

† Servant Leader †

Ecumenism: Pope Benedict XVI Carries On The Legacy - Part II

Today we conclude our series on ecumenism with part two on how Pope Benedict XVI is carrying forth the legacy of John Paul II in the vital area of ecumenism.

'Spiritual ecumenism'

Benedict spoke at World Youth Day last August of the importance of a "spiritual ecumenism" in which "each individual commits himself to prayer, to the examination of his own life, to the purification of memory, to the openness of charity." The pope said he is "convinced that if more and more people unite themselves interiorly to the Lord's Prayer 'that all may be one,' then this prayer, made in the name of Jesus, will not go unheard."

According to Bishop Farrell, the Holy Father "constantly calls for prayer, conversion of our hearts to Christ, and great love and humility in our dealings with our brothers and sisters of other churches and communities." The bishop added that the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity is "greatly encouraged by the way this 'spiritual' ecumenism is gaining ground at every level of the church."

The council is encouraging spiritual ecumenism by releasing a guidebook, "offering suggestions for practical cooperation in spiritual activities," Bishop Farrell said. The text, which has been finalized and will be released in the next few months, includes "ideas for common prayer and other ways in which Christians can work together for unity," the bishop said.

"There are lots of things we can do at the local level where most ecumenism that's meaningful takes place," George said. "I'm thinking joint prayers together, joint Scripture distribution and translation, and bible studies together."

George also pointed to an "ecumenism in the trenches" that has developed between Catholics, evangelicals and other Protestants in their common work on behalf of protecting human life and promoting the family.

"We have met in the trenches as co-combatants against a common foe," he said. "That has drawn us into deeper discussions on issues related to salvation and justification and holiness of life."

The Holy Spirit

Emphasis on the preeminent role of the Holy Spirit is the third prong of Benedict's ecumenical approach.

"In fact, it is impossible for us to 'make' unity through our own powers alone," the Holy Father told an ecumenical gathering in Poland this May. Making the words of

Pope John Paul II his own, Benedict added, "We will be available to receive this gift to the extent that we open our minds and hearts to him through the Christian life and above all through prayer."

"Pope Benedict never fails to remind us that unity is a gift of the Holy Spirit," Bishop Farrell said.

Father Richard John Neuhaus, editor of *First Things* and a leader in ecumenical dialogue, told the *National Catholic Register*, "What Benedict has been saying over the years is that the quest for greater Christian unity is not a program under our control or a goal obedient to our plans and schedules." The Catholic Church persists in dialogue, Father Neuhaus said, "in the hope that - in a way we can neither anticipate nor control - the Holy Spirit will crown with success our irrevocable union with Christ in praying that 'they may all be one.'"

Bishop Dimitrios, the Orthodox ecumenical officer, agreed. "No matter what we say and how much we disagree or agree, the day will come when the Holy Spirit guides us to this unity," he said.

Baptist theologian George compared the task of marriage to the openness that allows the Holy Spirit to create unity among Christians.

"The way forward in a marriage is not two people gazing into one another's eyes lost in wonder and love for each other, George said "It's the fact that when together, they walk toward a common goal." This also applies to ecumenism, George added. "It's not so much exploring the wonders of each other in dialogue," he said, "as it is being jointly focused on the one we serve."

Looking Forward

As I wrote at the beginning of this journey through ecumenism, beginning with my letters from Rome, one of my responsibilities in the Diocese of Sacramento is that of Ecumenism and Interfaith Relations.

The tremendous opportunity I was given on my pilgrimage to gather new insight and learn about our own Faith, the great Christian Faiths and the other great faiths of the world and what is being done, along with a look at the ecumenical legacy of Pope John Paul II and the continuing commitment of Pope Benedict XVI give me great confidence for the future of Christian Unity. The Holy Spirit works through all of us to bring about the prayer of Christ Jesus "that all may be one."



