



A GUIDE TO OUR LITURGY



THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF
ST CLEMENT OF ROME

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INTRODUCTION

This brochure is a guide for those new and old among us explaining what we do in Church and why. Given that this country is primarily a Protestant country, few know that the way in which we worship at St. Clement's Church and the Episcopal Church is how 90% of Christians worship, and have worshiped for two thousand years – celebrating the Eucharist to a set form called a “Liturgy.” However, we certainly acknowledge that non-liturgical worship found in many Protestant congregations is also a valid manner in which to worship God.

The purpose of this guide is to assist in being comfortable during the celebration of the Liturgy which in itself is a sacred drama that tells a story. There are no right or wrong ways to respond. No one will look at you funny if you don't bow or make the Sign of the Cross at the same time as everyone else or at all for that matter.

The Sign of the Cross



THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

is an ancient form of devotion reminding us of our own baptism and as a response to a blessing given by a priest or bishop. One makes the Sign of the Cross by touching the forehead, then the midsection, then the left shoulder and then the right.

Our Eastern Orthodox brethren and sistren reverse the order of shoulders right to left. Either manner is acceptable. And, as with all forms of devotion, making the Sign of the Cross is optional and left up to personal preference.

THE USE OF INCENSE

Incense has been used in Jewish, Christian and other the worship of other Traditions since the beginning of time and symbolizes our prayers rising to heaven. Incense also has a pragmatic use. While forbidden in the very Early Church because of its association with the worship of the Roman Emperor, this soon changed. It was originally introduced into the Church for fumigatory purposes. Imagine 500 people whose diet consisted primarily of garlic and onions packed into an enclosed space and whose bathing practices were different than today. The incense covered the stench. In time, it was given a symbolic meaning as well as the practical. Here at St. Clement's Church, incense is used during the celebration of the Mass in several places. While it is not a heavy incense and doesn't have much of a cloying effect, if one is sensitive to scents, one might think about sitting near the back our outside isles of the Church.



SETTING THE STAGE

St. Clement's Church provides the stage on which the sacred drama of the Mass takes place. As with many Church buildings, it takes the form of a cross. The **Sanctuary** is the "holy of holies" because it is the place where the Altar is situated. To the left of the Altar is the Tabernacle in which the Blessed Sacrament is kept, or "reserved", so that Holy Communion can be administered outside Mass: for the sick and homebound, etc.. The lamp above the Tabernacle reminds us that Christ is Sacramentally present with us.

The **Choir** is the area where the Choir sits during the Liturgy. The organ console is also placed here from which the organist plays. The pipes for the organ are in a loft above each side of the Choir.

The **Ambo**, or pulpit, is the place from which the first part of Mass, the Liturgy of the Word, is proclaimed: the Lessons and the Sermon.

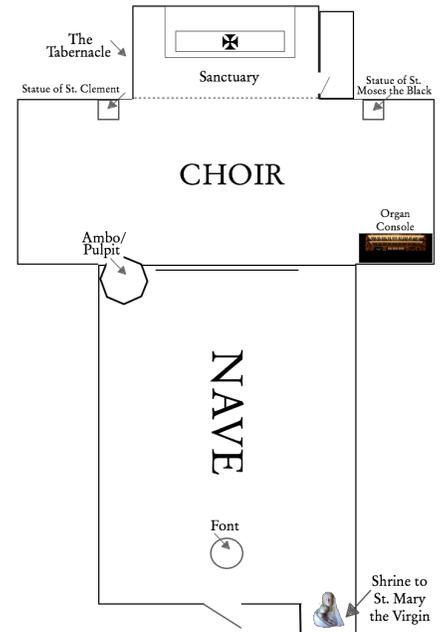
The **Nave** is the section of the Church provided for the Laity to sit. It's called "Nave" from the Latin word "navis" which means "ship." When looking at the ceiling, the Nave looks like the hull of a ship or an inverted boat. At the entrance of the Nave is the Font from which Holy Baptism is administered. It sits inside the door symbolizing Baptism as the entrance into the Christian Community and Faith. In the back of the Church is the shrine to the Blessed Virgin Mary. While we do not "worship" Mary, we venerate her as the Mother of God – Jesus – and ask her to pray for us. As the Mother of Jesus, she has great influence with God and her prayers for us are powerful. Statues of St. Clement of Rome, the patron of the Parish, and St. Moses the Black, an Egyptian saint from the 4th Century also adorn the Church as does St. Joseph in the back of the Church beside the elevator.

