

EVANGELIZATION & APOLOGETICS...

SPREADING THE WORD

SCRIPTURE IN SUPPORT OF OUR CATHOLIC BELIEFS

SESSION THREE
CATHOLICS NOT BIBLICAL?

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Session Three

Catholics Not Biblical?

Every year, our youth groups go down to Columbia for the annual March for Life. There are representatives there from dozens of churches of all denominations standing up for the right to life. It's a good thing.

But every year, there is this one guy with maybe a couple of friends, and a big banner proclaiming that "Catholicism is not Scriptural! Repent and be saved!"

"The Mass is all bells and smells, pomp and circumstance, mumbo jumbo and pagan rituals that have nothing to do with the love of Jesus, much less anything biblical."

"Catholics don't even read the Bible in Church"

...and on the face of it, it may appear to many non-Catholics that indeed we do not read the bible, because, just look at Catholics filing into church. Nobody even carries a Bible. Nobody opens a bible in Mass to follow along with the priest, but go to nearly any Protestant Church and you'll see that the majority of church goers carrying their own personal Bible, book marked, margin noted and tattered from use. When the pastor starts to preach he will often site scripture and invite the congregation to read along.

There are many people, simply misinformed, who believe that Catholics don't read the Bible in church or that Catholicism is not a scriptural religion or even that the Church tries to "suppress" the scriptures from its members. This simply couldn't be further from the truth. First, the "Catechism of the Catholic Church" the very document that explains the faith and teachings of the Catholic Church, contains at least 2,829 references to scripture¹ so the actual teachings of the church are highly based on scripture. And while it's true Catholics don't sit in the pews with their Bibles in hand and turn to a verse invoked by the priest during a sermon (or in our case a homily), the entire Catholic service (called the Mass), nearly every word spoken or sung from the opening song to the final blessing and recessional hymn is based on scripture.

One thing we all need to remember is that the Church is not from the Bible, but rather, the Bible is from the Church. At the time of Christ, the Bible as we know it didn't even exist. Yes, the Jewish laws existed, the Torah and the various other scriptures totaling 46 writings now included in the Old Testament.

It was not until about 367 AD that St. Athanasius came up with a list of 73 books for the Bible that he believed to be divinely inspired, including 27 various writings then commonly in use to be included as the New Testament. This list was approved by Pope Damasus I in 382 AD, and was formally approved by the Church Council of Rome in that same year.

Later Councils at Hippo (393 AD) and Carthage (397 AD) ratified this list of 73 books. In 405 AD, Pope Innocent I wrote a letter to the Bishop of Toulouse reaffirming this canon of 73 books. In 419 AD, the Council of Carthage reaffirmed this list, which Pope Boniface agreed to.

¹ See the Catechism of the Catholic Church got to <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/epub/index.cfm> scroll down on the left to the index of citations.

It was not until 1454 that the bible was Massed produced on a printing press and bound into a single volume by Johannes Gutenberg.

The Council of Trent, in 1546, in response to the Reformation removing 7 books from the canon (canon is a Greek word meaning "standard"), reaffirmed the original St. Athanasius list of 73 books.

In the Catholic Church, there are direct readings from these scriptures at every Mass (which are outline below) and a most amazing fact is that every Catholic Church, (or Parish) in the entire world, reads the same scriptures as every other parish every single day. In fact, if a person were to attend daily Mass seven days a week for three years, they would hear virtually the entire Bible read from Genesis to Revelation.

The term "Mass" may be derived from the Late Latin word *missa* (dismissal), a word used in the concluding formula of Mass in Latin: "*Ite, missa est*" ("Go; it is the dismissal"). In antiquity, *missa* simply meant 'dismissal'. In Christian usage, however, it gradually took on a deeper meaning. The word 'dismissal' has come to imply a 'mission'. The definition has come to encompass the entirety of the Eucharistic celebration in the Catholic Church. These few words succinctly express the missionary nature of the Church.

However, my intent here is not a theological discussion of the components of the Mass, but rather an enlightenment of the actual scriptures upon which every word of the Catholic Mass are based.

The Catholic Sunday Mass and its relation to the Bible.

First, there are four obvious, specific readings of scripture at every Sunday Mass and on special feast days. (These are the readings heard daily by Catholics worldwide.) they are:

1. An Old Testament Reading
2. A Responsorial Psalm (usually from Psalms, but sometimes from other scriptures)
3. A New Testament reading (Usually from the Epistles)
4. A Gospel Reading

During the week at daily Mass there are three readings:

1. An Old Testament Reading
2. A Responsorial Psalm (usually from Psalms, but sometimes from other scriptures)
3. A Gospel Reading

These readings are chosen by the Church and published in the Lectionary so that on each day, all of the readings complement each other and help form a cohesive teaching from the scriptures. They are compiled in three sets labeled A, B and C, So as you can see, Catholics do read from the Bible in church every day. In fact, if you were to attend daily mass every day for three years you would hear nearly the entire bible read by the time you are done.

...But there is much, much more!

For the purposes of this discussion, we will use the teachings and readings from a typical Sunday Mass.

So, let's start the Mass:

The Beginning

At the very beginning of the Mass, some parishes start by ringing the Sanctus Bells.² Immediately we sing an introitum (Latin for "entrance") sometimes called the processional or welcoming hymn. It is a song with lyrics often taken from Scripture and most often from scripture relating to the readings and the liturgy for the day. During this singing, the Priest, Deacons, and other celebrants and servers approach the Altar. When all are assembled and the song is finished the priest opens the continuing prayer of the Mass with **"In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."** While the Priest and the congregation perform the sign of the cross.

Luke 3:21-22

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²² and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved, with you I am well pleased." (ref. Father, Son and Holy Spirit appear together)

Matthew 28:19

¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,

...and all respond **"Amen"**

Throughout the Mass you'll find several uses of **"Amen"** which literally means "This is the truth, I believe this, I stake my life on it"

Biblical references:

Romans 11:36

³⁶ For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

1 Chronicles 16:36

³⁶ Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Let all the people say, Amen! Hallelujah.

Matthew 26:13

¹³ Amen, I say to you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be spoken of, in memory of her."

Revelation 5:14

¹⁴ The four living creatures answered, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

Immediately following this, the Priest greets the congregation with a variation of **"The Lord be with you."** Or a Bishop may say **"The peace of the Lord be with you."** The same salutation that we find in the Gospels and many of Paul's writings:

² <http://www.adoremus.org/0305SantusBells.html>

Luke 24:36

³⁶ While they were still speaking about this, he stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

2 Corinthians 13:13

¹³ *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the holy Spirit be with you all.*

1 Chronicles 22:11

¹¹ *“Now, my son, the LORD be with you, and may you succeed in building the house of the LORD your God, as he has said you shall.*

Ephesians 1:2

² *grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Philippians 1:2

² *grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Numbers 6:26

²⁶ The Lord look upon you kindly and give you **peace!**

To which the congregation responds with another Pauline address, **“And with your Spirit.”**

2 Timothy 4:22

²² *The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with all of you. Annunciation*

Galatians 6:18

¹⁸ *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.*

Philippians 4:23

²³ *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

Philemon 1:25

²⁵ *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.*

But most importantly, throughout the scriptures, when the Lord is delivering an important message to someone, His Angel or messenger begins by reassuring that the Lord is with you or has found favor with you;

Judges 6:12

¹² *When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, “The Lord is with you, mighty warrior.”*

Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ *In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”*

These always occur when the Lord is asking something momentous of someone. Therefore, in the Mass, the phrase is repeated four times at the beginning of a new and more momentous part of the Mass.

After the greeting the entire congregation publicly confesses to God and to each other that they have sinned:

The Penitential Act

“I confess to Almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and what I have failed to do. Through my fault, through my fault through my most grievous fault. Therefore I ask blessed Mary, ever-virgin, all the angels and saints, and you my brothers and sisters to pray for me to the Lord our God”

We are encouraged by the scriptures to confess our sins to each other and beg forgiveness.

1 John 1:9

⁹ If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing.

James 5:16

¹⁶ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.

1 Corinthians 11:28.

²⁸ A person should examine himself, and so eat the bread and drink the cup.

In this way we prepare ourselves for the breaking of the bread (another name for the Mass)

Acts 2:46

⁴⁶ Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart

During the spoken confession we reference and appeal to several Scriptural passages:

“I confess to almighty God, and to you my brothers and sisters...

James 5:16

¹⁶ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.

That I have greatly sinned...

1 Chronicles 21:8

⁸ Then David said to God, “I have sinned greatly in doing this thing. Take away your servant’s guilt, for I have acted very foolishly.”

In my thoughts and in my words...

Matthew 5:28

²⁸ *But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

James 3:6

⁶ *The tongue is also a fire. It exists among our members as a world of malice, defiling the whole body and setting the entire course of our lives on fire, itself set on fire by Gehenna.*

In what I have done, and what I have failed to do...

James 4:17

¹⁷ *So for one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, it is a sin.*

Luke 10:30-37

³⁰ *Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. ³² Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. ³³ But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. ³⁴ He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' ³⁶ Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" ³⁷ He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

Through my fault, through my fault through my most grievous fault.

While making this public confession we put our fist to our breast (either once or thrice) in imitation of the tax collector who beat or struck his breast in anguish over sinning against God.

Luke 18:13

¹³ *But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.'*

Therefore, I ask blessed Mary, ever-virgin, all the angels and saints, and you my brothers and sisters to pray for me to the Lord our God

1 Thessalonians 5:25

²⁵ *Brothers, pray for us too.*

Revelation 5:8

⁸ *When he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.*

Revelation 8:4

⁴ *And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.*

The priest then recites what is sometimes referred to as the "Mini Absolution":

“May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.”

