The Mass

Celebration of the Holy Eucharist

RCIA
October 10, 2013
The Sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist dates back to the early Church and is spoken of as early as the 2nd century in the writings of the Church fathers.
Mass

Although the celebration of the Eucharist existed in the early Church, the term Mass was not introduced until the 4th century when it was used by St Ambrose and St Augustine.
The term is derived from the Latin “Missa” which originated from the practice of the dismissal of catechumens prior to the Eucharist.

Others relate it to the dismissal at the end of the service where we are encouraged to go forth in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the Roman Catholic Church we reserve the term Mass to liturgical services where the bread and wine are consecrated through the power of the Holy Spirit and become the Real Body and Blood of Christ.
The Mass is formed by two great parts that form a fundamental unity:

The Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Catechism notes that “the Eucharistic table set for us is the table both of the Word of God and of the Body of the Lord.”
Prior to Mass

15 minutes early
Holy Water
Genuflect or bow
Prayer
Reverential Silence
The Mass is Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday.
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The bishops at the Second Vatican Council brought together these three mysteries in a multifaceted description of the Mass:

“At the Last Supper, on the night when he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his body and blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until he should come again and in this way to entrust to his beloved Bride, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet ‘in which Christ is eaten, the heart is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us’”

(Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, #42).
When friends gather for a meal, they sit and talk. Eventually they move to the table, say grace, pass the food and eat and drink, and finally take their leave and go home.

On our walk through the Mass we will follow this same structure:

We will see ritual acts of

- Gathering... Introductory Rites
- Storytelling... Liturgy of the Word
- Meal sharing ... Holy Eucharist (Communion)
- Dismissal/commissioning ... Dismissal/Final Blessing
The intent is that the assembled group unite as a community properly prepared to hear God's Word and celebrate the Eucharist.

Coming together, assembling, is at the heart of our Sunday worship. The reason behind each of the ritual actions of the first part of the Mass can be found in this word:

Gathering
Introductory Rites

The Mass begins with the procession of the priest, deacon, and altar servers through the midst of the people. It is a sign of ministry in the midst of God’s people.

When the Mass begins everyone stands. Standing is the traditional posture of the Christian at prayer. It expresses our attentiveness to the word of God and our readiness to carry it out.

Entrance Antiphon (Or processional hymn) - page 2

Often we begin by singing together. What better way to gather than to unite our thoughts and our voices in song. It is said that when we sing in Mass we pray twice. Should reflect the liturgical spirit of the day or season
Introductory Rites

The Book of the Gospels is carried in by the deacon or lector (if no deacon is present.) The Book of Gospels is held slightly elevated as a sign of reverence to the Word of God.

The altar is reverenced with a kiss by the priest and deacon. During special Masses incense may be used.

The Greeting/Blessing

The priest will ask us to begin with the sign of the cross, again reminding us of Baptism, and will greet us, saying, **“The Lord be with you.”** You will hear this greeting frequently. It is both a wish (may the Lord be with you) and a profound statement of faith (as you assemble for worship, the Lord is with you). The ritual response to this greeting is always the formula, **“And with your spirit.”**
Introductory Rites

Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water - page 6
This is done at special masses and replaces the customary Rite of Penitence. This represents a form of blessing on the gathered faithful

We are asked to pause and recall our common need for salvation in the Penitential Rite.

Penitential Rite – page 8

May take different forms:

• Confiteor
• Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy) Kyrie Eléison

The Rite of Penitence to those who are truly contrite absolves one of venial sin
Introductory Rites

Gloria (Glory to God) - page 10

The hymn “Glory to God in the Highest” is sung at this point. The “Gloria” has been a part of the Mass since about the sixth century.

Opening Prayer (Collect) - pages 12-16

We are called to a moment of shared, deep silence in the presence of the great mystery we call God. This deep silence is concluded by the priest praying aloud the Opening Prayer or Collect.
The Collect (Opening Prayer)

The Collect begins with the words, “Let us pray”

The priest will ask us to join our minds in prayer, and after a few moments of silence he will collect our intentions into one prayer to which we all respond “Amen,” a Hebrew word for “So be it.”

The silence is the heart of the collect. The words of the collect are not.