COSTUMES

Those taking part in the Liturgy wear special costumes called "Vestments," which are worn, not because the players in the drama are any better than the rest, but because they help us identify who the characters are and their functions.



The basic vestment is a long, white garment called an "alb," from the Latin, "alba" meaning "white." It is the vestment given to those newly baptized and could, in theory, be worn by all the baptized during the celebration of the Liturgy. The Priest as celebrant of the Mass, along with other ministers, wears the alb as the base vestment reminding him/her that Baptism is the primary Sacrament of ministry and the Sacrament on which his/her ordination is based.



The long, white garment worn over the black robe, called a “cassock,” is a variation on the alb developed in northern Europe in the middle ages to fit over heavy garments worn to keep people warm. The white “surplice” has long, pointed sleeves and may fall to the knees or closer to the feet. The cassock was the normal “street clothes” of the clergy until recent times.



Those who have been ordained, deacons and priest, wear a special insignia of their “order” called a “stole” which probably developed from a Roman military insignia. Deacons wear the stole over their left shoulder as a symbol of their role to call the people to prayer and to reflect to the Church the needs of the world, especially the poor. Priests wear the stole over both shoulders as a symbol of their participation with the Bishop of the fullness of the priesthood.



Both deacons and priests wear an outer garment: deacons, a “dalmatic” and priests, a “chasuble.” The dalmatic is shaped like a tunic or large tee-shirt and symbolizes the sacrifice of Christ in its cruciform shape. It reminds the deacon of her/his ministry to those who suffer. The chasuble is shaped like a large poncho. In ancient times, it was the outer overcoat worn by aristocratic Romans. In the very early Church, it was the common street wear of many, both men and women. As styles and needs changed, the chasuble took on a liturgical function of its own. The word “chasuble” means “little house” and symbolizes the charity and compassion of Christ. As with the dalmatic, the chasuble is only worn during the celebration of Mass. For the celebration of the other Sacraments, the priest and deacon wear the black cassock, white surplice and a stole.

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

COMMONLY CALLED “THE MASS”

The Eucharist is the primary act of Christian worship. It recalls the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples. Not long after the Resurrection, the Synagogue Liturgy was added to the beginning of the rite with readings from Scripture and an exhortation by the celebrant, usually the Bishop. In time, the Eucharist took on a stylized form of that recollection.

The term “Mass” comes from the words of the deacon in the Latin Rite. Before the final blessing, the deacon says, “Ita. Missa est,” or “Go, you are dismissed.” At the break with Rome, the name of the Liturgy was restored to its original: the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion. The word “Eucharist” comes from very early Church meaning in Greek, “Thanksgiving.” This term was also used after the break with Rome and replaced the previous title in the Book of Common Prayer of 1979.



The term Mass was recovered by the Oxford Movement which led to the Anglo-Catholic renewal in the Church of England and the Episcopal Church and other Anglican Churches in the 19th Century. As St. Clement’s Church is an Anglo-Catholic parish, we employ this term however one may call it whatever makes one comfortable.

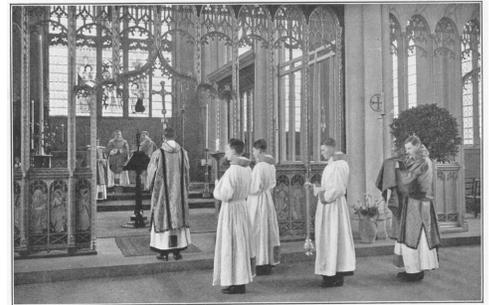
THE PRELUDE

is a musical offering, usually by the parish organist, to set the tone of the Liturgy to follow. It also signals that conversations are left for a later time and that we turn our focus to God in prayer.

At the sound of the bell, the people stand as able.

THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN

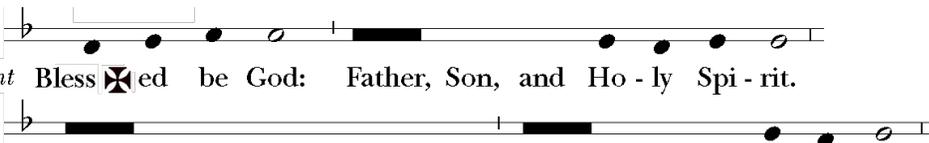
The Hymn is the opening “Introit” of the Mass during which the ministers (and choir) enter the Church. Incense is employed as a symbol of our prayers ascending on high. It is also a form of respect paid to the processional Cross, the symbol of our faith. It is common, though not mandatory, to bow as the Cross passes in procession.