THE PARISH OFFICE WILL BE
CLOSED
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2006
IN OBSERVANCE OF LABOR DAY

MASS INTENTIONS

Monday: Poor Souls +
Tuesday: Michael Rivera -Int.
Ronna Mae Rivera -Int.
Wednesday: Antonia Ner +
Anastacia Rivera +
Pantaleon Valbuena +
Thursday: Rita Crutcher +
Poor Souls +
Friday: Rita Crutcher +
Saturday: Poor Souls +



READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon: St. Augustine: 2 Thes 1:1-5,11-12; Mt 23:13-22
Tue: St. John the Baptist:
2 Thes 2:1-3a, 14-17; Mk 6:17-29
Wed: 2 Thes 3:6-10,16-18; Mt 23:27-32
Thu: 1 Cor 1:1-9; Mt 24:42-51
Fri: 1 Cor 1:17-25; Mt 25:1-13
Sat: 1 Cor 1:26-31; Mt 25:14-30
Sun: Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Dt 4:1-2,6-8; Jas 1:17-18,21b-22,27; Mk 7:1-8,14-15,21-23

Questions of the Week:

For Adults: To whom do you go when you are looking for meaning or answers to life's questions?
For Children: Who and what helps you believe in Jesus?

PRAYER CORNER

Please remember in your prayers:
Barbie Adorno, Peter Alvarez, Marcel Arnal, Mary Avila, Jack Barca, Pam Bardwil, Cody Bartley, Ray Bechler, Teresa Bennett Smith, Charles Black, Jill Boyd, Shirley Bryant, Bernard Burke, Joe Celeya, Bob Cleveland, Sue Cotner, Darren Crose, James Crutcher, Diane Cummings, Julie Desrochers, Maria Dixon, John Dooney, Bonnie Eldridge, Andrew Flores, Loretta Francescon, Frances & Leo Girard, Evelyn Gonsalves, Robert Gonzaga, Manuel Guerra, Max Guerra, Charlene Gutierrez, Rick Gutierrez, Eric Hayes, Jason Hayes, Stanley Hayes, Eddie Hoffman, Randy Kennedy, Kimberly Kolodzie, Ian Larmore, Maria Mamauog, Maria Martinez, Earl Mattingly, Luke McCord, Jenine Michilena, Mary Nekrassoff, Eleanor Obmann, Betty O'Neil, Lee Ann Parrott, Nita Parrott, Bud Phelps, Tom Poeschl, Sr. Mary Porter, Christine Regan, Raymond Remick, Zan Rockett, Nikelle Schafer, Charles Schneider, Katherine Schottgen, Lisa Stamps, Jardee Stanley, Phyllis Steele, Jo Ster, Laura & Paul Studer, Simon Sucharski, Clement Sweeney, D. Sweeney, Maureena Sutton, Elise Taylor, I. Thompson, X. Thompson, Jean Villanueva, Frank Vogel, Marvin Webster, Bishop Weigand, Mike Williams, Lani Zacherson, Claudette Zompetta

Stewardship
~ a way of life ~

CATHOLIC COMMUNICATIONS: THIS WEEKEND

In this 21st century, Catholics are challenged to spread the good news of our faith by modern means as well as traditional ones. That is why there is a second collection this weekend to support the annual Catholic Communications Campaign. Print, radio, internet, and television materials and programs are supported by your donations, including our local Diocesan projects. Your support is both needed and appreciated. If more convenient for you than using the collection basket this weekend, you may submit your donation to the parish office, marked Catholic Communications Campaign.

THANK YOU, GLORIA McKNIGHT

The Catholic Ladies Relief Society and Holy Family Parish would like to thank Gloria McKnight for her tremendous generosity in providing a large amount of food for the food closet. Your Christ-like compassion is a blessing to your parish family and particularly to those in need. Any parishioner who would like to help stock the food closet and assist the CLRS in this vital ministry is invited to call the parish office for more details.

