

Tea and Talk

28 October: The Dismissal



Introduction

The **Eucharist** (also called the **Mass**, or **Holy Communion**) is the principal Christian act of worship, which we celebrate in obedience to the command of Jesus on the night of his betrayal. In the offering of the Eucharist we re-present the sacrifice of Calvary, and Jesus gives us his body and blood in bread and wine.

The Mass has four main sections: (1) The Gathering; (2) The Liturgy of the Word; (3) The Liturgy of the Sacrament; (4) The Dismissal. Today we look at **the Dismissal**.

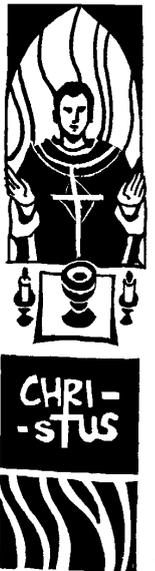
For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed, took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. (1 Corinthians 11.23-26)

The fourth and final part of the Mass concludes the liturgy, but also starts something else. It is the launchpad for us to live out the mystery we have celebrated. It includes the Notices, the Blessing, and the Dismissal.

1. The Notices

The Notices are not an 'official' part of the liturgy, but you would be hard pressed to find a church that doesn't have them! Some churches have the notices at the beginning of the service, others before the Peace, but most at this point, between the Post-Communion Prayer and the Blessing. What do you think is best? Why do they work well at this point?

At St John's in addition to general notices, we also have the Publication of Banns, and we bless people who are celebrating birthdays, or preparing to make journeys. Why do you think it's important to incorporate this into the Sunday Mass?



2. The Blessing

The Mass concludes with a general blessing. Of course, we have already been blessed by the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, so, in one sense, there is no further need for us to be blessed. But the blessing is a way of expressing our desire to be blessed in God's service as we leave church, and we pray that the blessing we receive may remain with us as we go about his work in the coming week.

... and the blessing of God almighty, ✠ the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The celebrant makes the sign of the cross over the faithful as he or she gives the blessing, and we make the sign of the cross on ourselves at the same time.

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. (Luke 24.50-51)

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. (Philippians 4.7)



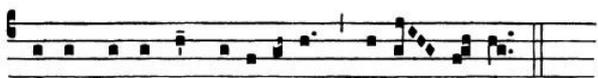
3. The Dismissal

After the blessing, the deacon, or another minister, dismisses the assembly, from which we get the name of this section of the Eucharist.

Go in the peace of Christ
OR Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.
Thanks be to God.

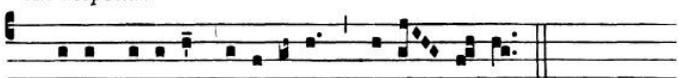
In fact, the word *Dismissal*, *Mass* and *Mission* all come from the Latin word for 'Go': *Ite missa est*.

What do you think is the relationship between *Mass* and *Mission*, given that the words have the same root?



I - te, missa est, alle-lú-ia, alle- lú- ia.
☩ The Mass is ended, go in peace, alleluia, alleluia.

All respond:



☩ De- o grá-ti- as, alle-lú-ia, alle- lú- ia.
☩ Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’ (Matthew 28.19-20)

And he said to them, ‘Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation. (Mark 16.15)

After this the Lord appointed seventy others and sent them on ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he himself intended to go. He said to them, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Go on your way. See, I am sending you out like lambs into the midst of wolves. Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road. (Luke 10.1-4)

Thus I make it my ambition to proclaim the good news, not where Christ has already been named, so that I do not build on someone else’s foundation, but as it is written, ‘Those who have never been told of him shall see, and those who have never heard of him shall understand.’ (Romans 15.20-21)

Then what?

Having been told to ‘Go in the peace of Christ’, we then stay and chat to one another! Would it be better if we just left and got on with the task of spreading the good news of Jesus Christ? Or is there a purpose to post-Mass coffee other than just a time to socialise? How would we feel about having coffee *before* Mass?!

