

An Instructional Eucharist

1979 Book of Common Prayer

Rite 2, Eucharistic Prayer A
Easter Season

The Church of The Resurrection

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The Holy Communion

The Offertory and Anthem

The service of the word is now concluded and the service of the table begins. The pulpit symbolizes Christ's presence in his Word. The altar symbolizes Christ's presence in his sacrament. The Holy Communion typically begins with an Offertory Sentence in which the Celebrant invites the people to present their offerings. The people's offerings include their money and gifts to support the church and its mission as well as the bread and wine for the communion feast. The offertory is how we present the fruits of our labor to God.

The Great Thanksgiving

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says

The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Every culture shares some form of a common meal. The common meal is an opportunity for fellowship, story sharing and thanksgiving. People eat together, sharing food and stories with another, and through this sharing they are bound closer together into family, clan, tribe, community, or church.

The Holy Eucharist is the common meal of the Christian community. It is known as Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, and Eucharist. The word 'eucharist' is from the Greek word for 'thanksgiving.'

The Great Thanksgiving begins with prayers similar to the Jewish prayers used at their sacred meals. The oldest of the common fixed elements of the prayer come from Jewish liturgical tradition. The Jewish prayer begins with the bidding to stand, "Lift up your hearts," and includes the request to pray in the people's name "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God."

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

One difference between the Eastern and Western liturgies is the use of proper prefaces in the West. The proper preface is a means to emphasize the seasons of the Church year or a particular occasion without changing the Eucharistic prayer.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, 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.

Next, in the praise of God the congregation shares the song of the angels and the whole company of heaven. The *Sanctus*, "Holy, holy, holy," is the song of the seraphim in Isaiah's account of his vision of the Lord (Isaiah 6). The Jewish synagogue used the *Sanctus* and it became a fixed part of the Christian liturgy as early as the 4th century. The Apostolic Constitution (c.380) is the first liturgical work to contain the *Benedictus qui venit*, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." It is associated with Christ's entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. We will now sing the *Sanctus* and the *Benedictus qui venit*.

The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

What follows is the beginning of the prayer of consecration. The celebrant tells the narrative of Jesus' saving work on the cross and his last meal with his disciples.

It was the custom in the early Church and remains so in the Eastern Church to stand during the Eucharistic Prayer. In fact, in 325 the Council of Nicea decided to forbid kneeling on Sundays. In the Middle Ages, only the priests partook of the Eucharistic meal and the people began the practice of kneeling during the Eucharistic prayer in adoration of Christ's presence in the sacrament. Prayer Books until 1979 assumed the people would stand, although they often did not. The 1979 Prayer Book gives the option of standing or kneeling. Standing symbolizes standing with the risen Lord and kneeling symbolizes reverence to the present Lord.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and

The Holy Eucharist meal consists of bread and wine. Bread is basic to life and symbolizes the fruit of the earth. It also symbolizes our labor in the effort it takes to grow and harvest the grain, to make flour, and to bake bread. We work to put "bread on the table." Bread is a symbol of fellowship; the word 'companion' means one with whom you share bread. Bread is essential to human life and in Hebrew, the words for 'bread' and 'life' sound almost identical.

Wine also symbolizes the fruit of the earth and it symbolizes our labor in growing grapes and making wine. Whereas bread symbolizes survival, a

<p>when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."</p>	<p>food necessary to stay alive, wine is associated with joy, fellowship, laughter, refreshment, and relaxation.</p> <p>However, it was in the upper room, on the night that Jesus was betrayed, that he added to the Jewish blessings these words: "This is my body" and "This is my blood." This added a new dimension to the ancient Hebrew rite of table blessing.</p>	
<p><i>Celebrant</i> Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:</p> <p><i>Celebrant and People</i></p> <p>Christ has died.</p> <p>Christ is risen.</p> <p>Christ will come again.</p>	<p>The Memorial Acclamation – "Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again" - gives the people the opportunity to say what they believe.</p>	
<p><i>The Celebrant continues</i></p> <p>We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.</p>	<p>The next prayer combines the prayers remembrance (<i>Anamnesis</i>) and offering (<i>Oblation</i>) of our gifts. The prayer of remembering is basic to Jewish-Christian tradition. It helps us remember what God has done for us before we even ask. It helps us to know who we are, to whom we belong, and where we are headed. A Christian is one for whom the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is remembered and for whom through Christ's death and resurrection we have already entered the Kingdom of God.</p>	
<p>Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.</p>	<p>The Prayer of Invocation (<i>Epiclesis</i>) calls upon the Holy Spirit to sanctify the bread and wine that it may become the body and blood of everlasting life.</p>	
<p>Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.</p>	<p>The Prayer of Supplication follows and it requests various blessings and intercessions of the Holy Spirit. Prayers for unity of the church, peace, and other blessings were in the earliest Eucharistic rites.</p>	
<p>All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.</p>	<p>Next is the Doxology. The Doxology concludes this series of prayers in the name of the Trinity.</p>	
<p>AMEN.</p>	<p>The "people's AMEN" or "great AMEN" is first recorded by Justin Martyr in the 2nd century. In saying the AMEN, the people affirm and assent to the previous prayers of the <i>Anamnesis</i>, <i>Oblation</i>, <i>Epiclesis</i>, <i>Supplication</i>, and <i>Doxology</i>. Now let us join in the AMEN.</p>	
<p><i>People and Celebrant</i></p> <p>Our Father, who art in heaven,</p>	<p><i>People and Celebrant</i></p> <p>Our Father in heaven, hallowed</p>	<p>About A.D. 400 the Lord's Prayer was included in the Eucharist as preparation to receiving the consecrated bread and wine. The early Church fathers associated "daily bread" with the</p>

