

# The New Roman Missal

## The Eucharistic Prayer, Part II: 'The mystery of faith'

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**By Sister Ann Rehrauer**

Last time, we considered the changes to the first parts of the eucharistic prayer: the introductory dialogue, the preface, (Holy, Holy Holy), *epiclesis* and the institution narrative and consecration. Following the institution narrative is the memorial acclamation. An acclamation is a response addressed to Christ. The current missal has four options. 1) Christ has died... 2) When we eat this bread... 3) Lord, by your cross and resurrection... 4) Dying you destroyed our death...

The first one was created by the former translators, and you'll notice that it is more of a statement or description (Christ has died), rather than a response addressed directly to Christ. This option will not appear in the new missal.

The new edition of the missal provides three English acclamations. The first is very similar to our current one: "When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again." The next reverses the former order: "Save us, Savior of the world, for by your cross and resurrection, you have set us free." The third is a combination: "We proclaim your death, O Lord, and profess your resurrection until you come again." Since the acclamation is the people's response, we will no longer hear the priest invite our response with "Let us proclaim the mystery of faith" (as if he were part of the responders). Rather, he will simply say, "The mystery of faith," and we will sing or say the acclamation.

After the memorial acclamation, the priest prays the next section, called the *anamnesis*, in which we remember Jesus' Passion, resurrection and ascension. In this, and the following sections of the prayer, you will notice changes in wording. There is much more sacrificial language and it will sound a bit more formal. As we celebrate the memorial of his Son, we offer God, in thanksgiving, the holy and living sacrifice. "We pray that God look upon the oblation of his church and recognize the sacrificial victim by whose death God willed to reconcile us to himself" (Eucharistic Prayer 3).

Following the *anamnesis* are the real "offerings" of the Mass. In this part of the prayer, we offer Christ to the Father, and offer ourselves with him. "Therefore as we celebrate the memorial of his death and resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of Life and the chalice of salvation, giving thanks that you held us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you" (Eucharistic Prayer 2). "May he make of us an eternal offering to you" (Eucharistic Prayer III).

The final section of the eucharistic prayer contains the intercessions, in which the priest (in our name) prays for and with all the church. He asks the Spirit to draw us into greater unity with Christ and with each other as we prepare to receive holy Communion. "Grant that we who are nourished by the body and blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit may become one body, one Spirit in Christ..." (Eucharistic Prayer 2).

"May this sacrifice of our reconciliation, we pray, O Lord, advance the peace and salvation of all the world. Be pleased to confirm in faith and charity your pilgrim church on earth. ... Listen graciously to

the prayers of this family whom you have summoned before you ... to our departed brothers and sisters and to all who were pleasing to you at their passing from this life, give kind admittance to your

kingdom. ...” (Eucharistic Prayer 3).

The final doxology (through him, with him, and in him) draws together our great prayer of praise and thanks, which is confirmed and concluded by our “Amen.”

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