

The Meaning of the Mass

St. Thomas More Parish RCIA

20 Sept 2007

What is the Mass?

A Historical Overview

Vocabulary

☹ Liturgy

- Greek: a deliberate public work for the good of the community
- The work of the people
- New Testament: worship (of God)
- The official public prayer of the Church

☹ 'Mass'

- Ite, missa est!

☹ Ritual

- A formal series of actions performed according to a set order

The Passover Meal

⊗ Jewish Feast

- Exodus 12-13

⊗ Remembrance



The Last Supper

- ⊕ A Passover meal
- ⊕ Christ's gift of self
- ⊕ Mission to service



The Paschal Mystery

- ⊕ The Lamb of God
- ⊕ Christ's sacrifice



The Road to Emmaus

🕒 Luke 24.13-25

- “...they were conversing about all the things that had occurred...”
- “...beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures...”
- “at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him...”
- “ ‘Were not our hearts burning (within us) while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?’ ”



A Closer Look at the Mass

The Elements of the Mass

⊕ Divine

- i.e.: Eucharistic Prayer, person of the minister, Scripture, 'matter'...
- Cannot change

⊕ Human

- i.e.: Vestments, language, Scripture selection...
- Can be adapted by the Church over time

Movements of the Mass

- ⊕ Opening Rites
- ⊕ Liturgy of the Word
- ⊕ Liturgy of the Eucharist
- ⊕ Concluding Rites

Opening Rites

☩ Sign of the Cross

- We acknowledge our Baptism /priestly character

☩ Greeting

☩ Penitential Rite

- We acknowledge we are sinners

☩ Kyrie

- Asking God for mercy

☩ Gloria (except Advent and Lent)

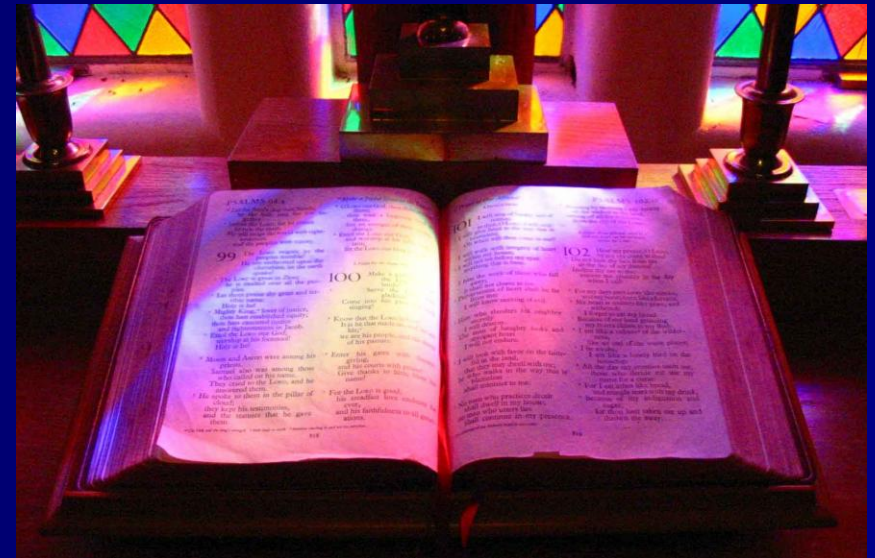
- Singing God's praise

☩ Opening Prayer



Liturgy of the Word

- ☩ The Word of God
- ☩ Recounting salvation history
- ☩ Prepares us for the Eucharist
- ☩ 1st Reading
 - Old Testament (Easter: Acts)
- ☩ Psalm
- ☩ 2nd Reading
 - Epistles (Letters), Acts, Revelation



Liturgy of the Word (cont.)