<p>hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.</p> <p>Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.</p> <p>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.</p> <p>For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.</p>	<p>be your Name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.</p> <p>Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.</p> <p>Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.</p> <p>For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.</p>	<p>Eucharist meal. Jesus taught the Church the Lord's Prayer and the Church has said it ever since.</p> <p>We often think of the Lord's Prayer version on the left in our Prayer Book as the traditional version. However, the version on the right is actually slightly closer to the original text of the Greek New Testaments.</p>
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<p>The Breaking of the Bread</p> <p><i>The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.</i></p> <p><i>A period of silence is kept.</i></p> <p><i>Then may be sung or said</i></p> <p>Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;</p> <p><i>Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.</i></p>	<p>The practical purpose of breaking the bread is to prepare it for serving to the people. Symbolically the bread is broken, as Christ's body is broken. During the breaking, silence is kept. To emphasize the solemn and penitential character of Lent, the Alleluia is omitted during Lent.</p>
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<p><i>Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation</i></p> <p>The Gifts of God for the People of God.</p> <p><i>and may add</i></p> <p>Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.</p>	<p>The ministrations of Communion now begins with the celebrant inviting everyone to partake in the Gifts of God. Only in the Middle Ages did the custom of kneeling to receive communion begin. In the early centuries, apparently those administering the communion moved among the people. The custom of the "communion rail" did not become popular until the 18th century. In the 4th century, Cyril of Jerusalem taught to "make your left hand a throne to receive a king." We still teach that today. The 1979 Prayer Book is the first Prayer Book to "legalize" receiving by dipping the bread in the wine (intinction).</p>
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<p><i>The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words</i></p> <p>The Body (Blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. [<i>Amen.</i>]</p> <p><i>or with these words</i></p>	<p>From the earliest times, the words the "Body of Christ" and "Blood of Christ," are spoken as the communion meal is distributed. These are called the Words of Administration and they constitute a confession of faith to which the recipient answers "Amen" as an assent.</p>
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<p>The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. [<i>Amen.</i>]</p> <p>The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. [<i>Amen.</i>]</p>	
<p><i>During the ministration of Communion, hymns, psalms, or anthems may be sung.</i></p>	
<p>In the name of the Church of the Resurrection, we send you out bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood. We who are many are one body, because we share in one bread, one cup.</p>	<p>It is the tradition at the Church of the Resurrection to send forth our Eucharistic Ministers with prayer.</p>
<p><i>After Communion, the Celebrant says</i></p> <p>Let us pray.</p> <p><i>Celebrant and People</i></p> <p>Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>	<p>The post-communion prayer was included in the liturgy in the 4th century after Constantine legalized Christianity and congregations began to gather in larger spaces. Until the 4th century, people would leave the assembly as soon as they received. The Thanksgiving prayer reminds people of what they have received.</p>
<p><i>The Bishop when present, or the Priest, may bless the people.</i></p> <p><i>Celebrant:</i> The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his son Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.</p> <p><i>Amen</i></p>	<p>In 1548, the people departed with this blessing: "The peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." In 1549, the following was added: "And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always."</p>
<p>Recessional with hymn</p>	<p>In contemporary custom, the choir, those assisting at the altar, and the priest process from the church with a hymn.</p>
<p><i>The Deacon, or the Celebrant, dismisses them with these words</i></p>	<p>We hope that you have enjoyed this instructed Eucharist that will enrich your participation in the central service of our Christian tradition.</p>

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People Thanks be to God.

The service concludes with a Dismissal. The Dismissal dates to the 4th century and sends us forth, reaching out to our community and the world as the hands of the Lord. The dismissal will follow the announcements.

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