

SUMMARY

Eucharist

History

- reenacts the closing events of Jesus' life
- links past-present-future one ceremony
- powerful, meaningful ritual
- last of the 3 sacraments of initiation
- prescribed by Christ
- have to see the Eucharist as body, not bread

Eucharist celebrates

- "a way of remembering"
- daily reminder of God's love
- Jesus shared bread at last supper/do this in memory of me
- a thanksgiving feast
- "Eucharist" means giving thanks

Ritual Meal

- earliest form of rituals are eating and gathering
- sacrifice meal
- ritual not a routine
- builds on the symbolism of a ritual meal

Sign and Symbols

- symbol of God's love for us
- Jesus' body
- last supper/banquet
- welcome others to participate in the Eucharist
- unfilled celebration
- if we went to Mass on Sunday, it would make the rest of the week more meaningful
- unified body
- it is the most commonly received sacrament, most pivotal of 7
- as a community, we celebrate the presence of Christ in the Eucharist
- bread: basic food for most people/closely associated with nature
human work

Vestments

- white/purple/black robe

Words

- "Do this in Memory of Me."
- "This is my body, which has been given up for you."

ST. ROBERT'S CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

"THE EUCHARIST"

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THE EUCHARIST

Thesis: The Eucharist is a sign of Jesus' death, and how He gave himself up for us, and how we experience Him through His body.

History of the Eucharist

The Eucharist is a Jewish Ritual of worship. It dates back to the Last Supper, where Jesus celebrated a typical Jewish community meal with His friends. Sharing a meal with family, (very important to the Jews) also dates back to the Passover Meal. This is called the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the early Christians added Jewish synagogue service and then became the Liturgy of the Word. ¹

The Eucharist is a sacrament, and is also a ritual. It is a repeated sacrament, and is the most frequently used among all sacraments. It is "a way of remembering" and a daily reminder of God's love. ² Jesus at the Last Supper shared bread with us, and said "Do this in Memory of Me." This is why we have bread, because it represents Jesus' body, and how He gave

¹Religion Manual p: 127

²Religion Manual p: 118

Himself up for us. The first little while of the Church, the "Mass was celebrated as a friendship meal called agape." ³ Christians shared brought food to the house where they were assembled, but as the numbers increased, the meal was cut down to bread and wine. Today, the offertory collection echoes the early years of the spirit giving at the Eucharist. ⁴ It is living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever believes has eternal life.

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Rituals of the Eucharist

The Eucharist, breaking of the bread, sharing the wine, eating and gathering are the earliest form of rituals. These rituals are a sacrifice meal. They are sacrifice meals because they take time, and are enjoyed, so therefore it is a meal, not a routine. The sharing of the meal is important, and it is a time of experiencing each other. ⁶

The word Eucharist means giving thanks, and the ritual of the Eucharist is like a "Thanksgiving every day of the year". ⁷

Symbols of the Eucharist

³Religion Manual p: 127

⁴Religion Manual p: 127

⁵John 6: 47-58

⁶Religion Manual p: 119

⁷Religion Manual p: 119

The Eucharist is a symbol of God's love for us. It illustrates Jesus's body, and welcomes others to participate in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is an unfilled Celebration and receiving the Eucharist on Sunday, makes the rest of the week more meaningful. It symbolizes the unified body of Christ, and the church symbolizes a community as we celebrate the presence in Christ in the Eucharist. The bread symbolizes giving thanks, and is the basic food for most people and is closely associated with nature and work of human hands. Sharing the Cup represents that drink is essential to life and both bread and wine are symbols of Christ. It also symbolizes how we can go forty days without water as opposed to five days without water. ⁸

Proclaiming the Word of God means that Jesus is present in the Gospels and He comes alive for us in hearing the words and stories of his life. We stand to welcome Christ into our living word of God.

Vestments

The garments worn during the Eucharist at Church are either Black, White, or Purple. These are for different times of the year. Black symbolizes death, purple illustrates Advent, and white portrays ordinary time.

Words, Statements, Responses

⁸"The Eucharist" p: 142

There are many different expressions used in the Mass, all with important meanings. First, the priest prepares the gifts, to make them Holy. We respond "Blessed it be God forever." Another one is "Do this in Memory of Me." This means that Jesus gave Himself up for us, and wants us to remember what He did for us. It reenacts the closing events of Jesus' life on earth.⁹ This is followed by the Eucharist Prayer "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord..." then ensued by "Lord, I am not worth to receive you, but only say the word, and I shall be healed." This means to clean yourself of sins, and get ready for the body of Christ.

To ask God if He welcomes you to receive the Eucharist.

⁹Religion Manual p: 129

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