



Our Eucharistic Journey

A collection of reflections and
meditations on the
Liturgy of the Eucharist

National Council of
Catholic Women

BY THE SPIRITUALITY COMMISSION



Ephphatha! Be Opened!

We invite you to join us in prayer and reflection as we partake in a Eucharistic journey. We hope this journal will help you to be open to the loving graces of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

1. Mary says yes to carrying Christ within her. Each time we accept the Eucharist, we say yes to carrying Christ within us. Doing so, we also say yes to trusting our Lord and following his will.
2. The Holy Eucharist strengthens our union with Christ, separates us from sin, and commits us to the poor. We are united as the body of the Church. In this unity we are called to help each other, especially the poorest among us.
3. Our Lord gives his entire self to each of us in the Eucharist. Are we willing to give ourselves to Christ by being more Christ-like in our daily living? For Christ's presence to increase in our lives, we must decrease.



Reflection

*Have you ever pondered
how you carry Christ
within you when you
receive Holy
Communion?*

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

4. The altar represents "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...the victim offered for our reconciliation and as food from heaven who is giving himself to us." 1.



5. For this sacrifice the altar is prepared.

6. How was Mary prepared--she was born without sin. Consider the preparations you make before you receive the Eucharist--do you go to confession, practice penance?

Reflection

*Make time for the
Sacrament of
Reconciliation.*

Your Thoughts & Reflections

Christ humbles himself to be present in the tiniest grain of the sacred host. How do we humble ourselves to receive our Lord?

Notes:

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

1. The Offertory: The gifts of bread and wine are brought to the priest by the people who act in the name of entire community. The gifts will be "offered by the priest in the name of Christ in the Eucharistic sacrifice in which they become His body and blood." 2. As we present our gifts, we present ourselves.

2. Standing at the altar, the priest prays first with the bread that it will become for us the bread of life. We reply: "Blessed be God for ever." Then mixing water and wine into the chalice, the priest prays that the wine we offer will become our spiritual drink. We reply: "Blessed be God for ever."

3. Washing of hands: The priest washes his hands in ritual purification before offering sacrifice. The priest says: "Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity/ and cleanse me from my sin." 3.



Reflection

"With humble spirit and contrite heart/ may we be accepted by you, O Lord,/ and may our sacrifice in your sight this day/ be pleasing to you, Lord God." [Roman Missal, 26]

Mary said yes to God's will in all humility. Are you humble and contrite when you present yourself to the Lord?

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

4. The priest calls on us to pray: "Pray, brethren,/ that my sacrifice and yours/ may be acceptable to God,/ the almighty Father." ⁴ This prayer underlines the participation of the whole community in the Eucharistic Offering.

5. Together we stand and say: "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." ⁵ The priest then says the Prayer over the Offerings and we acclaim: "Amen".

6. Here we are rising to the occasion in prayer, joining together--in unity with our Lord--not just for our own salvation but for the salvation of the whole Church.



Reflection

In the Eucharist Christ comes to us to become one with us for the sake of our salvation.

Your Thoughts & Reflections

How does your faith in our Eucharistic Lord help you find peace when the world is so hectic?

Notes:

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Eucharistic Prayer

1. The EUCHARISTIC PRAYER, also known as the Anaphora, which refers to the offering, is the central prayer of the Mass. It is the heart and summit of the celebration.⁶
2. The Eucharistic Prayer is made up of many parts: The Preface, Epiclesis, the Institution Narrative and Consecration, Anamnesis, Oblation, Intercessions, and final Doxology.
3. The Preface: We give thanks to the Lord. It is truly right and just, our duty and salvation, to give "thanks to the Father, through Christ in the Holy Spirit, for all his works: creation, redemption, and sanctification."⁷ We raise our voices in praise and sing the Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy).



Reflection

*To lift our voice in song,
we reach up toward
heaven to give our
heartfelt gratitude for
God's love and devotion,
like Mary in her
Magnificat*

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Eucharistic Prayer

4. The Epiclesis: Invoking the Holy Spirit over the bread and wine. The priest asks God "the Father to send his Holy Spirit (or the power of his blessing) on the bread and wine, so that by his power they may become the body and blood of Jesus Christ and so that those who take part in the Eucharist may be one body and one spirit"
5. Institution Narrative and Consecration: The consecration comes as the priest, speaking in the person of Christ, recites the words of Jesus over the bread and wine, which become the Body and Blood of our Savior. The priest follows Christ's actions at the Last Supper.
6. We proclaim the mystery of our faith. The words vary depending on the Eucharistic Prayer; if we believe then all that we do in our daily lives should prepare us for our salvation.



Reflection

The Holy Spirit came upon Mary at the Annunciation and the Spirit of the Lord shone through Mary at the Visitation. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Am I filled with the Holy Spirit?

Your Thoughts & Reflections

In what ways have you experienced God's presence in your daily living?