Matthew 6:12

¹² and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Luke 11:4

⁴ and forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us, and do not subject us to the final test.

1 John 1:9

⁹ If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing

Psalms 51:3-5

³ Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love; in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions. ⁴ Thoroughly wash away my guilt; and from my sin cleanse me. ⁵ For I know my transgressions; my sin is always before me.

The Kyrie

Next we sing or say the Kyrie: **"Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy"** or sometimes in Greek, **"Kýrie Eléison, Christe Eléison, Kýrie Eléison"**, which we find prayed by those in the Old Testament:

Baruch 3:2

² Hear, LORD, and have mercy, for you are a merciful God; have mercy on us, who have sinned against you:

Psalms 85:8

⁸ Show us, LORD, your mercy; grant us your salvation.

Isaiah 33:2

² LORD, be gracious to us; for you we wait. Be our strength every morning, our salvation in time of trouble!

Psalms 4:2

² Answer me when I call, my saving God. When troubles hem me in, set me free; take pity on me, hear my prayer.

Psalms 25:11

¹¹ For the sake of your name, LORD, pardon my guilt, though it is great.

Psalms 31:9

⁹ You will not abandon me into enemy hands, but will set my feet in a free and open space.

Psalms 41:5

⁵ Even I have said, "LORD, take note of me; heal me, although I have sinned against you.

Psalms 51:3

³ *Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love; in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions.*

Psalms 57:2

² *Have mercy on me, God, have mercy on me. In you I seek refuge. In the shadow of your wings I seek refuge till harm pass by.*

Tobit 8:4

⁴ *When Sarah's parents left the bedroom and closed the door behind them, Tobiah rose from bed and said to his wife, "My sister, come, let us pray and beg our Lord to grant us mercy and protection."*

And in the New Testament:

Matthew 9:13

¹³ *Go and learn the meaning of the words, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."*

Matthew 9:27

²⁷ *And as Jesus passed on from there, two blind men followed [him], crying out, "Son of David, * have pity on us!"*

Matthew 15:22

²² *And behold, a Canaanite woman of that district came and called out, "Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon."*

Matthew 17:15

¹⁵ *and said, "Lord, have pity on my son, for he is a lunatic and suffers severely; often he falls into fire, and often into water.*

Matthew 20:30

³⁰ *Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "[Lord,] Son of David, have pity on us!"*

Mark 10:47

⁴⁷ *On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me."*

Luke 16:24

²⁴ *And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am suffering torment in these flames.'*

The Gloria

The Kyrie is succeeded by the Gloria. It is also spoken or sung as a form of worship and adoration to God, and includes numerous Scriptural passages both referenced and taken word-for-word:

Glory to God in the highest. And on earth peace to men of good will.

Luke 2:14

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

We praise You. We bless You. We adore you. We glorify You. We give You thanks for Your great glory. Lord God, heavenly King, O God almighty Father.

Revelation 7:12

¹² and exclaimed: "Amen. Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor, power, and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen."

Revelation 19:6

⁶ Then I heard something like the sound of a great multitude or the sound of rushing water or mighty peals of thunder, as they said: "Alleluia! The Lord has established his reign, [our] God, the almighty."

Lord Jesus Christ, Only-begotten Son. O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father: you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. You take away the sins of the world,

John 1:29

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

receive our prayer.

Romans 8:34

³⁴ Who will condemn? It is Christ [Jesus] who died, rather, was raised, who also is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, You alone are the Lord.

Revelation 3:21

²¹ I will give the victor the right to sit with me on my throne, as I myself first won the victory and sit with my Father on his throne.

Revelation 15:4

⁴ Who will not fear you, Lord, or glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All the nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."

You alone are the most high Jesus Christ

Luke 1:32

³² He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father,

Psalms 83:19

¹⁹ Let them know that your name is LORD, you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

With the Holy Spirit in the glory of God the Father

Luke 4:34

³⁴ ...I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

John 14:26

²⁶ *The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you.*

2 John 1:3

³ *Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father’s Son in truth and love.*

Titus 3:4-6

⁴ *But when the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, ⁵ not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the holy spirit, ⁶ whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our savior*

Luke 9:26

²⁶ *Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*

2 Corinthians 13:13

¹³ *The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the holy Spirit be with all of you.*

Amen ³

The Liturgy of the Word

The liturgy of the Word contains several parts; readings from the sacred scriptures and the Homily (sermon) given by the priest, the Nicæan Creed, or “Profession of Faith”, and the Prayers of the faithful.

The first reading is from the Old Testament. The lector proclaims **“A reading from the book of Ezekiel”** (or appropriate scripture of the day) and begins to read from the proclaimed text. When he has finished reading, the lector proclaims, **“The Word of the Lord”**

John 1:1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1 Samuel 3:7

⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

1 Samuel 15:10

¹⁰ The word of the Lord came to Samuel:

2 Samuel 7:4

⁴ But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan:

³ See scripture relating to **Amen** on page 82

1 Kings 6:11

¹¹ Now the word of the Lord came to Solomon,

All respond with **“Thanks be to God!”** We should speak these words with great reverence and a full heart for these are God’s very words.

2 Corinthians 9:15

¹⁵ *Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!*

Romans 6:17

¹⁷ *But thanks be to God that you, having once been slaves of sin, have become obedient from the heart to the form of teaching to which you were entrusted,*

1 Corinthians 15:57

⁵⁷ *But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 8:16

¹⁶ *But thanks be to God who put in the heart of Titus the same eagerness for you that I myself have.*

The next scripture is the **Responsorial Psalm** and is taken directly from the Book of Psalms in the Bible or sometimes from other books as may be appropriate for the day. The cantor and choir sing several verses, with the congregation responding in song after every verse with a common phrase from the Scriptures. The Cantor sings the response, repeated by the choir and the congregation then the cantor sings each verse, followed by the response from the congregation and choir. This is in the tradition of the Jewish practice of singing the psalms in Alternating verses between the cantor and the congregation or sometimes two halves of the congregation singing in response to each other. This is one part in the Mass where we as the gathered Church actually repeat God’s word back to him in praise.

The second reading is generally from the New Testament epistles, the non-gospel books from sacred Scripture. Again, the lector proclaims “A reading from St Paul’s Letter to the Romans.” (or appropriate scripture of the day.) and begins to read the passage. And again at the conclusion of the reading the lector proclaims **“The word of the Lord”** and the faithful respond **“Thanks be to God”**

We then sing or recite **the Gospel Acclamation**. This is the rite by which the faithful welcome and greet the Lord who is about to speak to them in the Gospel and profess their faithfulness by means of the chant or song; **“Alleluia, Alleluia.”** Which in Hebrew means “Praise God” or Praise be to God” The Cantor then speaks or sings a short verse from Scripture (the antiphon) and all close together with **“Alleluia, Alleluia.”**

Revelation 19:1

¹ [The Rejoicing in Heaven] After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and power to our God,

Revelation 19:3

³ Once more they said, “Alleluia! The smoke goes up from her forever and ever.”

Revelation 19:4

⁴ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Alleluia!"

Revelation 19:6

⁶ Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying out, "Alleluia! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

Tobit 13:17

¹⁷ The gates of Jerusalem will sing hymns of joy, and all her houses will cry, 'Alleluia! Blessed be the God of Israel!' and the blessed will bless the holy name forever and ever."

During this time the priest bows to the altar and says softly or to himself the prayer; **"Cleanse my heart and my lips, almighty God, that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel."** If a Deacon is to read the Gospel, the Deacon will ask the Priest for a blessing and the priest will say the prayer for the Deacon; **"May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips, that you may proclaim his Gospel worthily and well, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."** The deacon crosses himself and replies **"Amen"**

After the Gospel Acclamation, the Priest and the congregation exchange a formal greeting, similar to the earlier salutations. The priest greets the congregation with: **"The Lord be with you."** Or **"The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you"** to which we respond again, **"And with your spirit"** which signifies a new, elevated part of the liturgy, the actual words spoken by our Lord Jesus.

The Gospel reading is the high point of the Liturgy of the Word, as these are the actual words spoken to us by the Lord.

The Gospel reading is from one of the four Gospels. Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. The Priest or Deacon proclaims **"A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew"** (or appropriate selection for the day) As he says this, he traces the sign of the cross over the words of the reading.

The Congregation responds, **"Glory to You O Lord."**

Luke 2:14

¹⁴ *"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

Romans 4:20

²⁰ *Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God,*

Philippians 2:11

¹¹ *and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

As we say this, the Priest or Deacon makes a small sign of the cross over his forehead, lips and heart. The Faithful often do this as well. The significance of the threefold signing is that we want to hear the Holy Gospel with an open mind, proclaim it with our lips, and cherish and safeguard it in our hearts. We are imploring the Lord for the grace to receive, acknowledge, and then profess the faith that has been received in the Holy Gospel through our Lord, Jesus Christ, the Word of God incarnate.

At the conclusion of the Gospel reading the Priest or Deacon sayss **“The Gospel of the Lord”** then may kiss the Gospel book with a small prayer **“Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away..”**

Gospel is the English form of the Greek; εὐαγγέλιον or “euangelion”, meaning simply Good News.

Romans 1:1

¹ [Salutation] Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

Romans 1:3

³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

Romans 1:9

⁹ For God, whom I serve with my spirit by announcing the gospel of his Son, is my witness that without ceasing I remember you always in my prayers,

1 Corinthians 9:12

¹² If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we still more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.