STEWARDSHIP - TREASURE

GENERAL COLLECTION

Weekly Goal	\$	11,000.00
July 30	\$	8,338.00
Aug 6	\$	12,487.00
Aug 13	\$	9,293.00
Aug 20	\$	8,706.00
YEAR-TO-DATE	\$	77,141.00
Goal-to-Date (8 Weeks)	\$	88,000.00
% of Goal Collected		87.66 %
Annual Goal	\$	572,000.00

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COLLECTION

Weekly Goal	\$	3,750.00
July 30	\$	595.00
Aug 6	\$	2,842.50
Aug 13	\$	915.00
Aug 20	\$	2,934.00
YEAR-TO-DATE	\$	14,398.50
Goal-to-Date (8 Weeks)	\$	30,000.00
% of Goal Collected		48.00 %
Annual Goal	\$	195,000.00

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

Holy Day: Assumption	\$	1,819.50
Diocese of Torit, Sudan	\$	8,621.00

In today's first reading, Joshua challenges the people to decide whom they will serve. Recalling God's faithfulness to them and their ancestors, the people declare, "We also will serve the Lord, for He is our God." May we, too, be mindful of God's gifts to us and renew our commitment to serve Him with grateful hearts.



HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL'S second week will feature two major events: Back-to-School Night and the year's Opening Liturgy. Families of all students will assemble in the Community Center on Thursday, August 31, at 6:30 p.m. to meet the faculty and staff and hear Sister Arlene, principal, outline significant plans for the year. Parents and guardians of students in grades K-6 will go to the various classrooms to hear the teachers' plans for the year, and those whose students are in grades 7-8 will remain in the gym to meet all of the junior high teachers. Then on Friday, September 1, at 10 a.m., all children in grades 1-8 will participate in the opening Mass of the Holy Spirit. All parishioners are welcome to attend both of these events as well as to visit our parish school at any time!



NEWS FROM THE KNIGHTS



PARISH BREAKFAST SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 3RD

Next Sunday the Knights of Columbus will host a Parish Breakfast. The proceeds will go to the support of a Seminarian.

Why work on Labor Day Weekend? Let the Knights Cook you a great and very affordable breakfast; adults are \$4.00 and children under 12 only \$3.00. Enjoy fellowship and good eats together. See you there!



Catholic Faith Formation

Holy Family Faith Formation announces the **Opening Day of Religious Education Classes for English, on Sunday September 24th, from 10:15-11:45 am.** This will be a new dismissal time that will, hopefully help with the traffic congestion in the parking lot after class, that we have all experienced over the last couple of years. We will be holding **Pre-registration** after all masses on Sunday August 27th and Sunday September 3rd. Pre registering your child will give us a better opportunity to provide books and supplies for the students on their first day of class Please join us at St. Joseph's Hall for hospitality and, at the same time register your children for Religious Education Sessions. If you prefer, please fill out registration forms located at each entrance of the church, and either mail or drop in the collection basket or drop by our office at the Community Center as soon as possible. We want to welcome back all our returning students, and also invite any new children to our parish to share together as Our Lord blesses another Faith-Filled year at Holy Family. If you have any questions please contact Bonnie Johnson at 726-7217 or at home 408-5191. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

YOUTH MINISTRY

SUMMER LAKE PARTY POSTPONED

The "Goodbye to Summer" Party at Folsom Lake has been postponed - watch for future details.

CALLING ALL JR. HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL MUSICIANS AND SINGERS

We are trying to compile a list of all musically talented young people in the parish. Please email holyfamilycym@yahoo.com and let us know whether you sing or play an instrument (and which one!)



ARE YOU A WOMAN IN NEED OF A LITTLE TIME TO YOURSELF – A LITTLE FOOD FOR THE SOUL?