REVERENCING

Reverencing is using the human body to show respect. Genuflecting, or dropping to one knee and rising, is certainly proper however it was never part of English and Anglican tradition until its adoption in the Victorian era from Roman practice. The English have always shown reverence by bowing – at the mention of the three persons of the Trinity, at the mention of the name of Jesus (and sometimes Mary), during the Nicene Creed and at the elevations of the Host and Chalice during the Canon or Eucharistic Prayer of the Mass. Some also bow when entering and leaving the pew. It is not necessary to do so when returning to one’s seat after Communion since the Body and Blood of Christ are now physically part of the communicant.

THE OPENING ACCLAMATION



Celebrant Bless^{ed} be God: Father, Son, and Ho - ly Spi - rit.

People And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ev - er. A - men.

is the proper beginning of the Mass and is different during different seasons of the Church Year. The Sign of the Cross may be made though, as with all physical reverences, it too is optional. You won't get a dirty look if your personal piety does not include this or any other form of reverence.

THE COLLECT FOR PURITY

BCP PG 355

comes from the Mass used in Salisbury (Sarum) England before the English Reformation. It asks God to cleanse our hearts as we prepare to celebrate the most sacred of Rites.



THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO

or another hymn of praise is sung during which time the Altar, Tabernacle and Altar Crucifix are censed as a sign of respect and worship. The *Gloria* is a joyful hymn composed in the 4th Century. Because of its joyous nature, it is omitted in the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent and at other times. The first line of the hymn is the message of the Angels at the birth of Christ as recorded in the Gospel of Luke.

THE WORD OF GOD

THE COLLECT (THEME PRAYER) OF THE DAY

BCP PG 357

The Collect, (pronounced *COL'-lect*) is a general prayer appointed for each Sunday to set the tone of the Liturgy. Unfortunately, the Collect sometimes doesn't fit the Lessons that follow.



THE LESSONS

After the Collect, everyone is seated. Three Lessons from the Bible are read: The First Lesson from the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament; The Second Lesson from an Epistle or Letter usually of St. Paul; and the Gospel – a portion of one of the Four Gospels setting forth a teaching of Jesus. Between the First and Second Lessons, a Psalm is offered, usually sung by the Cantor with a response by the congregation.

After each Lesson: The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

After the Lesson, silence is observed.

THE GOSPEL

is accompanied by a procession with incense. Usually a Hymn is sung around the Gospel reading. The Gospel Book is censed as a sign of reverence. The reader, frequently a Deacon, announces the Gospel:

“The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to (Name of Gospel writer)”

The People Respond,

Glory to you, Lord Christ

(who speaks in the words
of the reading.)



It is customary to make a small Cross on one’s forehead, lips, and heart preparing each to receive the words of Our Lord. The normal Sign of the Cross may also be made or one may choose no external sign of reverence at all.

After the Gospel, the Deacon or Priest says,

“The Gospel of the Lord” and kisses the Gospel Book in reverence.

The People Respond,

“Praise to you, Lord Christ.” (who has just spoken in the words of the reading.)

THE SERMON

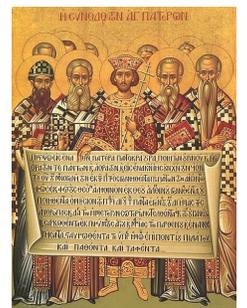


follows the Gospel reading. Because the Sermon is not the central focal point of the Mass, it is shorter than in most Protestant Traditions. Hopefully, the preacher develops on the reading and gives the people something to take home with them. If not, there’s frequently a picture on the back of the bulletin to color. Crayons are available in the back of the Church.

THE NICENE CREED

was composed by the Bishops of the Council of Nicea in modern day Turkey in 325AD at the instance of the Emperor Constantine and composed as much for political reasons as spiritual. The Creed is the Church’s best but totally inadequate attempt to explain the mystery of the Trinity which in itself beyond human comprehension. The Creed did not become part of the text of the Mass until around the 12th Century beginning in Spain as a litmus test for those forced to convert from Islam and Judaism. Because of the questionable nature of the Nicene Creed, the Apostles’ Creed – from the early 2nd Century, and Baptismal Covenant focusing on the Christian life and practice, are affirmed on alternating Sundays. The Sign of the Cross is customary at the end of either Creed as a remembrance of our baptism.