⊗ Gospel

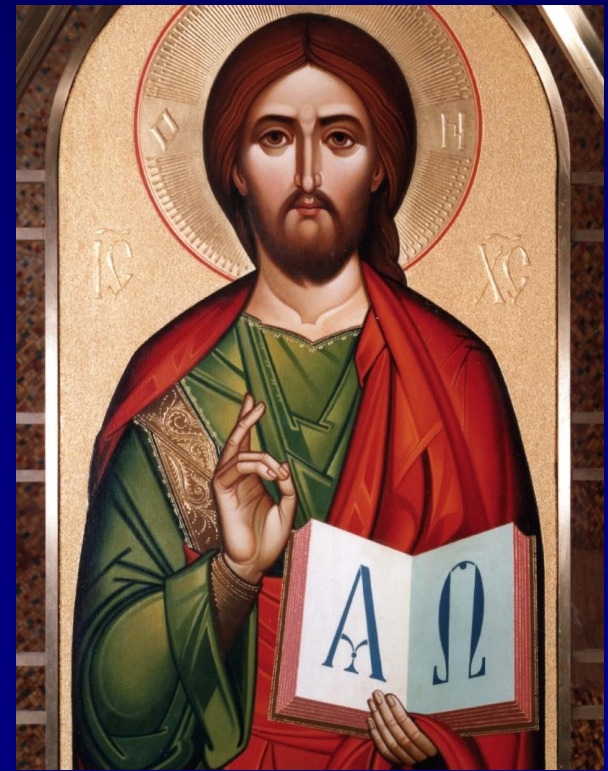
- Alleluia
- Life and words of Jesus
- A (Matthew), B (Mark), C (Luke)

⊗ Homily

- Interpretation of Scripture
- Priest or Deacon

⊗ 'Response'

- Creed
- Prayers of the Faithful



Liturgy of the Eucharist

⊕ Preparation of the Gifts

- The community offers
- Jewish origins
- Wine with water
- Washing of hands

⊕ Eucharistic Prayer

- Holy, Holy (Sanctus)
- Memorial Acclamation
- Great Amen

⊕ Communion Rite

Communion Rite

- ☩ The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)
- ☩ The Sign of Peace
- ☩ The Lamb of God
- ☩ "Lord, I am not worthy..."
- ☩ Communion
 - Climax and aim of Mass
 - A Taste of Heaven
 - Union with Christ
 - Union with each other (through Christ)



The Eucharistic Prayer

- ⊗ The heart of the Mass
- ⊗ Eucharistia
 - *Thanksgiving* (Greek)
- ⊗ Makes present Christ's sacrifice on the Cross



The Eucharistic Prayer (cont.)

☩ Preface

- Thanksgiving

☩ Epiclesis

- Invocation of the Holy Spirit

☩ Institution Narrative

- “Before he was given up to death...”
- From bread and wine to Body and Blood
- Transubstantiation

The Eucharistic Prayer (cont.)

☩ Memorial Acclamation

- Proclaiming the Paschal Mystery
- “Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again”

☩ Intercessions

- Prayers *for* the Church
- Prayers *from* the saints

☩ Doxology

- Words of glory to the Trinity (Father, Son, Spirit)

