book of the Gospels: the deacon, whose special ministry is the proclamation of the Gospels, brings the Book to the Altar
- When the priest and ministers enter the sanctuary, they reverence the altar (with a bow)
- As a sign of veneration, the priest and deacon kiss the altar (they may also incense the altar)



Opening Greeting

- After the entrance song, the priest and the whole assembly make the sign of the cross
- Then the priest greets the people, declaring that the Lord is present, the congregation responds to affirm God's presence in the Church gathered together
 - *The Priest says, "The Lord be with you."*
 - *We respond "And with your spirit."*
- This response recognizes the priest's role as presider—a role given to him by his anointing in the Holy Spirit at ordination

Penitential Rite & Kyrie

- The priest invites us to confess our sins and seek God's mercy through a communal confession and absolution—we pray the Confiteor (*I confess to almighty God and to you my brothers and sisters...*)
- The Kyrie begins, which is both petition and praise to God
 - *Lord, have mercy (Kyrie eleison)*
 - *Christ, have mercy (Christe eleison)*
 - *Lord, have mercy (Kyrie eleison)*
- These Greek words echo the petitions of those who sought Jesus' mercy and healing in the Gospels—we, too, acknowledge our neediness, our blindness, & our paralysis in the face of our sins & weaknesses



Gloria

- The Gloria is an ancient hymn in which the Church praises and entreats the Father and the Lamb (Jesus)
- The Gloria is a kind of Creed—it expresses our faith in God as Trinity and speaks of how God works in the world—we call upon His mercy even as we sing His praise

- *The Gloria is sung or said on Sundays outside of Advent or Lent, and it is recited on solemnities & feasts*

Collect (Opening Prayer)

- The priest invites the people to pray and together with him they observe a brief silence so that they may realize they are in God’s presence and may call their petitions to mind—*this is a good time to offer to God your specific petition for the Mass*
- The priest then says the opening prayer—this expresses the theme of the celebration; each week has a different collect, and feast days also have a unique collect
- The people make the prayer their own and give their assent by the acclamation, “Amen” (“so be it”)

Your Turn: Bringing it Home

Benchmarks or Goals for you, your family, your child regarding:

- **Gathering for and Getting to Mass**—how can we make it more prayerful, less stressful, more focused on worship?
- **Penitential Rite**—how can we amplify the penitential rite through giving and receiving forgiveness in our home?
- **Gloria**—what are ways that we can increase the amount of prayer time we spend thanking and glorifying God?



Closing Prayer

“You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks more graciously than the blood of Abel.”



Hebrews 12:22-24

**KEEP
CALM
AND**



**BRING
YOUR
KIDS TO
MASS**

Relevant Radio® listeners share tips on helping children behave and participate during Mass:

“Sit in the front row where they can see.” - Angle

“Go early, pep talk of expectations, separate kids (parent, kid, parent), no toys... smile & hug when on track.” - Bonnie

“What’s helped us is taking along a children’s Mass book. They enjoy trying to follow along.” - Jessica

“Keep going every week. The more they go, the better they will behave.” - Susan

“We let our young boys bring note pads and draw different parts of Mass. It gives us the opportunity to talk about their drawings after Mass and discuss the meaning behind each.” - Jacinta

“Practice at home with prayer time. Have the little ones sit on your lap and teach them that prayer time is a time to be still... finally, ask your Guardian Angels for help!” - Sharon

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