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THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

are a set of intercessions offered to God for the World, the Nation, the local Community, those in any need especially the sick and suffering, and the departed (those who have died.) We pray for the departed, not to release them from some sort of afterlife punishment, but because we continue to love them and pray for them as they mature and grow more fully into the Mystery of God. We also trust that they pray for us.

The Prayers frequently follow a pattern of intercessions sung by the Cantor to which the people respond



The term, “Lord, have mercy,” is not a penitential response but an ancient way of asking God to receive our prayers. At the conclusion of the Prayers, the Celebrant offers a Collect to which all respond:



THE CONFESSION OF SIN AND ABSOLUTION,

On occasion, the Confession is also offered before the Processional Hymn. The “General,” or common confession of sins by the people together, is a form of preparation for the reception of the Eucharist. In it, we admit that we are not perfect beings and rely on the never-failing compassion of God for our life and sustenance – which is a fact of life given that we are only human. Therefore, unless one has done something truly heinous, feeling guilty is not necessary, however turning from those things that separate us from God, ourselves and each other is.

The Absolution is a formula pronounced by the Priest. It does not erase ones sins by magic. In fact, the words of the Priest are an affirmation of what already is: God’s nature is forgiving and loving. Our sins are probably forgiven before we even commit them as symbolized by the death of Christ. The Absolution emphasizes this fact and our “Amen” is our response of thanksgiving. It is also customary to make the Sign of the Cross as the Priest makes it over us.

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L O R D
J E S U S
C H R I S T
S O N O F G O D
H A V E M E R C Y
O N M E S I N N E R

SPECIAL EVENTS: BIRTHDAYS, ANNIVERSARIES, ETC.

After all the high drama of the Liturgy, the Rector – head priest of the parish - asks those who wish to give thanks for special events in their lives to come forward. After noting the events, we all join hands and the Rector prays a, hopefully, short prayer.

THE PEACE comes from the very Early Church. Eventually, it took on a very stylized form exchanged only by the Celebrant and the sacred ministers. In the 1960s and 70s, the Peace was returned to its proper place in the Mass. It symbolizes that as we have all been reconciled to God in Christ, we ought to be reconciled to each other. The Peace is usually exchanged by a hand shake or an embrace.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

THE OFFERTORY ANTHEM

The Offertory is the beginning of the Liturgy of the Table or the Holy Communion. During this time, bread and wine are offered by representatives of the people and the collection of alms (money) is taken up. During this time, usually the Choir sings an Anthem that focuses on the theme of the day or another topic. During the Summer and the first Sundays after Easter and Christmas, the Choir takes time off for a well earned vacation.

THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

The Celebrant, or priest leading the Liturgy, asks God's blessing over the Bread and Wine and that God would receive them as an offering for the living and the departed. Because what we give is also sacred and offered to God, the alms are also blessed. At the conclusion of each prayer, all respond: **Blessed be God forever.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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or Canon of the Mass or Eucharistic Prayer, comes from the early 2nd Century. Since then, many Canons have been composed for various occasions. The Canon we regularly use, Eucharistic Prayer B, was composed specifically for the Book of Common Prayer, 1979, as was Eucharist Prayer C, known fondly as *The Star Trek Canon*. Eucharistic Prayer A is a translation of a Canon by St. Hippolytus in the 2nd Century. Eucharistic Prayer D is an adaptation of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom from the 4th Century used in the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

