

IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH: THE MASS



Blessing Prayers

This is article 10 of 21 of the Mass series

During the Offertory, when we offer to God the bread and wine which will later become the Body and Blood of Christ, the priest says something. What is the priest saying? And, more importantly, what is the priest doing?!

Thanks is given,...

When the bread and wine have been arranged on altar, the deacon gives the priest one of the ciboria (a ciborium is the plate-like vessel that will hold the Body of Christ). In quiet prayer the priest thanks God for the bread, which will become the Body of Christ. Then the deacon gives the priest the chalice (the special cup that will hold the Blood of Christ). Again, in prayer the priest thanks God for the wine that will become the Blood of Christ. So, why does the priest give thanks?

...in imitation of Christ,...

During the Last Supper, Christ said a blessing prayer over the bread (Luke 22:19) and gave thanks for the wine (Matthew 26:27 and Mark 14:23), which were common practices of the Passover (Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week, Pope Benedict XVI). The priest's prayers over the bread and wine are very similar to the blessing prayers of Passover. The priest's imitation of Christ at Mass, reminds us that we enter into the prayer of Christ. Simply put, we follow Christ.

...to unite ourselves with Him!

The Mass is the most powerful prayer because Christ offers Himself to the Father. When we go to Mass, we obey Christ and pray alongside Christ. When the priest lifts up the bread and wine, join Christ in His offering by giving your joys, sorrows, work, rest-everything to God! And, with Christ, give thanks to God for the bread and wine, the simple gifts He will use to unite ourselves with Him!