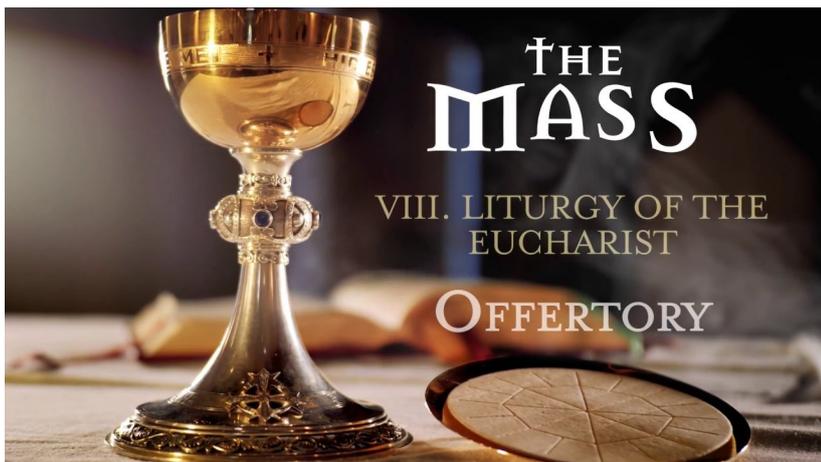


The Offertory

Pope Benedict XVI, in the apostolic exhortation "Sacramentum caritatis", reminds us that the different Eucharistic Prayers have been handed down to us by the Church's living Tradition and are noteworthy for their inexhaustible theological and spiritual richness. (SC, 48).

An essential part of each one of the Eucharistic Prayers is the offertory aspect, united to the memorial reality.

This aspect of offering Christ to the Father is intimately united to the memorial of the cross. The Church offers Christ. The first Eucharistic Prayer expresses this reality with the words: "We offer to you, God of glory and majesty, this holy and perfect sacrifice: the bread of life and



the cup of eternal salvation," the Eucharistic Prayer II: "We offer you, Father, this life-giving bread, this saving cup," the Eucharistic Prayer III: "We offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice," the Eucharistic Prayer IV: "We offer you His body and blood, the acceptable sacrifice which brings salvation to the whole world."

It is important to point out some key ideas of this offertory reality of the Eucharist:

- 1) The Eucharist is offered by the priest and by the people together, not only by the priest: "We offer you this sacrifice of praise for ourselves and those who are dear to us." (Eucharistic Prayer I). This real participation of the faithful in the offertory does not imply confusion between the ministerial priesthood and the common priesthood of the baptized. The priest acts in the person of Christ, the Head. The faithful participate also in the priesthood of Christ through baptism. Yet this priesthood differs not only from the ordained priesthood in degree, but also in essence.
- 2) In the offering of worship that we present to God, in reality we cannot give Him anything unless He gives it to us previously: life, liberty, health. This is why we say: "From the many gifts you have given us, we offer to you, God

of glory and majesty, this holy and perfect sacrifice.” (Eucharistic Prayer I)
In Protestant circles, the Catholic Mass has been accused of being a perversion of the worship due to God. Catholics were seen as trying to gain merit before God by offering something different from the sacrifice of Christ. This is not the case, because we offer what God Himself has given us: His own Son, dead and risen.

- 3) **The Church makes her offering to Christ and offers herself with Christ.** St. Augustine has numerous writings that reflect this reality. Christ, Head, has united Himself to His Body, which is the Church, and has associated her to His sacrifice. He does so in such a way that now only the “Christus totus”, the Total Christ, Head and ecclesial Body, is offered to the Father. One of the writings that is most known is this one: “Christ “wanted us to be a sacrifice; it follows that the whole redeemed city, that is to say, the congregation or community of the saints, is offered to God as our sacrifice through the great High Priest, who offered Himself to God in His passion for us, that we might be members of this glorious head... This is the sacrifice of Christians: we, being many, are one body in Christ. And this also is the sacrifice which the Church continually celebrates in the sacrament of the altar in which she teaches that she herself is offered in the offering she makes to God.” (City of God 10:6).