And all respond **“Praise to You Lord Jesus Christ”**

Philippians 1:11

¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

1 Peter 1:7

⁷ so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

The Gospel reading is followed by the Homily (Greek, "homilia,") delivered by the priest or deacon. It is generally an explanation of the Scripture readings; (distinctly different than a sermon). A sermon can be described as the idea of a chosen topic for which the speaker researches and provides examples of scripture to back up the given theme. A homily is a commentary, a teaching and an explanation of the theology behind a given scripture passage or group of passages, most often of the passages read during the Liturgy of the Word.

The Symbol or Profession of Faith – The Nicene Creed

After the Homily, the entire congregation makes a profession of faith by reciting the Nicene Creed, in which we find numerous Scriptural references.

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; Through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (all bow at the following words) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

The Nicene Creed honors and confesses the great mystery of the Faith. It is basically a distillation of our faith, the existence of God, the Father, His son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, our creation, our salvation and our core beliefs. It is called Nicene because it was originally adopted in the city of Nicaea (present day Iznik, Turkey) by the First Council of Nicaea in 325. In 381, it was amended at the First Council of Constantinople, and the amended form is referred to as the Nicene or the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed. Catholics have been reciting it at Mass ever since.

So let's break it down scripturally:

I believe in one God, the Father almighty

Ephesians 4:6

⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Matthew 4:10

¹⁰ At this, Jesus said to him, "Get away, Satan! It is written: 'The Lord, your God, shall you worship and him alone shall you serve.'"

maker of Heaven and Earth,

Genesis 1:1

¹ In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth

Genesis 14:19

¹⁹ He blessed Abram with these words: "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, the creator of heaven and earth;

of all things visible and invisible.

Colossians 1:16

¹⁶ For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and for him.

Hebrews 11:3

³ By faith we understand that the universe was ordered by the word of God, so that what is visible came into being through the invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,

1 Corinthians 8:6

⁶ yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things are and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are and through whom we exist.

the Only Begotten Son of God,

Luke 1:35

³⁵ And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

John 1:14

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.

born of the Father before all ages.

Colossians 1:15,17

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For in him were created all things in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,

John 1:1-2, 9

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

1 John 5:20

²⁰ We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us discernment to know the one who is true. And we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;

John 10:30

³⁰ The Father and I are one."

John 14:9-10

⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in me is doing his works.

through him all things were made.

John 1:3

³ All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be

John 1:10

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came to be through him, but the world did not know him.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.

John 6:38

³⁸ because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me.

Hebrews 2:14

¹⁴ Now since the children share in blood and flesh, he likewise shared in them, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. (During this phrase, all bow in respect)

John 1:14

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

Matthew 1:18

¹⁸ Now this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,

Mark 15:15

¹⁵ So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas to them and, after he had Jesus scourged, handed him over to be crucified.

John 19:16

¹⁶ Then he handed him over to them to be crucified.

1 Peter 2:24

²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

he suffered death and was buried,

1 Corinthians 15:3

³ For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures.

Luke 23:46

⁴⁶ Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"; and when he had said this he breathed his last.

Matthew 27:59-60

⁵⁹ Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it [in] clean linen ⁶⁰and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed.

Matthew 27:59-60

⁵⁹ Taking the body, Joseph wrapped it [in] clean linen ⁶⁰and laid it in his new tomb that he had hewn in the rock. Then he rolled a huge stone across the entrance to the tomb and departed.

and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

³ For I handed on to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures ⁴ that he was buried; that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures;

Mark 9:31

³¹ He was teaching his disciples and telling them, "The Son of Man is to be handed over to men and they will kill him, and three days after his death he will rise."

Acts 10:40

⁴⁰ his man God raised (on) the third day and granted that he be visible,

Luke 24:45-46

⁴⁵ Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. ⁴⁶ And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day

He ascended into heaven

Mark 16:19

¹⁹ So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God

Acts 1:9-10

⁹ When he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him from their sight. ¹⁰ While they were looking intently at the sky as he was going, suddenly two men dressed in white garments stood beside them.

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Mark 16:19

¹⁹ So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God.

Colossians 3:1

¹ If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Hebrews 1:3

³ who is the refulgence of his glory, the very imprint of his being, and who sustains all things by his mighty word. When he had accomplished purification from sins, he took his seat at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

He will come again in glory

Matthew 16:27

²⁷ For the Son of Man will come with his angels in his Father's glory, and then he will repay everyone according to his conduct.

Matthew 25:31

³¹ When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne,

Mark 13:26

²⁶ And then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in the clouds' with great power and glory,

John 14:3

³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be

to judge the living and the dead

2 Timothy 4:1

¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingly power:

Mark 16:19

¹⁹ So then the Lord Jesus, after he spoke to them, was taken up into heaven and took his seat at the right hand of God.

1 Peter 4:5

⁵ but they will give an account to him who stands ready to judge the living and the dead.

Matthew 25:31-46

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit upon his glorious throne, ³² and all the nations will be assembled before him. And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴ Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?' ⁴⁰ And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.' ⁴¹ Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.' ⁴⁴ Then they will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?' ⁴⁵ He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.' ⁴⁶ And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

and his kingdom will have no end.

Luke 1:33

³³ and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

2 Corinthians 3:17

¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

John 6:63

⁶³ It is the spirit that gives life, while the flesh is of no avail. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

2 Corinthians 3:6

⁶ who has indeed qualified us as ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter brings death, but the Spirit gives life.

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

John 15:26

²⁶ “When the Advocate comes whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth that proceeds from the Father, he will testify to me.

John 16:7

⁷ But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

John 14:16

¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you always,

who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,

Romans 11:36

³⁶ For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

Hebrews 9:14

¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works to worship the living God.

who has spoken through the prophets.

Ephesians 3:5

⁵ which was not made known to human beings in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit,

1 Peter 1:10-11

¹⁰ Concerning this salvation, prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and investigated it, ¹¹ investigating the time and circumstances that the Spirit of Christ within them indicated when it testified in advance to the sufferings destined for Christ and the glories to follow them.

2 Peter 1:21

²¹ for no prophecy ever came through human will; but rather human beings moved by the holy Spirit spoke under the influence of God.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.

Ephesians 5:27

²⁷ that he might present to himself the church in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 2:20

²⁰ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone.

Ephesians 4:4

⁴ one body and one Spirit, as you were also called to the one hope of your call;

Romans 12:4-5

⁴ For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another.

Matthew 16:18

¹⁸ And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins

Matthew 28:19

¹⁹ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit,

Ephesians 4:5

⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

Acts 22:16

¹⁶ Now, why delay? Get up and have yourself baptized and your sins washed away, calling upon his name

Acts 2:38

³⁸ Peter [said] to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the holy Spirit.

Galatians 3:27

²⁷ For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead

1 Corinthians 15:42

⁴² So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown corruptible; it is raised incorruptible.

Colossians 2:12-13

¹² You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And even when you were dead [in] transgressions and the

uncircumcision of your flesh, he brought you to life along with him, having forgiven us all our transgressions;

Romans 6:4-5

⁴ We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.

1 Thessalonians 4:16

⁴ We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.

and the life of the world to come.

John 14:1-3

¹ “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You have faith in God; have faith also in me. ² In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be.

John 3:16

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.

1 Thessalonians 5:9

⁹ For God did not destine us for wrath, but to gain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ

2 Peter 3:13

¹³ But according to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Revelation 21:1

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

Amen. ⁴

The Universal Prayer or the Prayers of the Faithful

Here the priest, and the deacon or Lector lead the assembly in prayers of petition or supplication to God

Prayers of a general and specific nature are recited or read aloud such as:

“May our nation’s leaders be strong in their faith and govern our country with the peace of the Lord, ”

We generally pray first for the Church, second for our nation and its leaders, third for our community, fourth for our families, fifth for ourselves and last for the deceased, but prayers can vary specific to seasons, world events or special activities of the Church.

⁴ See scripture relating to **Amen** previously discussed.

Each prayer is followed by; **“Let us pray to the Lord”**, or **“We Pray to the Lord”**.

1 Samuel 1:10:

¹⁰ *She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord, and wept bitterly. ”*

1 Samuel 7:5:

⁵ *Then Samuel said, “Gather all Israel at Mizpah, and I will pray to the Lord for you.” ”*

Or: **“Lord in Your mercy”** :

Psalm 25:6:

⁶ *Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. ”*

Psalm 119:77:

⁷⁷ *Let your mercy come to me, that I may live; for your law is my delight. ”*

Each time the gathered respond:

“Lord hear our prayer.” :

Psalm 5:2:

² *Listen to the sound of my cry, my King and my God, for to you I pray. ”*

Psalm 61:1:

¹ *Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer. ”*

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Eucharistic Prayer, the center and summit of the entire celebration is a memorial proclamation of praise and thanksgiving for God’s work of salvation, a proclamation in which the Body and Blood of Christ are made present by the power of the Holy Spirit and the people are joined to Christ in offering his Sacrifice to the Father. The Eucharistic Prayer is comprised of all of the rest of the Mass from this point until the concluding rites.

Extending his hands, the Priest says for the third time, raising the importance of the liturgy to a new height;

The Lord be with you.

To which the congregation again responds with;

“And with your Spirit.”

The Priest, raising his hands, continues:

Lift up your hearts.

The people respond:

We lift them up to the Lord.

Lamentations 3:41

⁴¹ *Let us lift up our hearts as well as our hands toward God in heaven!*

The Priest, with hands extended, ads:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

The people respond:

It is right and just.