Concluding Rite

- ⊕ Prayer after Communion
- ⊕ Blessing
- ⊕ Dismissal
 - Mission

Effects of the Mass/Communion

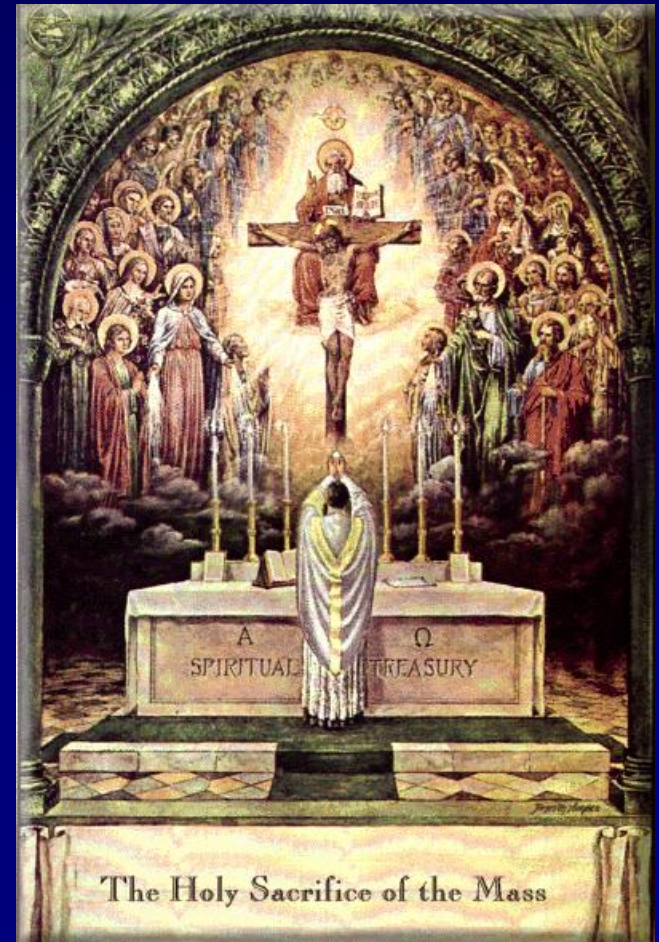
⊗ Proclamation of the Faith

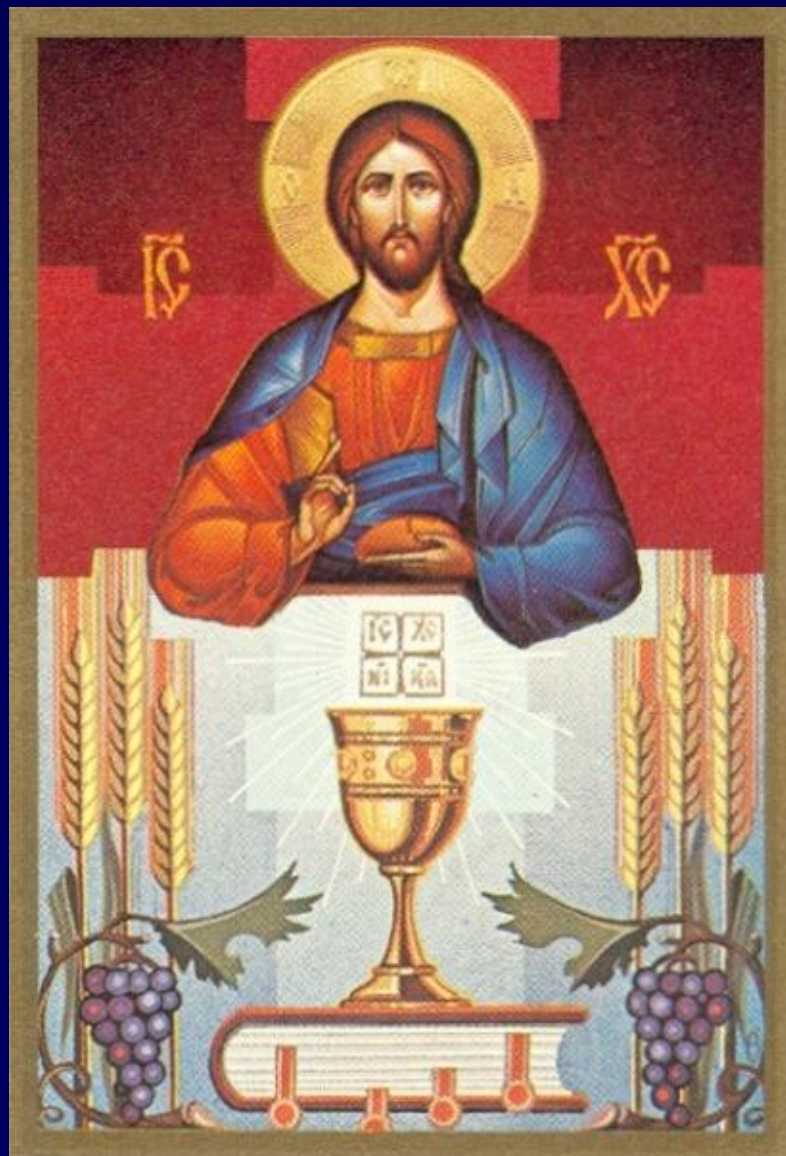
⊗ Union

- with Christ
- with the Church
 - The pope and bishop
 - The other faithful
 - The saints

⊗ Forgiveness of (venial) sin

⊗ Grace and sanctification





Questions?