

## **The Liturgy of the Eucharist: The Prayer Over the Gifts**

*The priest, facing the people and extending and then joining his hands, invites the people to pray, saying: **Pray, my sisters and brothers, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father.** The people rise and respond: **May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good, and the good of all his Church.** Then the priest says the prayer over the gifts.*

As I noted last week, there has been some confusion about just when the congregation should stand at this point in the Mass, after the gifts have been presented and prepared at the altar, and before the Prayer Over the Gifts. The quote cited above is what the Mass instruction book says about it, calling for the people to stand right after the priest's invitation to pray, and before the people's response. Most folks seem inclined to begin the response immediately after the invitation, as they are moving from sitting to standing. But this can be kind of clumsy and some of the response can get "lost" in the movement.

This is unfortunate and undesirable as it diminishes the people's full and conscious participation in, or "ownership of" the prayer which the response expresses. So, from now on, after the priest's invitation to prayer let's wait until all are standing before beginning the people's response. The Prayer Over the Gifts itself concludes the Preparation of the Gifts, and serves as a kind of 'bridge' or transition prayer to the great Eucharistic Prayer that follows. This prayer varies from Mass to Mass, and turns our attention to the offering of the gifts of bread and wine and of ourselves that we make in 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).