

Saint Patrick's Church

A Year of the Sacraments
Christ, Catechesis, Celebration

A Parish Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, pierce my soul with your love so that I may always long for you alone, who are the bread of angels and the fulfillment of the soul's deepest desires. May my heart always hunger and feed upon you so that my soul may be filled with the sweetness of your presence. May my soul thirst for you, who are the source of life, wisdom, knowledge, light and all the riches of God our Father. May I always seek and find you, think upon you, speak to you and do all things for honor and glory of your holy name. Be always my only hope, my peace, my refuge and my help in whom my heart is rooted so that I may never be separated from you. Amen.

- Saint Bonaventure, 1221-1274, *Desire for Closer Union*.

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Saint Patrick, pray for us!



A Year of the Sacraments

XX. We Become Whom We Receive

At the very heart of every celebration of the sacraments is the encounter between God and the faithful, and the Eucharist through its parts spells out for us this encounter between Jesus Christ and his disciples.

I. Introductory Rites. It begins with Jesus' intent to gather His disciples that we may encounter Him. Within the first part is the Penitential Act through which we recognize our offenses to God and neighbor. In seeking and receiving forgiveness, our relationship with God and one another is restored, enabling us to worthily celebrate the sacred mysteries. Before the Collect or Opening Prayer, during the brief pause, remember to offer to God your prayer intentions. The first part identifies us as the people gathered and restored by God.

II. Liturgy of the Word. Jesus has made known to us the alimentary nature of the Word of God: "Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." Through the Old Testament, we hear God's promises, and in the New Testament, we find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. The Homily is intended to expound on the readings or themes of faith. Our response to the Word of God is our Profession of Faith in God, through the Creed. After we listen to God, we make known to Him our prayers through the Prayer of the Faithful. The second part identifies us as the people nourished and shaped by the Word of God.

III. Liturgy of the Eucharist. Jesus is the Word made flesh, the Lamb of God. In Jesus, we learn that to fulfill the Word of God is to give ourselves completely to God. None among the children of Adam had done and can do this successfully, and so Jesus freely chose to do it for us, sacrificing himself to the Father. At Offertory, we offer to God the work of our hands so that at Consecration, what we offered is perfected in the sacrifice of Jesus, whose Body and Blood gives us divine life. The third part identifies us as the people nourished and shaped by the Son of God.

IV. Concluding Rites. Having gathered by God, informed by His Word, and transformed by His Son, God sends us forth to continue the mission He gave us through His Son, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. God has done something beautiful for us. It is must not be kept to ourselves but must be shared with others. The fourth part identifies us as the people sent on a mission by God.