Women of all ages are warmly invited to Holy Family Mother's Ministry 9-week fall spiritual renewal. Experience the healing power of the Holy Spirit; Deepen your Prayer Life; Meet New Friends. Together we will begin the first half of the popular Women of Grace® Foundational Study Series. FREE childcare is available (reserve space before Aug. 29th.) The meetings begin Tuesday, September 12 from 9:30-11:30 am in the RCIA room at the Holy Family Community Center and meet each Tuesday morning until November 7th. This Sunday please visit our table outside after the masses for information or to register. You can also pick up a brochure at the church entrances, or you can contact Julie Desrochers 784-7622 for registration information.

DIAPER/CLOTHING DRIVE!!

The Sacramento Life Center is in need of diapers, new or gently used baby clothes, and diaper wipes for their baby closet. Each year the Sacramento Life Center helps hundreds of women facing an unintended pregnancy, and the baby closet is a vital part to the services offered. Please bring your donations to the downtown clinic at 930 Alhambra Blvd., Ste 210. We are open Monday-Friday 9 am - 5 pm. For more information please contact Sara at 916-451-4357.

PRO-LIFE MASS, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST, 8:30 AM

There will be a Pro-Life Mass at Holy Family Church this Friday, September 1, at 8:30 am. Please plan on coming to support respect for life from conception to natural death. Following the Mass, we will pray the Pro-Life rosary in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. Please join us - come and spend time with our Lord in the Eucharist. For more information, call Sally at 780-5305.

ALL NIGHT VIGIL FOR LIFE-SEPTEMBER 1st & 2nd 2006

All Night Vigil for Life at St. Rose Catholic Church, 5961 Franklin Blvd, Sacramento on Friday, September 1st beginning with 1:30 PM Mass and ending on the first Saturday, September 2nd with 8:00 AM Mass. Please join us for an hour or more or spend the night. Following the Vigil we will pray the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary and the Divine Mercy at the Abortion Clinic on Wright St. and Alta Arden. Any questions call June at 916-967-9158.

WOMEN'S COUNCIL NEWS

Well, here we are again, and it's time for our

ANNUAL PASTA DINNER!

We should have just as much fun this year as we did last year. This year's dinner will be on Saturday, September 9, 2006 from 5:30 pm to 10:00 pm. Tickets are \$10.00 per person, or \$90.00 for a table of 10. There will be good eats, door prizes, raffles, and entertainment, so please come and enjoy the evening. It's a great way to get the family together.



For reservations call Anita Marsolais at 723-1775 or Gerry Matista at 725-1478. Tickets will also be available at the school office. Hope to see you there!

LOOKING OUT FOR EACH OTHER IN THE HEAT

As our current extreme weather situation continues, please be aware of your neighbors, family members, or those you know living alone who may need assistance. The Fire and Law Enforcement Departments of our surrounding areas are asking that we all look out for our neighbors. Call, visit, check on anyone who may be alone, elderly or in a situation where they need access to water or a cool environment.

The City and County of Sacramento have listed area cooling centers for people to visit if they have no air conditioning in their home. To access that information please call 916-264-5011 (City) or 916-874-2691 (County), 916-498-1000 (Sacramento area Help line)

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) has agreed to work with customers who may encounter hardship in meeting higher than normal utility bills due to the heat.

FOOD PROGRAM FOR SENIORS:

A kind note was sent into the parish office to tell us about a program called Senior Citizens Services, Inc., that distributes two large boxes of food each week to seniors for a \$20 monthly donation. According to a local care provider, the food is high quality (meat, vegetables, cereal) and donated by local grocers. The senior (or his/her care provider or family member) would be responsible for picking the food up weekly at the distribution center from 9 am - 11:30 am Mon-Fri.

For more information, please contact:

Senior Citizens Services, Inc., 8175 Signal Court, Ste. M, Sacramento, CA 95824, Phone: 381-7794 (located off Power Inn Road between Lemon Hill and Elder Creek Roads)

WHEELS OF LOVE

All Medicare recipients should now be aware that they may be eligible to receive a power wheelchair, paid for by Medicare, if they suffer from conditions such as arthritis, respiratory disorders, cardiovascular disease, pain, gait instability, and other conditions that impair a beneficiary's ability to participate in completing activities of daily living. For more information on Medicare eligibility call 1-866-631-3022.