1 Chronicles 16:8

⁸ Give thanks to the Lord, invoke his name; make known among the peoples his deeds.

Psalm 54:8

⁸ Then I will offer you generous sacrifice and give thanks to your name, Lord, for it is good.

Colossians 3:17

¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

1 Chronicles 16:34

³⁴ Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, whose love endures forever;

Genesis 18:19

¹⁹ Indeed, I have singled him out that he may direct his children and his household in the future to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that the Lord may put into effect for Abraham the promises he made about him.

Proverbs 21:3

³ To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

The Priest continues with the Preface:

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Father most holy, through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things, whom you sent as our Savior and Redeemer, incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin. Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people, he stretched out his hands as he endured his Passion, so as to break the bonds of death and manifest the resurrection. And so, with the Angels and all the Saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Which is broken down scripturally as follows:

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,

Ezekiel 18:27

*²⁷ But if the wicked turn from the wickedness they did and do what is **right and just**, they save their lives;*

Ezra 10:11-12

¹¹ But now, give praise to the Lord, the God of your ancestors, and do his will: separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign women.” ¹² In answer, the whole assembly cried out with a loud voice: “Yes, it is our duty to do as you say!

Ezekiel 33:16

¹⁶ None of the sins they committed shall be remembered against them. If they do what is right and just, they shall surely live.

always and everywhere to give you thanks,

1 Thessalonians 5:18

¹⁸ In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.

Psalms 30:5

⁵ Sing praise to the Lord, you faithful; give thanks to his holy memory.

Psalms 30:13

¹³ So that my glory may praise you and not be silent. O Lord, my God, forever will I give you thanks.

Father most holy,

John 17:11

¹¹ And now I will no longer be in the world, but they are in the world, while I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one just as we are.

through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ,

Mark 1:11

¹¹ And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

your Word through whom you made all things,

John 1:1

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God

John 1:3-4

³ All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. ⁴ through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race;

Revelation 4:11

¹¹ "Worthy are you, Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things; because of your will they came to be and were created."

whom you sent as our Savior and Redeemer,

Jude 1:25

²⁵ to the only God, our savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, power, and authority from ages past, now, and for ages to come. Amen.

2 Timothy 1:10

¹⁰ but now made manifest through the appearance of our savior Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin.

Luke 1:26

²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

Luke 1:35

³⁵ And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

Luke 2:7

⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn son.^[a] She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Fulfilling your will and gaining for you a holy people,

1 Peter 2:9

⁹ But you are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises" of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

2 Timothy 1:10

¹⁰ but now made manifest through the appearance of our savior Christ Jesus, who destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel

he stretched out his hands as he endured his Passion,

Luke 23:33

³³ When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him and the criminals there, one on his right, the other on his left.

Luke 23:46

⁴⁶ Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit"; and when he had said this he breathed his last.

so as to break the bonds of death and manifest the resurrection.

Luke 24:6-7

⁶ He is not here, but he has been raised. Remember what he said to you while he was still in Galilee, ⁷ that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners and be crucified, and rise on the third day."

And so, with the Angels and all the Saints we declare your glory, as with one voice we acclaim:

Revelation 7:11-15

¹¹ All the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They prostrated themselves before the throne, worshiped God, ¹² and exclaimed: "Amen. Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor, power, and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen." ¹³ Then one of the elders spoke up and said to me, "Who are these wearing white robes, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴ I said to him, "My lord, you are the one who knows." He said to me, "These are the ones who have survived the time of great distress; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵ "For this reason they stand before God's throne and worship him day and night in his temple. The one who sits on the throne will shelter them.

All recite or sing:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Isaiah 6:3

³ One cried out to the other: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts! All the earth is filled with his glory!"

Revelation 4:8

⁸ The four living creatures, each of them with six wings, were covered with eyes inside and out. Day and night they do not stop exclaiming: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come."

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Mark 11:9-10

⁹ Those preceding him as well as those following kept crying out: "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰ Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is to come! Hosanna in the highest!"

At the conclusion of the Holy, Holy, Holy the congregation kneels in a sign of respect, humility, adoration and worship. We show ourselves to be less than the greatness of God by this posture.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

For Catholics, the Eucharist is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. It is the vital center of all that the Church is and does, because at its heart it is the real presence of the crucified, risen and glorified Lord, continuing and making available his saving work among us. After we have affirmed our faith, the Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with a preparatory or offertory song. It is during this song that an offering is usually taken, and the priest begins preparation for the Eucharistic liturgy.

In the ancient church, the people brought bread and wine that they had personally made to offer as gifts for the transubstantiation into the Body and Blood of Christ. We now do this symbolically as someone chosen from the congregation brings the bread and wine to the priest, who places them on the Altar. At the same time, we offer our contemporary gifts to the Church by means of a money offering. We are saying that we offer our gifts as a part of the community of the Church. This is where we as people, figuratively place our gifts on the altar, our time, our talent, our treasure, our prayers.

When he has received the bread and wine for the celebration, the Priest offers prayer of blessing quietly at the altar. These are from the Jewish Passover prayers that Jesus would have prayed at the Last Supper; Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam, Hamotzi lechem min haaretz. Hebrew for **“Blessed are you eternal our God, sovereign of the Universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”** Then holding up the wine he would pray “Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu, Melech Haolam, borei p'ri hagafen.” **“Praise to You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.”** Sometimes these prayers are said aloud as the bread and then the wine is held aloft.

“Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.”

Judith 9:12

¹² Please, please, God of my father, God of the heritage of Israel, Lord of heaven and earth, Creator of the waters, King of all your creation, hear my prayer!

John 6:35

³⁵ Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.

the congregation responds:

“Blessed be God forever.”

1 Chronicles 29:10

¹⁰ Then David blessed the LORD in the sight of the whole assembly. David said: “Blessed are you, LORD, God of Israel our father, from eternity to eternity.

Psalms 89:53

⁵³ Blessed be the LORD forever! Amen and amen!

“Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.”

Judith 9:12

¹² Please, please, God of my father, God of the heritage of Israel, Lord of heaven and earth, Creator of the waters, King of all your creation, hear my prayer!

Genesis 14:18

¹⁸ Melchizedek, king of Salem, brought out bread and wine. He was a priest of God Most High.

Luke 22:20

²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.

The Priest then, pours wine and a little water into the chalice, saying quietly:

“By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity.”

He then bows to the altar and prays again to himself;

“With humble spirit and contrite heart, may we be acceptable to you O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your site this day, be pleasing to you, O Lord.”

Exodus 29:25

²⁵ Then take them from their hands and burn them on the altar along with the burnt offering for a pleasing aroma to the Lord, a food offering presented to the Lord.

The Priest then turns to the Altar Server for a part of the Mass called the Lavabo. The server pours water over the priest’s hands, in connection with the Passover because the leader of the Passover meal washes his hands at this moment in the meal. As he does this he prays;

“Lord wash away my iniquity and cleanse me of all my sins.”

The people then rise as he addresses the congregation;

“Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.”

Daniel 3:39-40

³⁹ *But with contrite heart and humble spirit let us be received; As though it were burnt offerings of rams and bulls, or tens of thousands of fat lambs,* ⁴⁰ *So let our sacrifice be in your presence today and find favor before you; for those who trust in you cannot be put to shame.*

To which 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.”**

Psalms 50:23

²³ *Those who offer praise as a sacrifice honor me; I will let him whose way is steadfast look upon the salvation of God.”*

The Epiiclesis

This is the point in the Mass at which the earthly bread and wine are transformed into the heavenly body, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ Himself!

As he extends his hands over the bread and wine the priest earnestly prays:

You are indeed Holy, O Lord, the fount of all holiness.

Ephesians 4:24

²⁴ *and put on the new self, created in God’s way in righteousness and holiness of truth.*

Exodus 3:5

⁵ *God said: Do not come near! Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.*

Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall,

Hebrews 2:4

⁴ *God added his testimony by signs, wonders, various acts of power, and distribution of the gifts of the holy Spirit according to his will.*

Exodus 16:13-15

¹³ *In the evening, quail came up and covered the camp. In the morning there was a layer of dew all about the camp, ¹⁴ and when the layer of dew evaporated, fine flakes were on the surface of the wilderness, fine flakes like hoarfrost on the ground. ¹⁵ On seeing it, the Israelites asked one another, "What is this?" ^{*} for they did not know what it was. But Moses told them, "It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.*

Luke 1:35

³⁵ *And the angel said to her in reply, "The holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.*

so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 11:23-25

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, ²⁴ and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The body and blood now transformed, the priest offers the meal to the faithful church by reminding us;

At the time he was betrayed and entered willingly into his Passion,

Luke 22:41-43

⁴¹ *After withdrawing about a stone's throw from them and kneeling, he prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me; still, not my will but yours be done." ⁴³ And to strengthen him an angel from heaven appeared to him.*

he took bread and, giving thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND EAT OF IT, FOR THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH WILL BE GIVEN UP FOR YOU.

^{*} What is this: the Hebrew *man hu* is thus rendered by the ancient versions, which understood the phrase as a popular etymology of the Hebrew word *man*, "manna"; but some render *man hu*, "This is manna."

Matthew 26:26

²⁶ While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, "Take and eat; this is my body."

Mark 14:22

²² While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body."

Luke 22:19

¹⁹ Then he took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me."

In a similar way, when supper was ended, he took the chalice and, once more giving thanks, he gave it to his disciples, saying: TAKE THIS, ALL OF YOU, AND DRINK FROM IT, FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, THE BLOOD OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL COVENANT, WHICH WILL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU AND FOR MANY FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME.