The collect concludes our gathering/Introductory Rites
Liturgy of the Word
When we gather at a friend’s home for a meal, we always begin with conversation, telling our stories.

At Mass, after the rites of gathering, we sit down and listen as readings from the Word of God are proclaimed. They are the stories of God’s people.

During the Liturgy of the Word... the Word of God is proclaimed, responded to, authoritatively explained, accepted and held fast, and appealed to.

First Reading
Responsorial Psalm
Second Reading
Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia) STAND
Gospel Reading SIT
The first reading will usually be from the Hebrew Scriptures. We recall the origins of our covenant.

It will relate to the Gospel selection and will give background and an insight into the meaning of what Jesus will do in the Gospel.
Responsorial Psalm

Following the 1st reading we will sing a psalm—a song from God’s own inspired hymnal, the Book of Psalms of the Hebrew Bible.
Second Reading

The second reading will usually be from one of the letters of Paul or another apostolic writing.
Because of the unique presence of Christ in the proclamation of the Gospel, it has long been the custom to stand in attentive reverence to hear these words. We believe that Christ “is present in his word, since it is he himself who speaks when the holy Scriptures are read in the church” (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, #7).

Gospel Reading
The deacon or priest if there is no deacon will again greet us with “The Lord be with you.” He then introduces the Gospel reading while marking a small cross on his forehead, lips and heart with his thumb while praying silently that God cleans his mind and his heart so that his lips may worthily proclaim the Gospel. The congregation also performs this ritual action along with the priest. The Gospel reading concludes with the ritual formula “The Gospel of the Lord” and we respond, “Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ,” again proclaiming our faith in the presence of Christ in the word.
A homily and sermon have subtle differences.

- A **homily** explains a passage of scripture and gives practical applications. The homily takes the word just proclaimed and brings it to our life situation today. Just as a large piece of bread is broken to feed individual persons, the word of God must be broken open so it can be received and digested by the congregation.

- A **sermon** develops a point of doctrine or morals in a systematic way.

**Silence**

The homily is often followed by a few moments of silence during which we each thank God for the word we have heard and apply the message of today’s readings to our daily living.
Profession of Faith

Profession of Faith - Nicene Creed  page 110

The creed is more than a list of things, which we believe. It is a statement of our faith in the word we have heard proclaimed in the Scripture and the homily, and a profession of the faith that leads us to give our lives for one another as Christ gave his life for us.

General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful)  page 112

The General Intercessions help us become who God is calling us to be. We are the Body of Christ by Baptism. We pray that our assembly really comes to look like the Body of Christ, a body at peace, with shelter for the homeless, healing for the sick, food for the hungry.

We pray for the Church, nations and their leaders, people in special need and the local needs of our parish—the petitions usually fall into these four categories. A minister will announce the petitions, and we are usually given an opportunity to pray for the intentions in our heart, making some common response aloud like, “Lord, hear our prayer.”
After the readings, the Liturgy of the Word, we move to the table. As at a meal in the home of a friend, we:

1) set the table
2) say grace
3) share the food (we eat and drink).

At Mass these ritual actions are called:

1) the Preparation of the Gifts
2) the Eucharistic Prayer
3) the Communion Rite.
Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Altar and of the Gifts
Prayer over the Gifts

Eucharistic Prayer
  Preface
  Preface Acclamation:
    Holy Holy Holy

Eucharistic prayer
  Memorial Acclamation

Eucharistic Prayer
  Doxology
  Great Amen

Communion Rite
  Lord’s Prayer
  Rite of Peace
  Breaking of the Bread
  Lamb of God

Communion
  Prayer after Communion
  Great Amen
Preparation of Altar / Presentation of the Gifts

The priest prepares the altar and the gifts, prays over the bread and wine, and helps the assembly to prepare for the tremendous sacrifice that will take place.

Preparation of the Altar
Preparation of the Bread
Preparation of the Wine
Washing of Hands

Invitation to Prayer

“Pray brethren that my sacrifice and yours, may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father”
We respond:

“May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his Holy Church.”

