

## **“GET UP AND EAT, ELSE THE JOURNEY WILL BE TOO LONG FOR YOU!”**

The Eucharist contains the **full treasure** of the Church, Jesus Christ himself.

### **THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

#### **Preparation of the Gifts**

The blessings prayers over the gifts of bread and wine are adapted from Jewish meal prayers used in biblical times.

**Notice** that water is poured in the chalice. The water symbolizes Christ’s humanity and the chalice of wine his divinity. This mixing also symbolizes the unity of the church (water) with Jesus (wine).

After the gifts are prepared the priest invites the faithful to participate in the major parts of the Eucharistic prayer that is about to begin. The preparation of the gifts concludes with the **Prayer over the Offerings**.

**Eucharistic Prayer:** At this point we arrive at the most solemn part of the Mass.

- **Thanksgiving and Acclamation:** We begin the Eucharistic Prayer with thanksgiving. This prayer is called the **preface**, from a Latin word that meant public announcement. We thank God the Father, through Christ in the Spirit, for the gifts of creation, salvation, and sanctification. We conclude the acclamation with, **Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord...**
- **Invocation of the Holy Spirit:** The Church implores the power of the Holy Spirit to change the bread and wine into Christ’s Body and Blood. The Church calls this event the **“epiclesis”**, a Greek word that means to call down.
- **Institution Narrative and The Consecration:** At the time he was betrayed...Take this, all of you, and eat of it...he took the chalice...Take this, all of you, and drink from it....

Like Elijah is today’s first reading, let us say to God, “Take my life.” In so doing, we are not asking to die, but rather giving ourselves to Him, loving Him as He loved us; on the cross and in the Eucharist.

The words of institution appear in Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14: 22-24; Luke 22; 19-20; and First Corinthians 11:23-25.

By the power of the Holy Spirit the bread and wine have been changed into Christ's Body and Blood. We call this change **Transubstantiation**, that is, the substance of bread & wine is transformed (changed) into the substance of the Body & Blood of our Lord. The term "transubstantiation" indicates our belief in this awesome change. Bread and wine truly become Christ's Body and Blood.

*Taste and see the goodness of the Lord (Ps 34:9).*

When the priest elevates the host and then the chalice an old custom **suggests** that we use the words of Thomas the Apostle and silently say "My Lord and My God."

**Memorial Acclamation:** The priest says: The mystery of faith. The Church calls us to respond with faith to this gracious mystery of faith-because human reason alone cannot know it-given to us because God loves us so much.

- **Remembrance:** We recall the death and Resurrection of Christ and look forward to his glorious return.
- **Second Epiclesis:** The Holy Spirit is invoked upon the gathered community, to bring unity to the worshippers who will receive Holy Communion.
- **Intercessions:** With the whole Communion of Saints and all God's people on earth, we pray for the needs of all the members of the Church, living and dead.
- **Doxology and Great Amen:** The Eucharistic Prayer ends with an outpouring of praise for this supreme gift of grace. The people respond with "Amen."

**Posture for the Eucharistic Prayer: Kneeling.** The faithful are to kneel after the Holy, Holy, Holy, until after the Amen of the Eucharistic Prayer. Corpus Christi Church is an exception because there are no kneelers. However, we are to show reverence by our full, active, and conscious participation at Mass. Kneeling signifies reverence, homage, and adoration before the presence of Christ in the Eucharist.