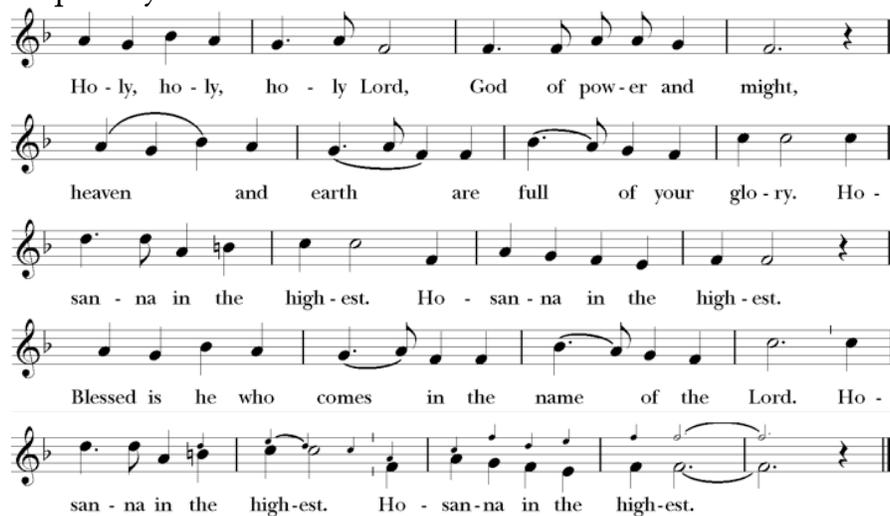
The Canon begins with a dialogue between the Celebrant and the People known as *The Sursum Corda*, Latin for “Lift up your hearts,” and is found in the Canon of St. Hippolytus.



The Lord be with you.
 And also with you.
 Lift up your hearts!
 We lift them to the Lord!
 Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
 It is right to give our thanks and praise.



The Celebrant continues with the Proper Preface, which continues the Canon. The Preface changes according to the Church Year or in accordance with the occasion being celebrated such as a wedding or funeral. At the end of the Preface is sung the “**SANCTUS AND BENEDICTUS.**” The Sanctus, or Holy, comes to us from the 6th chapter of the Book of the Prophet Isaiah. The Benedictus reflects the words that greeted Our Lord on the first Palm Sunday at his triumphal entry into the city of Jerusalem leading up to his crucifixion and Resurrection. It is common to bow at the words, “Holy, holy, holy Lord.” The Sign of the Cross is also frequently made at the word “Blessed.”



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,
 heaven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

KNEEL OR STAND?

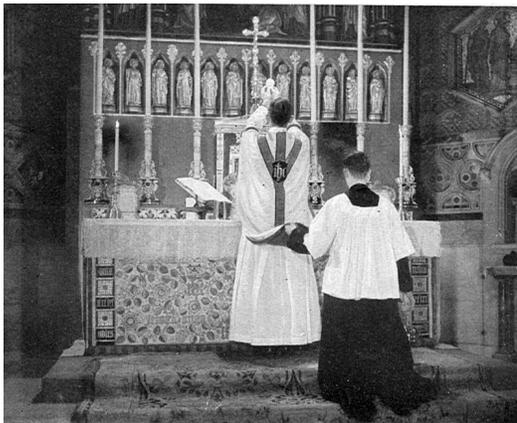
The people stand or kneel according to preference and/or ability. Kneeling was at one time a hallmark of the Episcopal/Anglican Tradition. However, it was unknown in the Christian Church before the middle ages and is still not practiced in the Eastern Orthodox Churches. In the West, kneeling was common before royalty and was adopted by western Catholicism as a sign of reverence towards God. Standing is symbolic of our risen nature given in Christ at Baptism and is the common posture during the fifty days of Easter. One may choose either posture.

THE CANON CONTINUES

The Celebrant continues the Eucharistic Prayer by giving thanks to God for creation, for our ancient Hebrew Ancestors and the coming of Jesus, the incarnation of God. The Celebrant then rehearses the words of Jesus used at the Last Supper beginning the process of the consecration of the Bread and Wine into the Body and Blood of Christ.

BELLS

are rung during the Consecration to call the attention of those worshipping. In the Western Church during the middle ages the Parish Church was frequently also the market place on Sunday Mornings especially in inclement weather. While the Celebrant and the monks and/or nuns were singing the Mass, transactions kept going on out in the main part of the Church called the Nave, where you now sit. Bells were rung to let those in the Nave know that something very sacred was happening. At this point, those in the Nave focused their attention to what was happening at the Altar. Exterior Church bells were also rung to let the local community know that the consecration was occurring.



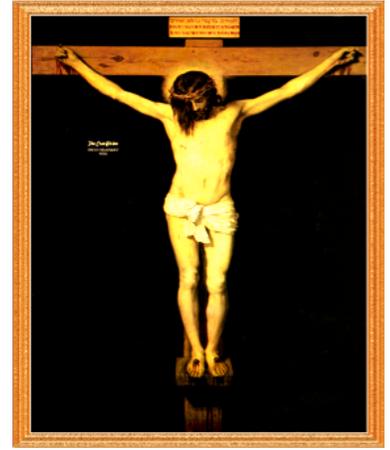
ELEVATIONS

In keeping with Western Catholic tradition, as each element of bread and wine is consecrated, the Celebrant lifts it up to God during which time it becomes the Body/Blood of Christ. Up until the 1960s, the Celebrant celebrated Mass in the opposite direction with his (no “hers” yet) back to the people. The Bread and Wine were elevated so that each could be seen by the people. It is customary to make the Sign of the Cross at the elevations.