Prayer over the Gifts
Eucharistic Prayer

The center and high point of the Mass that makes Christ present for us in His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. During it, the entire assembly joins Christ in acknowledging the works of God and in the offering of Sacrifice.

While the words of the prayer may vary from Sunday to Sunday, the prayer always has this structure:

1) We call upon God to remember all the wonderful saving deeds of our history.
2) We recall the central event in our history, Jesus Christ, and in particular the memorial he left us on the night before he died. We recall his passion, death and resurrection.
3) After gratefully calling to mind all the wonderful saving acts God has done for us in the past, we petition God to continue those deeds of Christ in the present:
   We pray that we may become one body, one spirit in Christ.
The prayer begins with a dialogue between the priest and the assembly.
First, the priest greets us with “The Lord be with you.”
He then asks if we are ready and willing to approach the table and to renew our baptismal commitment, offering ourselves to God: “Lift up your hearts.” And we say that we are prepared to do so: “We lift them up to the Lord.”
We are invited to give thanks to the Lord our God. And we respond: “It is right and just.”

To give “thanks and praise” translates the traditional Greek verb which now names the whole action: Eucharist.

In the preface, the Church gives thanks to the Father, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit, for all his works: creation, redemption, and sanctification.

The whole community thus joins in the unending praise with the Church in heaven, the angels and all the saints.

Holy, Holy, Holy... (Sanctus)
Eucharistic Prayer

Epiclesis

In the epiclesis, the Church asks the Father to send his Holy Spirit (or the power of his blessing) on the bread and wine, so that by his power they may become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ and so that those who take part in the Eucharist may be one body and one spirit.

Institution - Narrative and Consecration

In the institution narrative, the power of the words and the action of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, make sacramentally present under the species of bread and wine Christ's body and blood, his sacrifice offered on the cross once for all.
Memorial Acclamation -  page 132

When we eat this bread and drink this cup we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again

Continuation of Eucharistic Prayer: pages 134-140
The Church calls to mind the Passion, resurrection, and glorious return of Christ Jesus; she presents to the Father the offering of his Son which reconciles us with him.
The Church indicates that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the whole Church in heaven and on earth, the living and the dead, and in communion with the Pope, the diocesan bishop, his priests and his deacons, and all the bishops of the whole world together with their Churches.

Final Doxology  page 142
“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, for ever and ever.”

Great Amen  STAND
Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer

We prepare to eat and drink at the Lord's table with those words taught us by Jesus: “Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”

Rite of Peace (Sign of Peace)

Aware that communion (the word means “union with”) is the sign and source of our reconciliation and union with God and with one another, we make a gesture of union and forgiveness with those around us and offer them a sign of peace.

Fraction Rite / Breaking of the Bread / Commingling

He prays silently, “May the mingling of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.”

Symbolizes the Resurrection.
Symbolizes the unity of the Church.

Lamb of God (Agnus Dei)

Kneel
Rite of Communion
Invitation to Communion

The priest then shows us the Body of Christ and invites us to come to the table:

“Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.”

We respond:

“Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”

Communion

As God fed our ancestors in the desert on their pilgrimage, so God gives us food for our journey. We approach the minister who gives us the Eucharistic bread with the words “The Body of Christ,” and we respond, “Amen.”

We then go to the minister with the cup who gives it to us with the words “The Blood of Christ,” to which we again profess our “Amen.”

During this procession we usually sing a hymn, which unites our voices, minds and thoughts, even as the Body and Blood of Christ unites our bodies. Then we pray silently in our hearts, thanking and praising God and asking for all that this sacrament promises.

Silent Prayer

SIT
Prayer after Communion

This prayer speaks to the graces we have just received from the Body and Blood of Christ.

The priest unites our prayers in the Prayer After Communion, to which we respond, “Amen.”
Concluding Rite

Just as the people were greeted at the beginning of the Mass, so now the priest greets the people again and blesses them in one of several forms

STAND

Blessing

The priest says, “The Lord be with you”—the ritual phrase serves now as a farewell. We bow our heads to receive a blessing. As the priest gives us a final blessing in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit—we make the sign of the cross.

Dismissal

The priest or deacon then dismisses the assembly: “Go in peace...” and we give our liturgical “yes” by saying, “Thanks be to God.”