Matthew 26:27-28

²⁷ Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, ²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins.

Mark 14:23-24

²³ Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. ²⁴ He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many.

Luke 22:20

²⁰ And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.

In both the blessing of the bread and of the wine, these would have been the "Baruch Atah" Passover blessings discussed above under the Eucharistic Prayer.

After the words of Consecration, the priest says or may chant:

"The mystery of faith"**1 Timothy 3:9**

⁹ holding fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

1 Timothy 3:13

¹³ Thus those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus. *The Mystery of Our Religion.*

The which the congregation responds in one of three ways depending on the preference of the Pastor and the music director; All three are acceptable:

Either:

**We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection
until you come again.**

Romans 6:5

⁵ For if we have grown into union with him through a death like his, we shall also be united with him in the resurrection.

Or:

**When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,
until you come again.**

1 Corinthians 11:26

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

Or:

**Save us, Savior of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.**

John 8:32

³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Galatians 5:1

¹ For freedom Christ set us free; so stand firm and do not submit again to the yoke of slavery. Then

the Priest continues:

Therefore O Lord, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation,

John 6:48

⁴⁸ I am the bread of life.

1 Corinthians 11:26

²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

giving thanks that you have held us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you.

Wisdom 3:5

⁵ Chastised a little, they shall be greatly blessed, because God tried them and found them worthy of himself.

1 Thessalonians 2:12

¹² exhorting and encouraging you and insisting that you conduct yourselves as worthy of the God who calls you into his kingdom and glory.

Deuteronomy 10:8

⁸ At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister to him, and to bless in his name, as they have done to this day.

Humbly we pray that, partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, we may be gathered into one by the Holy Spirit.

Romans 12:4-5

⁴ For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another.

1 Corinthians 10:17

¹⁷ Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

1 Corinthians 12:11

¹¹ But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes. One Body, Many Parts.

Remember, Lord, your Church, spread throughout the world, and bring her to the fullness of charity, together with Francis our Pope and Robert our Bishop and all the clergy. (or other names appropriate to the time and location)

John 11:51-52

⁵¹ He did not say this on his own, but since he was high priest for that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation, ⁵² and not only for the nation, but also to gather into one the dispersed children of God.

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.

1 Thessalonians 4:14

¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep.

1 Corinthians 15:20

²⁰ But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Psalms 4:7

⁷ Many say, "May we see better times! Lord, show us the light of your face!" Selah

Have mercy on us all, we pray, that with the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with the blessed Apostles, and all the Saints who have pleased you throughout the ages, we may merit to be coheirs to eternal life,

Psalm 119:58

⁵⁸ I entreat you with all my heart: have mercy on me in accord with your promise.

Luke 1:35

³⁵ And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.

Revelation 5:8

⁸ When he took it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each of the elders held a harp and gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the holy ones. (the saints)

Matthew 19:29

²⁹ And everyone who has given up houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times more, and will inherit eternal life.

and may praise and glorify you through your Son, Jesus Christ.

Colossians 3:17

¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Matthew 5:16

¹⁶ Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.

At the conclusion of the Eucharistic Prayer the Priest takes the chalice and the paten with the host and, raising both, he alone says:

Through him, and with him, and in him,

John 1:3

³ All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be

John 1:4

⁴ through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race;

Mark 3:14

¹⁴ He appointed twelve [whom he also named apostles] that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach

John 6:56

⁵⁶ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.

O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, forever and ever.

And all recite: **Amen.**

1 Timothy 1:17

¹⁷ To the king of ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Communion Rite

The eating and drinking together of the Lord's Body and Blood in a Paschal meal is the culmination of the Eucharist. The themes underlying these rites are the mutual love and reconciliation that are both the condition and the fruit of worthy communion and the unity of the many in the One.

The Lord's Prayer

The congregation stands and the Priest says:

At the Savior's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

Together with the people, he continues:

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

Matthew 6:9-13

⁹ "This is how you are to pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. ¹¹ Give us today our daily bread; ¹² and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors ¹³ and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one.

The Priest alone continues, saying:

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, graciously grant peace in our days, that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

From Scripture:

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,

Matthew 6:13

¹³ and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one.

Psalms 79:9

⁹ Help us, God our savior, on account of the glory of your name. Deliver us, pardon our sins for your name's sake.

graciously grant peace in our days,

Proverbs 3:2

² For many days, and years of life, and peace, will they bring you.

Tobit 12:17

¹⁷ But Raphael said to them: "Do not fear; peace be with you! Bless God now and forever.

Psalm 4:9

⁹ In peace I will lie down and fall asleep, for you alone, Lord, make me secure.

that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,

1 Kings 8:50

⁵⁰ Forgive your people who have sinned against you and all the offenses they have committed against you, and grant them mercy in the sight of their captors, so that these will be merciful to them.

Psalm 25:7

⁷ Remember no more the sins of my youth; remember me according to your mercy, because of your goodness, Lord.

as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Titus 2:13

¹³ as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of the great God and of our savior Jesus Christ,

Then all conclude the prayer, acclaiming:

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Jude 1:25

²⁵ to the only God, our savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory, majesty, power, and authority from ages past, now, and for ages to come. Amen.

The Sign of Peace

Then the Priest says aloud:

Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you,

John 14:27

²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.

look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and graciously grant her peace and unity in accordance with your will. Who live and reign for ever and ever.

Acts 16:5

⁵ Day after day the churches grew stronger in faith and increased in number.

Psalm 106:1

¹ Give thanks to the Lord, who is good, whose mercy endures forever.

Exodus 15:18

¹⁸ May the Lord reign forever and ever!

The people reply:

Amen.

The Priest adds:

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

The Deacon, or the Priest, adds:

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

John 20:19, 21

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ [Jesus] said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."

Romans 16:16.

¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

And all offer one another a sign, in keeping with local customs, that expresses peace, communion, and charity. In the ancient church it was sometimes the custom at this point for people to leave the church and go to the place of a person whom they may have wronged or to seek them out in the church if they were in attendance and ask them for forgiveness and peace. Mass could be an all-day affair at times!

Breaking of the Bread

After a short interval, allowing for the congregants to greet all those around them. The priest holds the host over the paten and breaks it into smaller pieces in imitation and in honor of Christ breaking the bread for the Apostles. He drops a small portion into the chalice and quietly says:

May this mingling of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.

John 6:51-54

⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." ⁵² The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us [his] flesh to eat?" ⁵³ Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you,

*unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. ⁵⁴
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day.*

While the priest if he is doing this, the congregation recites or sings the Agnus Dei (Latin for "Lamb of God"). We ask Christ to have mercy on us and grant us peace as we recite or sing the words;

**“Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the Earth. Have mercy on us,
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the Earth. Have mercy on us,
Lamb of God, You take away the sins of the Earth. Grant us peace.”**

John 1:29

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

John 1:36

³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!”

Matthew 9:27

²⁷ As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, crying loudly, “Have mercy on us, Son of David!”

Luke 17:13

¹³ they called out, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!”

Leviticus 26:6

⁶ And I will grant peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and no one shall make you afraid; I will remove dangerous animals from the land, and no sword shall go through your land.

In ancient days, when there may have been several churches within traveling distance from one another, the Bishop would break of this morsel and drop it into the wine and the remaining piece would be given to a runner who would take it to a nearby church where the priest would break off a morsel and drop it into the wine there, and so on until all of the local churches had shared a piece of the same bread signifying the complete unity of the church.

After his private prayers of preparation the Priest genuflects, takes the host and, holding it slightly raised above the paten or above the chalice says aloud:

**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.**

John 1:29

²⁹ The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.

John 1:36

³⁶ and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, “Look, here is the Lamb of God!”

John 6:51-54

⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.” ⁵² The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us [his] flesh to eat?” ⁵³ Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats* my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day.

1 Corinthians 11:29

²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.

And together with the people all reply:

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

Matthew 8:8

⁸ The centurion said in reply, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed.

Revelation 19:9

⁹ Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who have been called to the wedding feast of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These words are true; they come from God.”

Communion

After the priest has reverently consumed the Body and Blood of Christ the communicants come forward in reverent procession, and make a preparatory act of reverence by bowing their head in honor of Christ’s presence in the Sacrament. They receive Holy Communion standing. The Priest says:

The Body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:16

¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

Ephesians 4:12

¹² to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

The communicant replies: **Amen**, and receives the host either on the tongue or in the outstretched hands from which he consumes it immediately.

When Communion is ministered under both kinds (bread and wine, body and blood) the minister of the Chalice raises it slightly and shows it to each of the communicants, saying:

The Blood of Christ.

1 Corinthians 10:16

¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

Hebrews 9:14

¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works to worship the living God.

1 Peter 1:19

¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb.

The communicant replies **Amen** and receives the chalice in his hands and takes a small sip.

After the distribution of Communion, if appropriate, a sacred silence may be observed for a while, or a psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may be sung.

Prayer after Communion

Then, the Priest says:

Let us pray.

Tobit 8:4

⁴ When Sarah's parents left the bedroom and closed the door behind them, Tobiah rose from bed and said to his wife, "My sister, come, let us pray and beg our Lord to grant us mercy and protection."

All stand and pray in silence. Then the Priest says the Prayer after Communion, at the end of which the people acclaim:

Amen.

The Concluding Rites

The brief Concluding Rite sends the people forth to put into effect in their daily lives the Mystery of Christ's Death and Resurrection and the unity in Christ which they have celebrated. Their mission is to witness to Christ in the world and to bring the Gospel to the poor.