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, in number 79 says: “In this very memorial, the Church — and in particular the Church here and now gathered — offers in the Holy Spirit the spotless Victim to the Father. The Church's intention, however, is that the faithful not only offer this spotless Victim but also learn to offer themselves, and so day by day to be consummated, through Christ the Mediator, into unity with God and with each other, so that at last God may be all in all.”



Also, Pope Paul VI points out this idea by saying: “The whole Church plays the role of priest and victim along with Christ, offering the Sacrifice of the Mass and itself completely offered in it.” (Mysterium Fidei, 31)

We must conscious of this offering that we make. Through our prayer we must

become a pleasing offering to the Father. With the prayer of Mary: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to thy word." **With the prayer of Jesus: "Not my will, but yours be done."** With prayer-offerings, like the perfect one of St. Ignatius of Loyola: "Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, my entire will, all of my possessions; you have given it all to me, to you, Lord, I return it; everything is yours, do with it what you will; give me only your love and grace, that is enough for me" (Spiritual Exercises 234).

Our actions must be consistent with the offering we make. St. Theresa of Avila

compares our offering to someone who, extending his hand, offers God a gem (his life, health, will, etc). Yet when God extends His hand to take what we have offered Him, we close our hand do not allow God to do as He wills with what we have offered. This Mystical Doctor points out that this is to mock God. We must, therefore, be faithful and sincere in our offering, remain firm, without the desire to ever recover what we have given. We must know that what we have offered to God is not



lost, but rather fulfilled in love. **True love seeks to give of itself to the one who is loved, and we cannot correspond to the love of a God who has died for us, with anything less than a sincere offering of our life.**

When St. Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows coughed up blood for the first time, an evident sign of his tuberculosis and a prelude of his early death, he ran to the chapel with his blood-stained handkerchief and, kneeling at the foot of the Crucifix, he said, **"Lord, life for life, blood for blood, love for love."**

"We offer you His body and blood, the acceptable sacrifice which brings salvation to the whole world." (Eucharistic Prayer IV)

ARCHDIOCESAN NOTICES

COME AND SEE Vocations Morning

Saturday 10th 9-11:30am at St Teresa's Church, Karori.

- *Has anyone ever said that you would make a good priest?*
- *Have you thought about the idea, but tried to put it out of your mind?*
- *Do you think you might have a vocation?*

Join us for Mass at 9am, followed by breakfast a time of fellowship and discussion. For catering purposes, please let us know you're coming.

l.hensel@wn.catholic.org.nz or text 021 164 5800. Visit www.wellingtonpriests.org

HOLY CROSS SEMINARY OFFICE MANAGER

Holy Cross Seminary in Ponsonby, Auckland is looking for an experienced Office. Full-time permanent role. Applications secretariat@nzcbc.org.nz by 22 August. More details available at <https://www.seek.co.nz/job/58017032>



ALFRED TONG will be ordained to the priesthood at the Church of St Joseph's, Upper Hutt at 11am on Saturday 24th September. Please keep Deacon Alfred in your prayers as he prepares for priestly ordination..

THE CHRISM MASS

at St Teresa's Pro-Cathedral on Wednesday, 14th September at 7pm. Parishes are requested to have representatives appointed to collect the Holy Oils at that Mass. Clergy Trust Fund Special Meeting in the afternoon of the Chrism Mass.

CARITAS WELLINGTON HEAD OF PROGRAMMES

to lead and manage the Programmes Team, and ensure the effective management of partnerships for development and humanitarian relief within the team. Will also be responsible for identifying programme opportunities to engage with current partners (and potential partners).

Details: <https://www.seek.co.nz/job/57927367?type=standout#sol=5e05b1d98ce49206b72504aa2bec9111ef3e3e1f>

YOUNG CHURCH MASS IS BACK IN AUGUST!!

The Young Church are excited to be joining Cardinal John and Life Teen Petone for Young Church Mass on Sunday 21st August!

5.30pm at Sacred Heart Church, Petone. Come and bring your friends along!