Notes:

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Eucharistic Prayer

1. The Anamnesis: The priest calls to mind the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ. The Church presents to the Father the offering of his Son, which reconciles us with Him. ⁷
2. Oblation: The Church offers the unblemished sacrificial Victim in the Holy Spirit to the Father. The Church's intention is that the faithful learn to offer their very selves, and through the mediation of Christ, be brought into unity with God and with each other.
3. Intercessions: The Church indicates that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the whole Church in heaven and on earth. ⁸



Reflection

On the night of Jesus' birth, the shepherds come to see their Savior. Mary and Joseph later present Jesus at the Temple. Do we believe in the presence of the Lord in the Holy Eucharist?

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Eucharistic Prayer

4. Doxology: In this prayer of praise, the priest lifts the chalice and the paten with the host and says:
"Through him, with him, and in him/
O God, almighty Father, in unity of
the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor
is yours, for ever and ever." [Roman
Missal, 98]



5. We acclaim a heartfelt "Amen!"
6. By the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is present and offered up in sacrifice to God the Father for the sake of our salvation. We see the greatness of God's love for each of us. So be it!

Reflection

Certainly Mary and Joseph gave thanks and praise when they found young Jesus in the Temple. How often do we give thanks to our Lord for all he has given us?

Your Thoughts & Reflections

What great joy there is in receiving Jesus in the Eucharist! In what ways can your joy welcome your brothers and sisters back to the Church?

Notes:

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Communion Rite

1. Those of the faithful, who receive the spiritual food of the Lord's Body and Blood, should be properly disposed. The fraction and other preparatory rites lead the faithful to Communion. At this moment in the Mass we stand and say at the Savior's command The Lord's Prayer.
2. At the conclusion of the prayer, the priest emphasizes our plea to deliver us from evil, grant us peace, and be free from sin and safe from all distress. Let us prepare ourselves for the "blessed hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ" as we recognize that without God we can do nothing. "For the kingdom/ the power and the glory are yours/ now and for ever." [Roman Missal, 125]
3. The priest prays for peace and unity; we reply: Amen. He extends the peace of the Lord and we say: "And with your spirit." [Roman Missal, 127] We then offer each other the Sign of Peace.



Reflection

We are called to be active participants in God's plan by following God's will. We make this promise each time we say the Lord's Prayer. Do we mean what we pray?

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Communion Rite

4. Fraction: In preparation for Communion, the bread is broken. The breaking of the bread underlines the sacrifice of the Lamb. The priest's host alone is broken.
5. Commingling: After breaking the bread, the priest places a small fragment of it in the chalice, signifying the unity of Christ's Body and Blood. "May this mingling of the Body and Blood/ of our Lord Jesus Christ/ bring eternal life to us who receive it." [Roman Missal, 129]
6. The Congregation recites or sings Agnus Dei. The priest quietly prays to Jesus to be freed from sin and every evil. He calls on Christ to keep him faithful to the Commandments and remain united with the Lord.



Reflection

*What must I do to be
worthy of receiving my
Lord in the Eucharist?
How do I present myself
to the Lord?*

Your Thoughts & Reflections

How do we extend the peace of our Lord to our neighbors?

Notes:

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Communion Rite

1. Communion: The priest genuflects, holds up the consecrated host slightly above the paten or chalice, and says: "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." [Roman Missal, 132]
2. We respond: "Lord, I am not worthy/ that you should enter under my roof/ but only say the word/ and my soul shall be healed." The priest quietly prays: "May the Body of Christ/ keep me safe for eternal life." [Roman Missal, 133] He then consumes the Body of Christ.
3. He takes the chalice and prays: "May the Blood of Christ/ keep me safe for eternal life." [Roman Missal 133] He then consumes the Blood of Christ.



Reflection

Do I truly believe in this miracle and accept God's grace as I take in the Holy Eucharist during Mass? How does this grace affect my body, mind, heart and soul?

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Communion Rite

4. We raise our voices in song. By uniting our voices, we express our spiritual union and gladness of heart.
5. In reverence we come forward and approach the priest or Eucharistic Minister to receive the Holy Eucharist. After receiving the Holy Eucharist, we say Amen, then return to our pews to kneel and pray.
6. The priest and deacon cleanse the vessels and clear the altar. The priest takes great care to clear any host fragments from his fingers over the paten. Not one speck of the host and not one drop of the Precious Blood are left. Christ is present in the Sacrament; every crumb and every drop remaining are consumed by the priest. The priest quietly prays: "What has passed our lips as food, O Lord/ may we possess in purity of heart,/ that what has been given to us in time/ may be our healing for eternity." [Roman Missal, 137]



Reflection

What has been given to us in the Holy Eucharist, we are meant to share through our faith, hope, and love.

MEDITATIONS

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Communion Rite

Let Us Pray

In conclusion, the Priest
says the Prayer After
Communion for the
congregation, "praying for
the fruits of the mystery"
[GIRM Chapter II, 89]
we just celebrated,
sharing the meaning of
what we have just
received.

We acclaim:

Amen.



Reflection

*Truly, we have
reason to be joyful.
May we always give
thanks and praise to
Heaven's Almighty
for the graces and
blessings we receive.
Let us go in peace to
love and serve
our Lord.*

Your Thoughts & Reflections

Jesus is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament! Take some time to write about any new ways He has revealed Himself to you.

Additional Notes

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18. Roman 137
19. GIRM Chapter 11, 89

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The National Council of Catholic Women acts through its members to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership, and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.



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