Any brief announcements to the people may follow here, but are not a formal part of the liturgy. Some priests may elect not to include pulpit announcements, some do. Then the dismissal takes place. Sometimes this takes a more elaborate form than that given below.

Blessing

This is the culmination of the entire Mass. The time when united in the Eucharist, the entire church is given the commission to take their faith from this Holy place and spread it throughout the world as Christ taught us.

The Priest, therefore says for the fourth time:

The Lord be with you.

The people reply:

And with your spirit.

The Priest blesses the people, saying:

**May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.**

As all perform the sign of the cross.

The people reply:

Amen.

Dismissal

Then the Deacon, or the Priest himself, says:

Either:

Go forth, the Mass is ended.

Isaiah 55:12

¹² Yes, in joy you shall go forth, in peace you shall be brought home; Mountains and hills shall break out in song before you, all trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Or:

Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

Mark 16:15

¹⁵ He said to them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.

Or:

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

2 Timothy, 4:1-5

¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingly power: ² proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching. ³ For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine but, following their own desires and insatiable curiosity, will accumulate teachers ⁴ and will stop listening to the truth and will be diverted to myths. ⁵ But you, be self-possessed in all circumstances; put up with hardship; perform the work of an evangelist; fulfill your ministry.

Or:

Go in peace.

Luke 2:29

²⁹ "Now, Master, you may let your servant go in peace, according to your word,

The people reply:

Thanks be to God.

1 Corinthians 15:57

⁵⁷ But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 9:15

¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

In our example above there are references to 98 chapters and 112 verses in the Catholic Mass!

As you can see, every word spoken, every prayer raised to heaven, every tradition, rite, ceremony and sacrament of the Mass come directly from the scriptures. There are indeed many more than this that can be found to support the content of the entire Mass and of course, those numbers will vary depending on the season, the feast or the special Mass. The Easter Vigil contains seven sets of scripture readings as well as the sacraments of confirmation and baptism!

Know that from the beginning of the Church, the Mass, the Church itself rose from the prophesy of the covenants of the Old Testament to be fulfilled by the Covenants of the New Testament, the Word of God, the Son who became man, humbled himself to take on our humanity to redeem us from our sin

Luke 2:51

⁵¹ *He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother **kept all these things in her heart.***

Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Mass of all ages

1345 As early as the second century we have the witness of St. Justin Martyr for the basic lines of the order of the Eucharistic celebration. They have stayed the same until our own day for all the great liturgical families. St. Justin wrote to the pagan emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161) around the year 155, explaining what Christians did:

On the day we call the day of the sun, all who dwell in the city or country gather in the same place.

The memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read, as much as time permits.

When the reader has finished, he who presides over those gathered admonishes and challenges them to imitate these beautiful things.

Then we all rise together and offer prayers* for ourselves . . .and for all others, wherever they may be, so that we may be found righteous by our life and actions, and faithful to the commandments, so as to obtain eternal salvation.

When the prayers are concluded we exchange the kiss.

Then someone brings bread and a cup of water and wine mixed together to him who presides over the brethren.

He takes them and offers praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and for a considerable time he gives thanks (in Greek: eucharistian) that we have been judged worthy of these gifts.

When he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all present give voice to an acclamation by saying: 'Amen.'

When he who presides has given thanks and the people have responded, those whom we call deacons give to those present the "eucharisted" bread, wine and water and take them to those who are absent.¹⁷¹

1346 The liturgy of the Eucharist unfolds according to a fundamental structure which has been preserved throughout the centuries down to our own day. It displays two great parts that form a fundamental unity:

- the gathering, the liturgy of the Word, with readings, homily and general intercessions;
- the liturgy of the Eucharist, with the presentation of the bread and wine, the consecratory thanksgiving, and communion.

The liturgy of the Word and liturgy of the Eucharist together form "one single act of worship";¹⁷² the Eucharistic table set for us is the table both of the Word of God and of the Body of the Lord.¹⁷³

1347 Is this not the same movement as the Paschal meal of the risen Jesus with his disciples? Walking with them he explained the Scriptures to them; sitting with them at table "he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them."¹⁷⁴

1348 *All gather together.* Christians come together in one place for the Eucharistic assembly. At its head is Christ himself, the principal agent of the Eucharist. He is high priest of the New Covenant; it is he himself who presides invisibly over every Eucharistic celebration. It is in representing him that the bishop or priest acting *in the person of Christ the head (in persona Christi capitis)* presides over the assembly, speaks after the readings, receives the offerings, and says the Eucharistic Prayer. All have their own active parts to play in the celebration, each in his own way: readers, those who bring up the offerings, those who give communion, and the whole people whose "Amen" manifests their participation.

1349 The *Liturgy of the Word* includes "the writings of the prophets," that is, the Old Testament, and "the memoirs of the apostles" (their letters and the Gospels). After the homily, which is an exhortation to accept this Word as what it truly is, the Word of God,¹⁷⁵ and to put it into practice, come the intercessions for all men, according to the Apostle's words: "I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings, and all who are in high positions."¹⁷⁶

1350 The *presentation of the offerings* (the Offertory). Then, sometimes in procession, the bread and wine are brought to the altar; they will be offered by the priest in the name of Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice in which they will become his body and blood. It is the very action of Christ at the Last Supper - "taking the bread and a cup." "The Church alone offers this pure oblation to the Creator, when she offers what comes forth from his creation with thanksgiving."¹⁷⁷ The presentation of the offerings at the altar takes up the gesture of Melchizedek and commits the Creator's gifts into the hands of Christ who, in his sacrifice, brings to perfection all human attempts to offer sacrifices.

1351 From the very beginning Christians have brought, along with the bread and wine for the Eucharist, gifts to share with those in need. This custom of the *collection*, ever appropriate, is inspired by the example of Christ who became poor to make us rich:¹⁷⁸

Those who are well off, and who are also willing, give as each chooses. What is gathered is given to him who presides to assist orphans and widows, those whom illness or any other cause has deprived of resources, prisoners, immigrants and, in a word, all who are in need.¹⁷⁹

1352 The *anaphora*: with the Eucharistic Prayer - the prayer of thanksgiving and consecration - we come to the heart and summit of the celebration:

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 that the Church in heaven, the angels and all the saints, sing to the thrice-holy God.

1353 In the *epiclesis*, the Church asks the Father to send his Holy Spirit (or the power of his blessing¹⁸⁰) 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 (some liturgical traditions put the epiclesis after the anamnesis).

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.

1354 In the *anamnesis* that follows, 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.

In the *intercessions*, 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 pastors of the Church, the Pope, the diocesan bishop, his presbyterium and his deacons, and all the bishops of the whole world together with their Churches.

1355 In the communion, preceded by the Lord's prayer and the breaking of the bread, the faithful receive "the bread of heaven" and "the cup of salvation," the body and blood of Christ who offered himself "for the life of the world":¹⁸¹

Because this bread and wine have been made Eucharist ("eucharisted," according to an ancient expression), "we call this food *Eucharist*, and no one may take part in it unless he believes that what we teach is true, has received baptism for the forgiveness of sins and new birth, and lives in keeping with what Christ taught."¹⁸²

V. THE SACRAMENTAL SACRIFICE THANKSGIVING, MEMORIAL, PRESENCE

1356 If from the beginning Christians have celebrated the Eucharist and in a form whose substance has not changed despite the great diversity of times and liturgies, it is because we know ourselves to be bound by the command the Lord gave on the eve of his Passion: "Do this in remembrance of me."¹⁸³

1357 We carry out this command of the Lord by celebrating the *memorial of his sacrifice*. In so doing, *we offer to the Father* what he has himself given us: the gifts of his creation, bread and wine which, by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the words of Christ, have become the body and blood of Christ. Christ is thus really and mysteriously made *present*.

1358 We must therefore consider the Eucharist as:

- thanksgiving and praise to the *Father*;
- the sacrificial memorial of *Christ* and his Body;
- the presence of Christ by the power of his word and of his *Spirit*.

Thanksgiving and praise to the Father

1359 The Eucharist, the sacrament of our salvation accomplished by Christ on the cross, is also a sacrifice of praise in thanksgiving for the work of creation. In the Eucharistic sacrifice the whole of creation loved by God is presented to the Father through the death and the Resurrection of Christ. Through Christ the Church can offer the sacrifice of praise in thanksgiving for all that God has made good, beautiful, and just in creation and in humanity.

1360 The Eucharist is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Father, a blessing by which the Church expresses her gratitude to God for all his benefits, for all that he has accomplished through creation, redemption, and sanctification. Eucharist means first of all "thanksgiving."

1361 The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of praise by which the Church sings the glory of God in the name of all creation. This sacrifice of praise is possible only through Christ: he unites the faithful to his person, to his praise, and to his intercession, so that the sacrifice of praise to the Father is offered *through* Christ and *with* him, to be accepted *in* him.

The sacrificial memorial of Christ and of his Body, the Church

1362 The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover, the making present and the sacramental offering of his unique sacrifice, in the liturgy of the Church which is his Body. In all the Eucharistic Prayers we find after the words of institution a prayer called the *anamnesis* or memorial.

1363 In the sense of Sacred Scripture the *memorial* is not merely the recollection of past events but the proclamation of the mighty works wrought by God for men.¹⁸⁴ In the liturgical celebration of these events, they become in a certain way present and real. This is how Israel understands its liberation from Egypt: every time Passover is celebrated, the Exodus events are made present to the memory of believers so that they may conform their lives to them.

