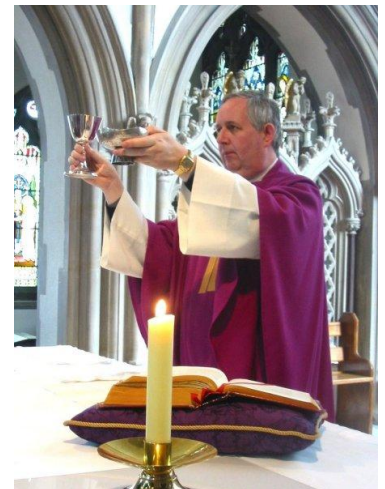


#23 ALL GLORY AND HONOR IS YOURS

How often do you praise God? This question kept creeping into my thoughts as I prepared to write this article. This week, we conclude our analysis of the Eucharistic Prayer by examining the doxology and Great Amen.

As I thought about the proposed question, my initial thought was, “not very much.” In my hectic life, I sometimes forgot to consciously give praise to God. But then, I thought more about it and realized that my actions and ministry, even though not perfect, are united to all creation in giving praise to God. If you recall our discussion over the last several weeks, you will remember that when we gather to celebrate Eucharist, we unite with all of creation in the great song of praise and thanksgiving, culminating in the Eucharistic Prayer. Our celebration, our listening to God’s word and sharing at the table, forms us to be a people of praise so that when we are dismissed from the gathering, we can continue the work begun in our worship of God. We do not always have to explicitly say words of praise, but we do need to let our lives be transformed by the celebration of the Eucharist so that we become a people who praise God in everything that we do and say.

The Eucharistic Prayer concludes with a prayer of praise called the doxology. Lifting the chalice and paten, the presider sings, “Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.” This short Trinitarian prayer sums up the entire prayer that we offer to the Father, through and with Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. The doxology is a prayer of praise. Here, we praise God once more for the profound gift of love and mercy shared with us in Christ whom we will soon receive in sacramental form. In this prayer, we are also reminded to live a life of praise, a life that gives glory to God with all of creation (for more on this, you might refer back to my article on the Holy).



The people’s “Amen” concludes the doxology. This amen is often called the Great Amen because it concludes the Eucharistic Prayer, which is at the center of our celebration. At the beginning of her poem titled “Amen”, Barbara Schmich Searle says, “Be careful of simple words said often.” This amen affirms everything the presider has said and done during the Eucharistic Prayer. By exclaiming the Great Amen, each person in the assembly boldly declares that he or she affirms the action of our Eucharist and is willing to say yes to God’s invitation to feed the poor, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, and live the Christian life. This coming week, listen attentively to these words at the Eucharist and reflect how you might live your “Amen” in your life.

Next time, we will discuss the sign of peace and fraction rite.