Prayer Opportunities



WORLD APOSTOLATE OF FATIMA:

Pope Benedict XVI has elevated the World Apostolate of Fatima (The Blue Army.) It is now officially associated with the Pontifical Council for the Laity in Rome. We are happy to offer these prayers here at Holy Family.

All are welcome to join us Mondays after the 8:30 am Mass in St. Mary's Hall. For information, please call Phyllis, 725-0218 or Phyllis, 725-5358.



VOCATIONS CROSS

Each week a parish family is presented with the Vocations Cross to take home for the week and asked to pray daily for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life. The next Sunday, the family returns the cross and another family is presented the cross to pray for vocations.

If you are interested in taking the Vocation Cross home, please contact Young Stewart at 332- 8732.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:

Jesus stays with us day and night in the Blessed Sacrament, blessing us with the grace that encourages us, consoles us, strengthens us, guides us and inspires us to place our trust in Him. We stay with the Real Presence of Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration to be more personally involved with Him and to keep the Eucharist central in our lives.



Spending time with Jesus in the Eucharist enables us to build a truly personal relationship with Him. Come into His presence in our beautiful chapel - He is looking forward to your visit!

BLESSED SACRAMENT CHAPEL VISITING HOURS:

Monday – Friday	9:00 am – 9:00 pm
Saturday	9:00 am – 3:30 pm
Sunday	1:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Also in the chapel:

Each day at 9:00 am a community Rosary and Chaplet of Mercy are prayed, and at 3:00 pm the Chaplet of Mercy is prayed.

DOMINICAN LAITY AT HOLY FAMILY

St. Dominic founded the Order of Preachers in 1216. He chose that name to express our purpose, namely to explain the message of Jesus to others. He outlined the means to achieve this purpose – through prayer, both private and liturgical; the steady study of Sacred Truth; the sharing of our spiritual life with others in the community; and, apostolic outreach.

From the beginning, St. Dominic associated devout Catholic lay people in his plan for spreading the Gospel. The Dominican Laity have been members of the Order of Preachers since the 13th century.

Think about joining the Dominican Laity of Sacramento which meets on the 1st Sunday of the month at Holy Family Church, in St. Mary Hall of the Community Center, from 1 – 3 pm. Our first meeting will be next Sunday, September 3rd, 2006. Hope to see you there.

For more information, please contact Phyllis Sale, 725-5358.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE DIOCESE - AND BEYOND

REUNIONS FOR CLASS OF 1966, ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL AND CHRISTIAN BROTHERS HIGH SCHOOL:

The St. Francis High School and Christian Brothers High School (Bishop Armstrong) classes of 1966 will celebrate together their 40-year high school reunion on September 16, 2006 at St. Francis High School. For further information, please contact Lynn Otten Spaich at 635-8789 (SFHS) or contact Linda or Jim Luttrell at 689-5791 (SFHS or CBHS).

RED MASS AT THE CATHEDRAL

On October 4, Bishop Weigand and the legal community are sponsoring a Red Mass at the Cathedral in the late afternoon, followed by dinner at the Sutter Club. Bishop Tom Curry will be the homilist at the Mass, and noted legal scholar Prof. Doug Kmiec will be the speaker at the dinner, talking about religious freedom and Constitutional Law. All attorneys, Judges and elected officials in the Sacramento area are invited. Details forthcoming.

RETURNING CATHOLICS

St. Clare Catholic Church extends a welcome to those who have been away from the church whether for a few months or many years. A series of six informal weekly meetings will begin on Monday, September 11. These sessions will be held from 7 - 9 pm in the St. Clare Room in the Narthex of the church. The discussions will be in an open, friendly and confidential environment and questions will be welcomed. St. Clare Church is at the corner of Baseline and Junction Blvd. Advanced registration is not required. For further information, call Alice and Bob Eickhoff at 771-5089 or St. Clare Church at 772-4717.