1364 In the New Testament, the memorial takes on new meaning. When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ's Passover, and it is made present the sacrifice Christ offered once for all on the cross remains ever present.¹⁸⁵ "As often as the sacrifice of the Cross by which 'Christ our Pasch has been sacrificed' is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried out."¹⁸⁶

1365 Because it is the memorial of Christ's Passover, the Eucharist is also a sacrifice. The sacrificial character of the Eucharist is manifested in the very words of institution: "This is my body which is given for you" and "This cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my blood."¹⁸⁷ In the Eucharist Christ gives us the very body which he gave up for us on the cross, the very blood which he "poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."¹⁸⁸

1366 The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it *re-presents* (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its *memorial* and because it *applies* its fruit:

[Christ], our Lord and God, was once and for all to offer himself to God the Father by his death on the altar of the cross, to accomplish there an everlasting redemption. But because his priesthood was not to end with his death, at the Last Supper "on the night when he was betrayed," [he wanted] to leave to his beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice (as the nature of man demands) by which the bloody sacrifice which he was to accomplish once for all on the cross would be re-presented, its memory perpetuated until the end of the world, and its salutary power be applied to the forgiveness of the sins we daily commit.¹⁸⁹

1367 The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are *one single sacrifice*: "The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different." "And since in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same

Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner. . . this sacrifice is truly propitiatory."¹⁹⁰

1368 *The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church.* The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. With him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She unites herself to his intercession with the Father for all men. In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value. Christ's sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering.

In the catacombs the Church is often represented as a woman in prayer, arms outstretched in the praying position. Like Christ who stretched out his arms on the cross, through him, with him, and in him, she offers herself and intercedes for all men.

1369 *The whole Church is united with the offering and intercession of Christ.* Since he has the ministry of Peter in the Church, the *Pope* is associated with every celebration of the Eucharist, wherein he is named as the sign and servant of the unity of the universal Church. The *bishop* of the place is always responsible for the Eucharist, even when a *priest* presides; the bishop's name is mentioned to signify his presidency over the particular Church, in the midst of his presbyterium and with the assistance of *deacons*. The community intercedes also for all ministers who, for it and with it, offer the Eucharistic sacrifice:

Let only that Eucharist be regarded as legitimate, which is celebrated under [the presidency of] the bishop or him to whom he has entrusted it.¹⁹¹

Through the ministry of priests the spiritual sacrifice of the faithful is completed in union with the sacrifice of Christ the only Mediator, which in the Eucharist is offered through the priests' hands in the name of the whole Church in an unbloody and sacramental manner until the Lord himself comes.¹⁹²

1370 To the offering of Christ are united not only the members still here on earth, but also those already *in the glory of heaven*. In communion with and commemorating the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints, the Church offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. In the Eucharist the Church is as it were at the foot of the cross with Mary, united with the offering and intercession of Christ.

1371 The Eucharistic sacrifice is also offered for *the faithful departed* who "have died in Christ but are not yet wholly purified,"¹⁹³ so that they may be able to enter into the light and peace of Christ:

Put this body anywhere! Don't trouble yourselves about it! I simply ask you to remember me at the Lord's altar wherever you are.¹⁹⁴

Then, we pray [in the anaphora] for the holy fathers and bishops who have fallen asleep, and in general for all who have fallen asleep before us, in the belief that it is a great benefit to the souls on whose behalf the supplication is offered, while the holy and tremendous Victim is present. . . . By offering to God our supplications for those who have fallen asleep, if they have sinned, we . . . offer Christ sacrificed for the sins of all, and so render favorable, for them and for us, the God who loves man.¹⁹⁵

1372 St. Augustine admirably summed up this doctrine that moves us to an ever more complete participation in our Redeemer's sacrifice which we celebrate in the Eucharist:

This wholly redeemed city, the assembly and society of the saints, is offered to God as a universal sacrifice by the high priest who in the form of a slave went so far as to offer himself for us in his Passion, to make us the Body of so great a head. . . . Such is the sacrifice of Christians: "we who are many are one Body in Christ" The Church continues to reproduce this sacrifice in the sacrament of the altar so well-known to believers wherein it is evident to them that in what she offers she herself is offered.¹⁹⁶

The presence of Christ by the power of his word and the Holy Spirit

1373 "Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us," is present in many ways to his Church:¹⁹⁷ in his word, in his Church's prayer, "where two or three are gathered in my name,"¹⁹⁹ in the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned,¹⁹⁹ in the sacraments of which he is the author, in the sacrifice of the Mass, and in the person of the minister. But "he is present . . . most *especially in the Eucharistic species*."²⁰⁰

1374 The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend."²⁰¹ In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, *the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained*."²⁰² "This presence is called 'real' - by which is not intended to exclude the other types of presence as if they could not be 'real' too, but because it is presence in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a *substantial* presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present."²⁰³

1375 It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament. The Church Fathers strongly affirmed the faith of the Church in the efficacy of the Word of Christ and of the action of the Holy Spirit to bring about this conversion. Thus St. John Chrysostom declares:

It is not man that causes the things offered to become the Body and Blood of Christ, but he who was crucified for us, Christ himself. The priest, in the role of Christ, pronounces these words, but their power and grace are God's. This is my body, he says. This word transforms the things offered.²⁰⁴

And St. Ambrose says about this conversion:

Be convinced that this is not what nature has formed, but what the blessing has consecrated. The power of the blessing prevails over that of nature, because by the blessing nature itself is changed. . . . Could not Christ's word, which can make from nothing what did not exist, change existing things into what they were not before? It is no less a feat to give things their original nature than to change their nature.²⁰⁵

1376 The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: "Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation."²⁰⁶

1377 The Eucharistic presence of Christ begins at the moment of the consecration and endures as long as the Eucharistic species subsist. Christ is present whole and entire in each of the species and whole and entire in each of their parts, in such a way that the breaking of the bread does not divide Christ.²⁰⁷

1378 *Worship of the Eucharist.* In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. "The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession."²⁰⁸

1379 The tabernacle was first intended for the reservation of the Eucharist in a worthy place so that it could be brought to the sick and those absent outside of Mass. As faith in the real presence of Christ in his Eucharist deepened, the Church became conscious of the meaning of silent adoration of the Lord present under the Eucharistic species. It is for this reason that the tabernacle should be located in an especially worthy place in the church and should be constructed in such a way that it emphasizes and manifests the truth of the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

1380 It is highly fitting that Christ should have wanted to remain present to his Church in this unique way. Since Christ was about to take his departure from his own in his visible form, he wanted to give us his sacramental presence; since he was about to offer himself on the cross to save us, he wanted us to have the memorial of the love with which he loved us "to the end,"²⁰⁹ even to the giving of his life. In his Eucharistic presence he remains mysteriously in our midst as the one who loved us and gave himself up for us,²¹⁰ and he remains under signs that express and communicate this love:

The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic worship. Jesus awaits us in this sacrament of love. Let us not refuse the time to go to meet him in adoration, in contemplation full of faith, and open to making amends for the serious offenses and crimes of the world. Let our adoration never cease.²¹¹

1381 "That in this sacrament are the true Body of Christ and his true Blood is something that 'cannot be apprehended by the senses,' says St. Thomas, 'but *only by faith*, which relies on divine authority.' For this reason, in a commentary on *Luke 22:19* ('This is my body which is given for you. '), St. Cyril says: 'Do not doubt whether this is true, but rather receive the words of the Savior in faith, for since he is the truth, he cannot lie.'²¹²

Godhead here in hiding, whom I do adore
Masked by these bare shadows, shape and nothing more,
See, Lord, at thy service low lies here a heart
Lost, all lost in wonder at the God thou art.

Seeing, touching, tasting are in thee deceived;
How says trusty hearing? that shall be believed;
What God's Son has told me, take for truth I do;
Truth himself speaks truly or there's nothing true.²¹³

VI. THE PASCHAL BANQUET

1382 The Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord's body and blood. But the celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice is wholly directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ through communion. To receive communion is to receive Christ himself who has offered himself for us.

1383 *The altar*, around which the Church is gathered in the celebration of the Eucharist, represents the two aspects of the same mystery: the altar of the sacrifice and the table of the Lord. This is all the more so since the Christian altar is the symbol of Christ himself, present in the midst of the assembly of his faithful, both as the victim offered for our reconciliation and as food from heaven who is giving himself to us. "For what is the altar of Christ if not the image of the Body of Christ?"²¹⁴ asks St. Ambrose. He says elsewhere, "The altar represents the body [of Christ] and the Body of Christ is on the altar."²¹⁵ The liturgy expresses this unity of sacrifice and communion in many prayers. Thus the Roman Church prays in its anaphora:

We entreat you, almighty God,
that by the hands of your holy Angel
this offering may be borne to your altar in heaven
in the sight of your divine majesty,
so that as we receive in communion at this altar
the most holy Body and Blood of your Son,
we may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace.²¹⁶

"Take this and eat it, all of you": communion

1384 The Lord addresses an invitation to us, urging us to receive him in the sacrament of the Eucharist: "Truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."²¹⁷

1385 To respond to this invitation we must *prepare ourselves* for so great and so holy a moment. St. Paul urges us to examine our conscience: "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself."²¹⁸ Anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before coming to communion.

1386 Before so great a sacrament, the faithful can only echo humbly and with ardent faith the words of the Centurion: "*Domine, non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum meum, sed tantum dic verbo, et sanabitur anima mea*" ("Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul will be healed.").²¹⁹ And in the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom the faithful pray in the same spirit:

O Son of God, bring me into communion today with your mystical supper. I shall not tell your enemies the secret, nor kiss you with Judas' kiss. But like the good thief I cry, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."