EUCCHARISTIC THEOLOGY

Anglicans/Episcopalians hold the doctrine of the “Real Presence” with respect to the Eucharist claiming that the bread and wine take on (the bread and wine remain present too) the Body and Blood of Christ in a real manner. However, we refuse to explain what that real manner is because we really don’t know. It is a sacred Mystery. In many ways, the doctrine of the Real Presence is similar to the doctrine of Transubstantiation in the Roman Church but we deny that each time the Mass is celebrated Christ is resacrificed for the sins of the world since the Epistle to the Hebrews claims that Christ was sacrificed once for ALL. What we DO know is that the Eucharist does what it’s supposed to do: nourish our bodies and souls that we may be outward and visible signs of the One we have consumed.

With regard to “sacrifice,” we do not believe that God required a sacrifice for sin since God can forgive sin anyway God chooses without a sacrifice. Indeed, the very nature of God is love, mercy and forgiveness and God was probably not surprised at the way humans turned out. And it’s a rather tyrannical deity who creates humans in this manner and then holds them accountable for it and condemns them to everlasting torment.



Rather, we understand that Jesus was betrayed and executed because those in power, i.e., the Romans and the Temple Authorities – not the entire Jewish nation – thought of him as a threat to their power, wealth and influence over the people. Jesus’ message of universal love regardless of station in life also got him into trouble, a message we humans have still to learn. Jesus’ death is the result of humanity at its worst moment, a death he freely accepted giving us an example of what happens when we stand with the poor and marginalized and stand up to abusive and evil power. However, death was not the last word as God raised him from the dead as God has all Christians in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.

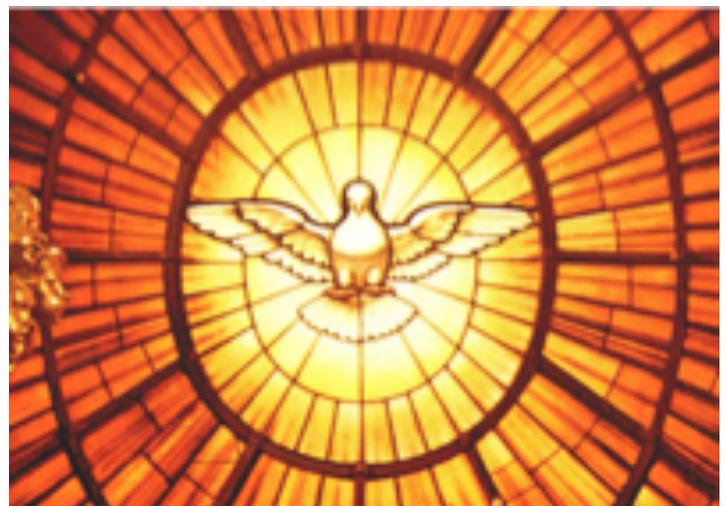
After the Institution Narrative, the Celebrant asks God to receive our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and offers to God our gifts of bread and wine.

EPICLESIS

is a ten dollar Greek word meaning “calling down from on high.” During the Epiclesis, the Celebrant asks the Holy Spirit to effect the change of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ, thus concluding the Consecration itself.