AMAZING GRAPES

Amazing Grapes, St Ignatius School's annual Food, Wine, Beer and Art Festival, is being held September 23rd, from 6:30 to 10:00 p.m., outside in the Church Garden at 3245 Arden Way (near Watt Ave).

Food samples are being provided by over 20 local restaurants, caterers and food purveyors, while beverage samples are being supplied by 24 California wineries, 3 local microbreweries and assorted, sort drink, coffee and water companies.

Five local fine artists of various mediums, will be on hand to display and sell their creations. There will be dancing to the music of "Azuar", a roving magician, a cigar smoking area, raffle drawings and a Silent Auction to complete the fun.

Tickets are available for \$50 in advance or \$55 at the door. Contact Tim at 482-7199 for tickets or more information.

DIOCESAN CATECHIST MINISTRY DAY 2006

Who Do You Say That I Am? Saturday, Sept. 9, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, 9:00 a.m. Mass with Bishop Richard Garcia. St. Francis Catholic High School, 5900 Elvas Avenue, Sacramento. \$25 Registration fee - Every 11th person free if you register as a parish group. Keynotes & Workshops. Wonderful food, Hospitality, Entertainment, Mariachi, Over 20 Exhibitors. Childcare Available (donations accepted) For More Information, Contact John Rieschick at 733-0133 or jrieschi@diocese-sacramento.org

RETREAT FOR SINGLE ADULTS

The Diocese of Sacramento Department Evangelization & Catechesis & its Single Adult Ministry are sponsoring an upcoming Retreat for Single Adults entitled, "A Single Sound of Soul," facilitated by Victoria MacDonald. This weekend, take time to be still... to listen and recognize the unique sound of your soul's voice.

Site: Mercy Retreat Center

535 Sacramento Street in Auburn

Date: Fri. October 20th - Sun. October 22nd

Time: 6:00 pm Friday to after lunch, Sunday

Cost: 175 for overnight retreatants & \$130 for commuters

INFO: Contact Marylee at (916) 419-9845

or email marylee_barcelona@earthlink.net

CATECHIST MINISTRY DAY

The Diocese of Sacramento Department of Evangelization & Catechesis is sponsoring Catechist Ministry Day for all Catechists, Teachers, Parents & interested Adults. Topics include Liturgy, Religious Education, Catechesis, RCIA, Social Justice, Methodology, Ministering with Youth & Teens, Whole Community Catechesis, Re-igniting Inactive Catholics, Evangelization, Reconciliation & Healing and Family Life.

Site: St. Francis Catholic High School

5900 Elvas Avenue in Sacramento

Date: Saturday, September 9th

Time: 8:00 am to 4:30 p.m.

Mass: 9:00 am with Bishop Garcia

Cost: \$25, includes continental breakfast, educational opportunities, lunch, exhibits & mariachi!

INFO: Contact Dr. Holly Peterson at (916) 733-0153

or email hpeterson@diocese-sacramento.org

CHILD CARE AVAILABLE!

SIX HOURS OF CATECHIST CERTIFICATION APPROVED

GARAGE SALE FOR BGMH

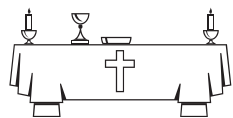
The Bishop Gallegos Maternity Home will hold a Garage Sale Friday through Sunday, September 1-3, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 6423 Lang Ave., Sacramento. From Hwy. 99 exit on 47 East, 2nd right). Please visit the Home for low prices on furniture, appliances, clothing, electronics and sporting goods. Donations and volunteers would be appreciated. BGMH provides shelter and care for 12 mothers and their babies in a loving home designed to meet their needs during a crisis pregnancy. For information, call Lenore at 395-9370.

