

Lesson 20--The Eucharistic Prayer

Mystery of Faith, Anamnesis and Offering

Last week, we discussed the Institution Narrative of the Eucharistic prayer whereby the bread and wine are consecrated into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Today we discuss the next key elements of the Eucharistic Prayer, the memorial acclamation, the anamnesis, and the offering.

Action:

The priest joins his hands and looking at the people says or sings, “*The mystery of faith.*” The assembly responds by saying or singing one of the approved acclamations that affirms our belief in the Resurrection of the Lord whose death we have just mystically experienced!

Next in the Anamnesis, the Prayer recalls that this offering is done because of the Lord’s command and that this re-presentation of Christ’s “once for all” sacrifice (Offering) on Calvary is an offering made by the whole Church, but especially those presently assembled at this Mass.

History:

Two of the elements of the Eucharist Prayer are very ancient: the anamnesis and the offering. They are included in all of the known anaphoras and so we know that they were part of the Prayer at least as early as the 3rd century and probably much earlier. The Mystery of Faith is newer. In fact, the acclamations were constructed beginning shortly after the end of the Vatican Council II and only for the United States. This newness should not bother anyone since the Liturgy of the Mass is in a regular state of change. However, whatever changes are made must be made in agreement with the

entire Church. No single priest or even bishop has the right in any way to alter important parts of the Mass.

In the Mystery of Faith, we acknowledge the reality of Jesus' death but we also proclaim our faith that He is alive and that He will come again to institute "a new heaven and a new earth."

In the Anamnesis we recall that the command of the Lord is completed when we offer his sacrifice. In some of the other early prayers additional events of salvation were also recalled. And, in the Offering the Church describes Christ's sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving that was made "once for all."

Suggestions of how to make this part of the Mass your own.

In whatever Eucharistic Prayer that is prayed, say the Mystery of Faith with conviction. In the anamnesis join with the priest in recalling Christ's command to offer the Mass and in the Offering pray that Christ's sacrifice will bring salvation to the entire world. In short make the prayer of the priest your own.