

My Catholic Worship! Study Group

Session 4 - The Most Holy Eucharist!

Pre-meeting Prep

Participants should be asked to read Chapter Five of the *My Catholic Worship!* book prior to this meeting.

5 minutes - Gather

Snacks and informal social time as people arrive. Try to be punctual and gather everyone together no longer than 5 minutes after the scheduled starting time.

5-10 minutes - Opening prayer and Scripture

Everyone sits quietly as the leader begins with the Sign of the Cross and then invites a period of silence in the following way:

"Let us quiet ourselves as we begin this study of our glorious Catholic worship together. 'Lord, as we sit here for a minute in silence, help each one of us to bring our own questions, concerns, fears, and joys to You. Help us, in this moment of silence, to be attentive to Your gentle voice speaking to us, directing us, and calling us to a deeper faith.'"

Take about a minute in silence with eyes closed so that each person can speak to our Lord about their own particular cares and concerns.

Leader reads the following invitation:

Let us ponder the Word of God. Let us reflect upon our own faith journey with the following questions: Do I believe? How deep is my faith? Am I open to letting God speak to me? Am I open to the Word of God and willing to let God's truth sink in more deeply? Am I willing to let this new faith change my life?

The leader of the session prayerfully reads the following Scriptures, one at a time, pausing for about 30 seconds between each verse:

John 6:53-56: Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.

Matthew 8:5-8: When he entered Capernaum, a centurion approached him and appealed to him, saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, suffering dreadfully." He said to him, "I will come and cure him." The centurion said in reply, "Lord, I am not

worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed.

Mark 14:18-26: And as they reclined at table and were eating, Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me." They began to be distressed and to say to him, one by one, "Surely it is not I?" He said to them, "One of the Twelve, the one who dips with me into the dish. For the Son of Man indeed goes, as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would be better for that man if he had never been born." While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many. Amen, I say to you, I shall not drink again the fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Revelation 4:1-8: After this I had a vision of an open door to heaven, and I heard the trumpet-like voice that had spoken to me before, saying, "Come up here and I will show you what must happen afterwards." At once I was caught up in spirit. A throne was there in heaven, and on the throne sat one whose appearance sparkled like jasper and carnelian. Around the throne was a halo as brilliant as an emerald. Surrounding the throne I saw twenty-four other thrones on which twenty-four elders sat, dressed in white garments and with gold crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings, and peals of thunder. Seven flaming torches burned in front of the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. In front of the throne was something that resembled a sea of glass like crystal. In the center and around the throne, there were four living creatures covered with eyes in front and in back. The first creature resembled a lion, the second was like a calf, the third had a face like that of a human being, and the fourth looked like an eagle in flight. The four living creatures, each of them with six wings, were covered with eyes inside and out. Day and night they do not stop exclaiming: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come."

Leader then says: ***Let us take a moment in silence to reflect upon these words.*** (a minute of silence)

The Leader invites everyone to pray the following prayer from St. Thomas Aquinas:

***Prostrate I adore Thee, Deity unseen,
Who Thy glory hidest 'neath these shadows mean;
Lo, to Thee surrendered, my whole heart is bowed,
Tranced as it beholds Thee, shrined within the cloud.***

***Taste, and touch, and vision, to discern Thee fail;
Faith, that comes by hearing, pierces through the veil.***

***I believe whate'er the Son of God hath told;
What the Truth hath spoken, that for truth I hold.***

The prayer time concludes with everyone professing the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

45-50 minutes - Discussion questions

Each person should be invited to share something or ask a question if he/she chooses regarding the questions/discussion starters below. Go through one question at a time, and give each person an opportunity to say something if he/she chooses. Avoid having one or two persons dominate the discussion. Go around the circle and do not be afraid to share! Your insights might assist someone else in their understanding of the topics. Your question might very well be the same question someone else has. Some of the questions below will invite a personal sharing; other questions will invite you to share with others what you read in the chapter for this discussion. The goal is to share personally and to make sure that the faith of our Church is clearly expressed and understood by all.

1. The hymn used in the opening prayer is from St. Thomas Aquinas and is called the *Adoro te Devote*. This prayer especially reveals that our five senses are deceived regarding the reality of the Eucharist. Share any thoughts about the beautiful depth of that prayer regarding the Eucharist.
2. The Eucharist is about three truths. Discuss how these three are connected. Discuss each one of them individually:
 1. The Sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated. The Eucharist is "One Eternal Sacrifice." Every time we participate in it, we are sharing in that one Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. It transcends all time. Share any thoughts, questions, insights, or confusions about this reality.
 2. From that Sacrifice, we receive the lasting Sacrament of the Eucharist. Discuss the True Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. How should we revere this Sacrament? Is it treated with the proper reverence and respect today? The presence of Christ in the Eucharist is veiled but is the same Christ who is in Heaven. How is the presence of Christ most likely treated in Heaven? Do we treat His presence in the Sacrament the same way?

3. That Sacrament achieves its purpose when Communion is received. Communion means “union with.” What are your thoughts on the unity that God wants to establish through this gift of the Eucharist? What does true “communion” mean for our lives? What should be the effect of this communion?
3. Open [Chapter 5 of the book *My Catholic Worship!*](#) and walk through the various parts of the Mass. Share thoughts, questions, or insights on as many parts of the Mass you have time for.

20 minutes - Final Reflections and sharing

Go around and give each person an opportunity to share what might have stood out the most to them from the discussion or what left them the most confused, so as to gain further clarity or insight from others.

5 minutes - Closing prayer

Leader begins with the Sign of the Cross and invites a minute of silence with all eyes closed. Each person should reflect upon what was discussed, especially what stood out to him/her the most.

Leader then prays the following prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, we believe You are truly present in the Most Holy Eucharist! We thank You for dying on the Cross so that You can give us the glorious Sacrament of Your Body and Blood broken and poured out for us. Help us to understand this Gift more completely. Help us to receive this precious Gift more deeply into our souls.

Lord, as we adore You and as we receive You in Holy Communion, make us one with You. Transform us into Yourself so that we can more fully be Your Body in the world.

May all people come to understand this unfathomable Gift of Your continued presence among us. Jesus, we trust in You. Jesus, we adore You!

Leader then invites everyone present to offer their own prayer in the following way (Note: This can be done out loud, but it might be preferable if it's done in silence at the discretion of the leader):

Let us now each bring our own personal concerns before our Lord, trusting that He hears us and knows all we need. Let us entrust these prayers to Him with full confidence that He desires to take control.

(Take a minute of silence for each person to speak to God about their own personal needs).

Leader then invites everyone to close with the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.