**Roman Missal: Ordinary of the Mass**

Last week, we looked at the Proper Prayers of the Mass. This week, we will look at the Ordinary of the Mass: those elements that remain the same at each celebration of the Mass. These are: the Greeting, the Penitential Act, the *Kyrie* *eleison*, the *Gloria*, the Profession of Faith (Creed), the Canon of the Mass (Preface and the Eucharistic Prayers), the *Sanctus* (“Holy, Holy, Holy”), the *Mysterium Fidei*, the Lord’s Prayer, the Sign of Peace, the Breaking of the Bread (Fraction), the *Agnus Dei*, the Pre-communion Prayer, the Blessing, and the Dismissal.

**Greeting**: the Sign of the Cross and one of the following forms of the greeting –

1. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
2. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. The Lord be with you.

The people’s response is the same for each form: **And with your spirit**.

**Penitential Rite**: We call to mind our sins in order to “prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.”

***Kyrie eleison***: meaning “Lord, have mercy.” This involves a triple invocation of God’s mercy upon us: “Lord, have mercy.” “Christ, have mercy.” “Lord, have mercy.”

Both the penitential rite and the Kyrie offer the opportunity to turn from sin. While the world often tells us that sin does not exist or that we should not worry about it, the Mass grounds us in reality: we are sinners and in need of the mercy of God. This is not meant to bring us discouragement or despair; rather, it allows us to cast our hope and trust more fully upon God who, by his grace, will bring us beyond sin and into the fullness of holiness.

***Gloria***: the prayer which begins “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.” The whole of the Mass is an occasion to glorify and praise the greatness of God, and the *Gloria* sums this up in a profound and poetic way.

**The Profession of Faith (Creed)**: following the homily and the prayer of the faithful, we profess the faith which we believe. It is both person (“***I*** believe”) and communal (recited in unison); it is a faith we profess as our own, a personal commitment to God, but which we hold with all Catholics throughout the world.

**The Canon of the Mass**: this is the heart of the Mass – because of its importance, we will look at this on its own next week.

***Sanctus***: Just before we kneel for the Eucharistic Prayer and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (in which Christ is made truly, really, and substantially present), we join in “one voice” with the Angels and Saints, saying, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.”

***Mysterium Fidei***: the “mystery of faith”; this prayer is spoken or sung after the Consecration of the Eucharist and expresses the profound reality which is taken place before us. This is done in one of three forms:

1. We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.
2. When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim our Death, O Lord, until you come again.
3. Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

**Doxology and Great Amen**: “Through him, and with him, and in him, O God almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.” **Amen**.

**The Lord’s Prayer**: the praying of the “Our Father,” the prayer given us by Jesus himself.

**Sign of Peace**: after hearing the words of Christ – “Peace I leave you, my peace I give you” – the priest prays that “the peace of the Lord be with you always” and we pray that it be “with [his] spirit.” There is then the offer of the sign of peace to one another.

**Breaking of the Bread (Fraction)**: the priest takes the Host, breaks it over the paten, and places a piece in the chalice while praying quietly: “May this mingling of the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to those who receive it.” The act has a double meaning: first, Christ is one – his Body and Blood are not two separate things – and two, to symbolize that the “one bread” is broken and shared among all the faithful, stressing our unity in Christ.

***Agnus Dei***: Latin for “Lamb of God”; during the breaking of the bread, the faithful speak or sing: “Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.” Jesus is the fulfillment of the Passover Lamb of the Old Covenant – he lays down his life and by his blood we are saved from sin and death.

**Pre-communion Prayer**: “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.” The people respond: **Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.** We acknowledge Christ’s true Presence in the Eucharist – that we are about to receive his Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity – and ask God for the grace to be healed and made worthy. After this prayer, the priest, as he consumes the Body and Blood of Christ, prays quietly: “May the Body of Christ keep me safe for eternal life”; “May the Blood of Christ keep me safe for eternal life.”

**Blessing**: “May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

**Dismissal**: in one of four forms:

1. Go forth, the Mass is ended.
2. Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.
3. Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
4. Go in peace.

The people’s response is the same for each form: **Thanks be to God**.

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