

What Are We Doing and Why?

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

We come now to the second part of the Mass, the *Liturgy of the Eucharist*. Recall that the whole of the Mass is made up of four distinct parts, the *Introductory Rites* {Entrance, Greeting, Penitential Rite, Kyrie, Gloria, and Opening Prayer}; the *Liturgy of the Word* {Scripture Readings, Homily, Profession of Faith, and General Intercessions}; the *Liturgy of the Eucharist* {Preparation of the Gifts, Eucharistic Prayer, Communion Rite}; and the *Concluding Rite* {Blessing and Dismissal}. When referring to the Mass, we often speak of the whole of it as the *celebration of the Eucharist*, while we also use the term *Eucharist* to refer more specifically to Holy Communion. As noted above, the *Liturgy of the Eucharist* refers to all that takes place from the Preparation of the Gifts through the Communion Rite. The word “liturgy” itself means literally “the people’s work” from a Greek word, *leitourgia* that has come to refer to the work or service of worshipping God that we carry out at Mass. The word “Eucharist” is also a Greek word that means “thanksgiving” or “blessing”, and speaks both of God’s gift and blessing to us in the gift of Jesus Christ, and our thanksgiving back to God for that gift and blessing, and all God’s gifts and blessings to us. In the weeks ahead we will look at each part of the *Liturgy of the Eucharist* in which we both offer praise and thanksgiving to God for the gift of the Eucharist, and personally receive that gift in Holy Communion.

Please let us know what else about our faith tradition you'd like to find out more about. Contact Fr. Dan Krettek at dkrettek@saintmaryhc.org.