



Invest time each week to expand your vocabulary and deepen your faith.

14 April 2024

WORD OF THE WEEK

Liturgy of the Eucharist 'yü-kə-rəst\

Eucharist, Greek for “thanksgiving,” is the formal name for the Mass. Also part three of the four-part movement of the Mass: the Introductory Rite, Liturgy of the Word, **Liturgy of the Eucharist**, and Concluding Rite. The **Liturgy of the Eucharist** includes the people’s offering, the Eucharistic Prayer, and the Communion rite.

Pronunciation: <https://tinyurl.com/Take5-Liturgy-of-the-Eucharist>

CONTEXT

Liturgy is, therefore, both word and action . . . the **Liturgy of the Eucharist** is the action that flows from the word.

—Sister Julia Upton, R.S.M.

The Liturgy of the Word centers its action at the ambo, the **Liturgy of the Eucharist** at the altar. The first is fundamentally verbal, the second primarily visual. The first is story, the second tangible sacrament.

—Alice Camille

WHY IT MATTERS

We celebrate our faith in two main units of liturgy that serve as the spiritual lungs of the church: Word and **Eucharist**. The first tells the story of how we came to be the People of God. The second gives thanks for this astonishing reality. In addition, the church teaches in *Lumen Gentium* that the faithful, “as true witnesses of Christ,” are “obliged to spread the faith by word and deed,” which includes taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice, “the source and summit of the Christian life.”

From the General Instruction of the Roman Missal: The Church has arranged the entire celebration of the **Liturgy of the Eucharist** in parts corresponding to precisely [the] words and actions of Christ (no. 72).

RELATED WORDS

Ritual | Mass | Eucharistic Prayer | thanksgiving

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Why are Catholics focused on Eucharist?

A Eucharistic spirituality is ground-level for Catholic life. It’s built on three gospel accounts of the Last Supper, in which Jesus employs well-known forms of Jewish prayers of praise and thanksgiving and urges his friends to “do this in memory of me.” While John’s gospel doesn’t recount this narrative, he does have an extended teaching on Jesus as the bread of life.

Early Church teachers like Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Cyril, Ambrose, and Augustine agreed that **Eucharist** had several meanings. One is the impact of the Passion of Christ for human history. Another is the unity Christians share as the Body of Christ. Engaging this sacrament has profound moral implications for those who do.

In the medieval church *why* Jesus makes this self-offering was obscured in debates about *how* it’s accomplished ritually and theologically. Most believers adored the Host but fewer embraced a life of thanksgiving. The Second Vatican Council sought to restore “full, conscious, and active” participation so that the People of God might remember that the *why* of **Eucharist** is more vital than the *how*.

—Alice Camille, from *Questions Catholics Ask* <http://tinyurl.com/QCA-Eucharist-focus>

REFLECTION OF THE WEEK

THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER (APRIL 14)

Grace-filled beginnings

The disciples on the road to Emmaus and those in the Upper Room experienced Jesus in bodily form and also in his role as rabbi. He helped them “connect the dots” of their Jewish tradition so they could see that the Resurrection was the fulfillment of the hopes of their ancestors.

READINGS: Acts 3:13-15, 17-19; 1 John 2:1-5a; Luke 24:35-48 (47 <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/041424.cfm>). “*He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.*”

FAITH IN ACTION

Allow Easter to help you locate yourself in the vast sweep of history and see that you are the intended beneficiary of God’s grace since the beginning of time.