CONCLUSION

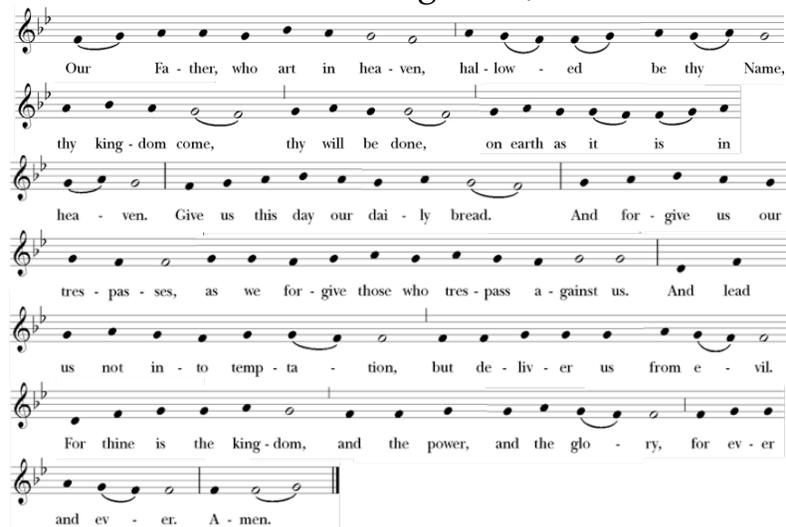
The Celebrant concludes the Canon by asking that in the fullness of time we may share with Mary-the Mother of God, and all the saints in eternity – whatever that may be. At the end of the Canon, the Celebrant offers the “Minor Doxology” by lifting the consecrated Bread and Wine as a symbol of offering and adoration.



OUR FATHER

From the beginning of the Christian Tradition, it seems that every celebration of the Lord’s Supper or Eucharist concluded the Canon with the words that Jesus himself taught his disciples. We sing the Lord’s Prayer to a chant composed probably around the 6th Century.

Celebrant As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray:



THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

BCP PG 364

The Consecrated Bread, the Body of Christ, is then broken as a symbol of Christ's being broken for the sake of the world. It also reminds us who observe this action that we too as followers of Jesus are broken for the sake of the world; that we are called to go out into the world to relieve the suffering of those who suffer, to work for justice and peace among all people and strive for the respect of the dignity of every human being.



THE INVITATION AND COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD



At the Eucharist, we welcome everyone to the Lord's Table, regardless of religious affiliation, if any. The Bread is received in the palm of the hand. Assist the Chalice Bearer in guiding the Chalice to your lips by lightly holding its foot. You may also hold on to the Bread and the Chalice Bearer will dip it in the Wine and then transfer it to your mouth. This form of Communion is called "intinction." If you would prefer not to receive Communion but would like a blessing, please come forward to the Altar and cross your arms across your chest. If you prefer, for whatever reason, gluten-free Bread, please indicate so by holding up your index finger.

A WORD ABOUT THE COMMON CUP

To some, the use of a common Chalice for the administration of the Blood of Christ in Holy Communion may seem unsanitary. For this reason, many Protestant churches use small communion cups that look like mini-shot glasses. Given the fact that they primarily use grape juice rather than wine, their concern is valid. However, sacramental Wine is a special variety with a higher



alcohol content which dispatches most germs. Also the use of silver or gold in a Chalice wards off any unpleasant possibilities. The Chalice Bearer wipes the edge of the Chalice after each person has received from it with a napkin called a “purificator,” and turns the Chalice so the next person receives from a different spot.

A WORD ABOUT WINE

Some prefer to receive Communion in one kind, i.e., the Bread only, and not the Wine for various valid reasons. Some have allergies to sulfites used in the production of wine. Others are not able to consume alcoholic beverages. Some have other reasons. If you prefer not to receive from the Chalice, feel free to return to your seat as soon as you have consumed the Body of Christ. Our Eucharistic theology holds that the full Eucharist is received in either “species” as well as in both.

COMMUNION HYMN

LEVAS II

During Communion, a hymn is frequently sung from the *Lift Every Voice and Sing II* hymnal published and authorized by the Episcopal Church for use in African American congregations.

THE POST COMMUNION PRAYER

BCP PG 365

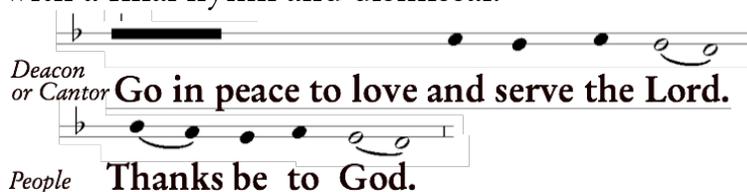
is offered giving thanks to God for feeding us with the Eucharist and asking God to follow us as we minister to the world in Christ’s name.

THE BLESSING

The Celebrant blesses the congregation in the name of the Trinity. The form of blessing may change depending on the time of the Church Year. It is customary to make the Sign of the Cross at the mention of the Trinity.

HYMN AND THE DISMISSAL

The Mass concludes with a final hymn and dismissal.



Deacon
or Cantor **Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.**

People **Thanks be to God.**



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