

## *Eucharistic Prayer and Eucharistic Prayers revisited*

For the next several weeks these reflections might be more accurately called *What Are We **Saying** and Why?* Our recent reflections have focused on the *Eucharistic Prayer* (EP), the great prayer of praise of thanksgiving that makes up the *Liturgy of the Eucharist*, the largest part of the second main part of the Mass.

The EP begins after the *Preparation of the Gifts* with the *Preface*, when the priest and Congregation pray in dialogue: *The Lord be with you – And also with you. Lift up your hearts – We lift them up to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God – It is right to give him thanks and praise.* {The exact wording of these particular prayers will change somewhat when the new translation of the Mass prayers comes into effect next November 27<sup>th</sup>, the First Sunday of Advent.} It concludes with the great expression of praise and glorification of God called the *Doxology*: *Through him, with him, and in him...etc.*

As noted previously, there are currently 13 different Eucharistic Prayers approved for use in the United States, with three used most regularly. What we will do over the next several weeks is look more closely at the actual text of Eucharistic Prayer number three (EP III - the EP most of us would be familiar with at Sunday Mass) section by section, to reflect on its message and meaning. As also noted previously, some parts of the different Eucharistic Prayers are common to them all, worded exactly the same in all 13 versions (such as the *Preface's* opening dialogue between priest and Congregation noted above, and the *Holy Holy Holy* that concludes the *Preface*), while other parts vary from one to another (such as the text of the *Preface* between its opening and conclusion).

Over the next several weeks we will take a detailed look at the actual text of the third Eucharistic Prayer (EP III) to try to understand better just what we are saying and why when we pray the Eucharistic Prayer.

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about. Contact our Council for Catechesis at [tkautza@saintmaryhc.org](mailto:tkautza@saintmaryhc.org).