

The Liturgy of the Believers

Objective:

Understanding the symbolism in the Liturgy
Understand the rituals of Eucharist

Memory Verse:

*“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes”
(1 Corinthians 11:26).*

Reference:

1 Corinthians 11 - Matthew 26:26-29 - Mark 14:22-26

Introduction:

The liturgy of the believers begins with the deacon crying out saying “In the wisdom of God, let us attend. Lord have mercy. Lord have mercy. In truth”. The reason is that there used to be some noise of people leaving the church after the Liturgy of the Catechumens. Hence the deacon calls everybody’s attention to the start of the holy liturgy of the believers. The church doors are shut and only the faithful are inside so that all are lifted to heaven.

Lesson Outline:

I. The Reconciliation Prayer

This prayer is called the Reconciliation Prayer because the priest refers to the wonderful miraculous deed of Christ to reconcile man with God. “For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the Law of Commandments contained in ordinance, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity” (Ephesians 2:14-16). Then he completes the prayer saying “According to Your good will, O God fill our hearts with Your peace”. In the first supplication we implore God to grant us peace and in this supplication we implore Him to fill our hearts with that peace which will keep our hearts and minds with Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7) and to purify us and cleanse us from evil and the remembrance of evil (thinking evil) so that we may enjoy peace with God and with our brethren and kiss one another with a pure holy kiss because He wants us to offer our sacrifice while we are on good terms with our brothers *“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remembers that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift”* (Matthew 5:23-24). *“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear”* (Psalms 66:18) and because, *“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses”* (Matthew 6:14).

- ⌚ Both priest and deacon remove the Prospherine from the altar and make it flutter over the oblation. Removing the Prospherine stands for removing the stone from the tomb door when Christ rose from the dead and the flutter of the Prospherine stands for the earthquake, which occurred when the stone was removed. The congregation sings the hymn, “Through the intercession of the Theotokos (Mother of God)...”

- ⌚ The priest holds the corporal, which covers the Lamb and crosses the people, the ministers and himself declaring that the church receives the blessing from the Lamb of God. The priest blesses the people, “The Love of the Lord Father...” and the priest cries “Lift up your hearts” so we follow the Lord Christ in His ascension and we pass and overcome the well of time and place Then “We thank God” because without His grace and redemption, our hearts would remain clinging to the earth. The Eucharist Prayers go on and the faithful raise their praises and hymns “The cherubim Worship You”. This hymn is a token of our fellowship with the angels and the heavenly hosts.
- ⌚ Meanwhile the Angel of the offertory guards it and prays with us. The priest crosses himself, the ministers and the people three times with the corporal, which was on the lamb and says, “Holy” because Christ is Holy and is able to sanctify us. He declares our Salvation. He speaks about incarnation of the Son of God, His crucifixion, His resurrection, His ascension and His Second Coming to judge each one according to his deeds.

II. The Sanctification Prayer

- ⌚ The priest begins prayers of sanctification, which are prayers for the Lord to transubstantiate the Bread into the Body of Christ and the wine into His blood. The priest relates to us the story of sanctification, which the Lord performed when He established this mystery. The church repeats the same words of Christ proclaiming His perpetual presence for the salvation of the church.
- ⌚ The deacon cries out, “Worship God in fear and trembling.” At this moment the oblation are transubstantiated into the Lord’s Body and blood. The church then prays for all people and in the Commemoration she asks for the intercession of the departed saints and also prays for the departed Diptych.

III. The Fraction Prayer

- ⌚ The Fraction prayer is the last part of the Liturgy. The fraction prayer differs according to occasions. (Give examples to young people) Meanwhile the priest breaks the Holy Body in a certain way in the form of the cross. (This could be explained on an oblation under the guidance of the priest). When the Fraction prayer is completed the Lord’s Prayer is cited. Then the priest cites some prayers in a low voice asking for forgiveness for himself and for all the people. He says, “The Holy unto the holy” then he dips the Spadikon in the Chalice and crosses the body with it three times.
- ⌚ “Holy and honored are the true Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, the begotten Son of Our God. Amen. Then he puts the Spadikon back into the chalice. The priest’s face should be towards the blood, towards the chalice after crossing the Body with the Blood as a token of their unity. He then lifts up the paten and says the confession, and then kneels and asks for forgiveness then administers the communion.
- ⌚ “The Holy unto the holies” means that (the holy matters concerning the Holy God are for all the people who are sanctified in Him). No body must think that holy means without sin, it only means sanctified in the Blood of Christ, and through the holy sacraments. St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, “Receive the communion and believe that you will receive a power that can destroy false desires, cure any disease or weakness operating in us.”
- ⌚ Being worthy of receiving communion means trust in the Love of Christ and the feeling that we need this mystery that gives life and also being prepared to receive the Holy Communion.

Exercise:

You must receive communion many times since through it you stand firm in Christ and your eternal life.

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