SAINTS GO MARCHING IN

The second week in October brings the annual Saints Go Marching In walk to raise funds for the Bishop Gallegos Maternity Home in Sacramento. Look for further details in upcoming bulletins.

DIVINE MERCY CONFERENCE

Save this date: October 7, '06 for the Divine Mercy Conference at the Sacramento Convention Center presenting world famous speakers: Dr. Stockpole and Fr. Seraphim Mikalenko the leading expert on St. Faustina and Divine Mercy Devotion. You can help promote this event, call Cheryl 966-1830.



Exploring the Mass

Part III - Liturgy of the Eucharist



We continue our journey through the mass with the Liturgy of the Eucharist. We will spend two weeks on this central and sacred part of the Liturgy, with this week's issue covering the Preparation of the Gifts through the Great Amen concluding the Eucharistic Prayer.

General Instruction on the Roman Missal

Throughout this article we will include parts of the description of the preparation and the Eucharistic Prayer that is contained in the General Instruction on the Roman Missal. Vatican II not only spelled out the structure, but beautifully described the background and motivation for each part of the rite.

Preparation of the Gifts

This begins with the presentation of gifts during which the very elements Christ used at the first celebration of Eucharist - bread and wine - are brought to the table of the sacrifice. At the same time, we demonstrate our discipleship as we offer our sacrificial gifts of financial support for the church and for the poor.

During the Preparation, we continue our use of music to enhance the celebration by singing a song to accompany the activity.

GIRM 49. At the beginning of the liturgy of the Eucharist the gifts, which will become Christ's body and blood, are brought to the altar.

First the altar, the Lord's table, which is the center of the whole Eucharistic liturgy, is prepared: the corporal, purificator, missal, and chalice are placed on it (unless the chalice is prepared at a side table).

The gifts are then brought forward. It is desirable for the faithful to present the bread and wine, which are accepted by the priest or deacon at a convenient place. The gifts are placed on the altar to the accompaniment of the prescribed texts. Even though the faithful no longer, as in the past, bring the bread and wine for the liturgy from their homes, the rite of carrying up the gifts retains the same spiritual value and meaning.

This is also the time to receive money or other gifts for the church or the poor brought by the faithful or collected at the Mass. These are to be put in a suitable place but not on the altar.

Prayer over the Gifts

The preparation is followed by this Prayer through which we offer thanksgiving for the tremendous gifts we are about to receive in return, and we prepare for the centerpiece of the celebration, the Eucharistic prayer.

GIRM 53. Once the gifts have been placed on the altar and the accompanying rites completed, the preparation of the gifts comes to an end through the invitation to pray with the priest and the prayer over the gifts, which are a preparation for the eucharistic prayer.

Eucharistic Prayer

This prayer is the center and summit of the entire celebration. At its beginning we are compelled to "Lift up your hearts." We join with the church throughout the world in recognizing and giving thanks and praise for the paschal sacrifice of the Lord. Our church, our faith, our very lives as Christians are built on the sacred mystery of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and this is the part of the liturgy where we fulfill what Christ asked of us the night before he died and "do this in remembrance" of His gift of salvation.

54. Now the center and summit of the entire celebration begins: the eucharistic prayer, a prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification. The priest invites the people to lift up their hearts to the Lord in prayer and thanks; he unites them with himself in the prayer he addresses in their name to the Father through Jesus Christ. The meaning of the prayer is that the entire congregation joins itself to Christ in acknowledging the great things God has done and in offering the sacrifice.

The eucharistic prayer calls for all to listen in silent reverence, but also to take part through the acclamations for which the rite makes provision.

Great Amen

Once again we utilize the unique power and effect of music to proclaim our glorious assent to the central prayer of the mass. We express our faith in the account of the paschal mystery that has been presented, we express our immeasurable gratitude for the sacrifice of Christ and we give glory to God, the author of it all.