1387 To prepare for worthy reception of this sacrament, the faithful should observe the fast required in their Church.²²⁰ Bodily demeanor (gestures, clothing) ought to convey the respect, solemnity, and joy of this moment when Christ becomes our guest.

1388 It is in keeping with the very meaning of the Eucharist that the faithful, if they have the required dispositions,²²¹ *receive communion when* they participate in the Mass.²²² As the Second Vatican Council says: "That more perfect form of participation in the Mass whereby the faithful, after the priest's communion, receive the Lord's Body from the same sacrifice, is warmly recommended."²²³

1389 The Church obliges the faithful to take part in the Divine Liturgy on Sundays and feast days and, prepared by the sacrament of Reconciliation, to receive the Eucharist at least once a year, if possible during the Easter season.²²⁴ But the Church strongly encourages the faithful to receive the holy Eucharist on Sundays and feast days, or more often still, even daily.

1390 Since Christ is sacramentally present under each of the species, communion under the species of bread alone makes it possible to receive all the fruit of Eucharistic grace. For pastoral reasons this manner of receiving communion has been legitimately established as the most common form in the Latin rite. But "the sign of communion is more complete when given under both kinds, since in that form the sign of the Eucharistic meal appears more clearly."²²⁵ This is the usual form of receiving communion in the Eastern rites.

The fruits of Holy Communion

1391 *Holy Communion augments our union with Christ.* The principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus. Indeed, the Lord said: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him."²²⁶ Life in Christ has its foundation in the Eucharistic banquet: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me."²²⁷

On the feasts of the Lord, when the faithful receive the Body of the Son, they proclaim to one another the Good News that the first fruits of life have been given, as when the angel said to Mary Magdalene, "Christ is risen!" Now too are life and resurrection conferred on whoever receives Christ.²²⁸

1392 What material food produces in our bodily life, Holy Communion wonderfully achieves in our spiritual life. Communion with the flesh of the risen Christ, a flesh "given life and giving life through the Holy Spirit,"²²⁹ preserves, increases, and renews the life of grace received at Baptism. This growth in Christian life needs the nourishment of Eucharistic Communion, the bread for our pilgrimage until the moment of death, when it will be given to us as viaticum.

1393 *Holy Communion separates us from sin.* The body of Christ we receive in Holy Communion is "given up for us," and the blood we drink "shed for the many for the forgiveness of sins." For this reason the Eucharist cannot unite us to Christ without at the same time cleansing us from past sins and preserving us from future sins:

For as often as we eat this bread and drink the cup, we proclaim the death of the Lord. If we proclaim the Lord's death, we proclaim the forgiveness of sins. If, as often as his blood is poured out, it is poured for the forgiveness of sins, I should always receive it, so that it may always forgive my sins. Because I always sin, I should always have a remedy.²³⁰

1394 As bodily nourishment restores lost strength, so the Eucharist strengthens our charity, which tends to be weakened in daily life; and this living charity *wipes away venial sins*.²³¹ By giving himself to us Christ revives our love and enables us to break our disordered attachments to creatures and root ourselves in him:

Since Christ died for us out of love, when we celebrate the memorial of his death at the moment of sacrifice we ask that love may be granted to us by the coming of the Holy Spirit. We humbly pray that in the strength of this love by which Christ willed to die for us, we, by receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, may be able to consider the world as crucified for us, and to be ourselves as crucified to the world. . . . Having received the gift of love, let us die to sin and live for God.²³²

1395 By the same charity that it enkindles in us, the Eucharist *preserves us from future mortal sins*. The more we share the life of Christ and progress in his friendship, the more difficult it is to break away from him by mortal sin. The Eucharist is not ordered to the forgiveness of mortal sins - that is proper to the sacrament of Reconciliation. The Eucharist is properly the sacrament of those who are in full communion with the Church.

1396 *The unity of the Mystical Body: the Eucharist makes the Church*. Those who receive the Eucharist are united more closely to Christ. Through it Christ unites them to all the faithful in one body - the Church. Communion renews, strengthens, and deepens this incorporation into the Church, already achieved by Baptism. In Baptism we have been called to form but one body.²³³ The Eucharist fulfills this call: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."²³⁴

If you are the body and members of Christ, then it is your sacrament that is placed on the table of the Lord; it is your sacrament that you receive. To that which you are you respond "Amen" ("yes, it is true!") and by responding to it you assent to it. For you hear the words, "the Body of Christ" and respond "Amen." Be then a member of the Body of Christ that your *Amen* may be true.²³⁵

1397 *The Eucharist commits us to the poor*. To receive in truth the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognize Christ in the poorest, his brethren:

You have tasted the Blood of the Lord, yet you do not recognize your brother, . . . You dishonor this table when you do not judge worthy of sharing your food someone judged worthy to take part in this meal. . . . God freed you from all your sins and invited you here, but you have not become more merciful.²³⁶

1398 *The Eucharist and the unity of Christians*. Before the greatness of this mystery St. Augustine exclaims, "*O sacrament of devotion! O sign of unity! O bond of charity!*"²³⁷ The more painful the experience of the divisions in the Church which break the common participation in the table of the Lord, the more urgent are our prayers to the Lord that the time of complete unity among all who believe in him may return.

1399 The Eastern churches that are not in full communion with the Catholic Church celebrate the Eucharist with great love. "These Churches, although separated from us, yet possess true sacraments, above all - by apostolic succession - the priesthood and the Eucharist, whereby they are still joined to us in closest intimacy." A certain communion *in sacris*, and so in the Eucharist, "given suitable circumstances and the approval of Church authority, is not merely possible but is encouraged."²³⁸

1400 Ecclesial communities derived from the Reformation and separated from the Catholic Church, "have not preserved the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Holy Orders."²³⁹ It is for this reason that, for the Catholic Church, Eucharistic intercommunion with these communities is not possible. However these ecclesial communities, "when they commemorate the Lord's death and resurrection in the Holy Supper . . . profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and await his coming in glory."²⁴⁰

1401 When, in the Ordinary's judgment, a grave necessity arises, Catholic ministers may give the sacraments of Eucharist, Penance, and Anointing of the Sick to other Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church, who ask for them of their own will, provided they give evidence of holding the Catholic faith regarding these sacraments and possess the required dispositions.²⁴¹

VII. THE EUCHARIST - "PLEDGE OF THE GLORY TO COME"

1402 In an ancient prayer the Church acclaim the mystery of the Eucharist: "O sacred banquet in which Christ is received as food, the memory of his Passion is renewed, the soul is filled with grace and a pledge of the life to come is given to us." If the Eucharist is the memorial of the Passover of the Lord Jesus, if by our communion at the altar we are filled "with every heavenly blessing and grace,"²⁴² then the Eucharist is also an anticipation of the heavenly glory.

1403 At the Last Supper the Lord himself directed his disciples' attention toward the fulfillment of the Passover in the kingdom of God: "I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."²⁴³ Whenever the Church celebrates the Eucharist she remembers this promise and turns her gaze "to him who is to come." In her prayer she calls for his coming: "*Marana tha!*" "Come, Lord Jesus!"²⁴⁴ "May your grace come and this world pass away!"²⁴⁵

1404 The Church knows that the Lord comes even now in his Eucharist and that he is there in our midst. However, his presence is veiled. Therefore we celebrate the Eucharist "awaiting the blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ,"²⁴⁶ asking "to share in your glory when every tear will be wiped away. On that day we shall see you, our God, as you are. We shall become like you and praise you for ever through Christ our Lord."²⁴⁷

1405 There is no surer pledge or dearer sign of this great hope in the new heavens and new earth "in which righteousness dwells,"²⁴⁸ than the Eucharist. Every time this mystery is celebrated, "the work of our redemption is carried on" and we "break the one bread that provides the medicine of immortality, the antidote for death, and the food that makes us live for ever in Jesus Christ."²⁴⁹

IN BRIEF

1406 Jesus said: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; . . . he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and . . . abides in me, and I in him" (*Jn* 6:51, 54, 56).

1407 The Eucharist is the heart and the summit of the Church's life, for in it Christ associates his Church and all her members with his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all on the cross to his Father; by this sacrifice he pours out the graces of salvation on his Body which is the Church.

1408 The Eucharistic celebration always includes: the proclamation of the Word of God; thanksgiving to God the Father for all his benefits, above all the gift of his Son; the consecration of bread and wine; and participation in the liturgical banquet by receiving the Lord's body and blood. These elements constitute one single act of worship.

1409 The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover, that is, of the work of salvation accomplished by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, a work made present by the liturgical action.

1410 It is Christ himself, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant who, acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. And it is the same Christ, really present under the species of bread and wine, who is the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

1411 Only validly ordained priests can preside at the Eucharist and consecrate the bread and the wine so that they become the Body and Blood of the Lord.

1412 The essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper: "This is my body which will be given up for you. . . . This is the cup of my blood. . . ."

1413 By the consecration the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is brought about. Under the consecrated species of bread and wine Christ himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner: his Body and his Blood, with his soul and his divinity (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1640; 1651).

1414 As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God.

1415 Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance.

1416 Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.

1417 The Church warmly recommends that the faithful receive Holy Communion when they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist; she obliges them to do so at least once a year.

1418 Because Christ himself is present in the sacrament of the altar, he is to be honored with the worship of adoration. "To visit the Blessed Sacrament is . . . a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord" (Paul VI, *MF* 66).

1419 Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints.