



A Guide to the Eucharist

Basic Liturgics

Liturgy

Liturgy comes from the Greek word *leitourgia*, which literally means “work of the people”. It was used to refer to a public work done at private expense. In church usage, liturgy is that act of worship that we do together on behalf of ourselves, the wider Church, and the world.

Eucharist

The word Eucharist comes from the Greek word *eucharistia*, which means “thanksgiving”. For this reason, the Prayer Book also calls the Eucharistic Prayer “The Great Thanksgiving”. The service of Holy Communion is our great act of thanksgiving to God.

The Structure of the Eucharistic Liturgy

The Eucharistic Liturgy is divided into two main parts:

- 1) The Liturgy of the Word
 - the Gathering Rite
 - the Lessons and Sermon
 - the Creed
 - the Intercession and Confession
 - the Peace
- 2) The Liturgy of the Table
 - the Offertory
 - the Eucharistic Prayer
 - the Lord’s Prayer
 - the Fraction
 - Holy Communion
 - the Post-Communion Prayer
 - the Blessing and Dismissal

Those who Help with Worship

Celebrant: a priest or bishop who presides at the liturgy

Deacon: a person ordained to the diaconate who can help with reading the gospel, leading the Prayers of the People, leading the Confession, setting the altar at offertory, distributing Communion, cleaning up after Communion, and the dismissal

Crucifer: a person who carries the processional cross

Acolyte: a person who is responsible for lighting altar candles and carrying a torch in procession (from the Greek for “follower”)

Book-bearer: a person who carries the gospel book in procession and holds it during the gospel reading

Lay Eucharistic Minister: A layperson who has been authorized by the bishop and the rector to help distribute Communion, usually by being a chalice-bearer

Lector (Reader): a person who reads a lesson from the Bible

Preacher: a person who gives a sermon or homily

Intervenor: a person who leads the Prayers of the People

Oblation-bearer: a person who brings up the gifts of bread and wine at the offertory

Usher: a person who hands out the bulletin, helps people find their seats, collects and presents the offering, and helps direct people during Communion

Altar Guild: the team of people who help prepare the altar area and are responsible for cleaning the vessels and linens

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Note: Throughout this bulletin, items in the body of the service text which do NOT appear in The Book of Common Prayer are printed in gray type rather than black.

# The Holy Eucharist: Rite Two

## The Word of God: The Liturgy of the Word

### Prelude

Often, when there is music accompanying the service, the musician(s) will begin with an instrumental piece.

### Processional Hymn

*A hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.*

### Opening Acclamation

*The people standing, the Celebrant says*

✠ Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

*People* And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever.  
Amen.

*In place of the above, from Easter Day through the Day of Pentecost*

*Celebrant* ✠ Alleluia. Christ is risen.

*People* The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

*In Lent and on other penitential occasions*

*Celebrant* ✠ Bless the Lord who forgives all our sins.

*People* His mercy endures for ever.

### The Collect for Purity

*The Celebrant may say*

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known,  
and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our  
hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may  
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name;  
through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

This sort of note, offering directions about liturgy, is called a “rubric”, from the Latin word *rubrica* (“red”), and refers to a time when these instructions were written in red type. In the Episcopal church, rubrics “have the force of law” -- they are authoritative and binding. Clergy agree to uphold them “as part of the worship of the Church” in their ordination oath.

Many people cross themselves at the beginning of the opening acclamation. The “sign of the cross” dates back to at least the year 200 CE, when Christians marked themselves with a cross on the forehead. By the next century, the gesture had become the bigger one we use today.

The Collect for Purity is an English rendering by Archbishop Thomas Cranmer of the Latin prayer that began the “Sarum Rite” liturgy used by medieval churches in England before the Reformation. It remains a distinctive part of Anglican/Episcopal worship.

Sometimes a response of the congregation is not specifically noted in a rubric. Italics within a spoken portion of the text indicate that the people are to say that word or phrase.

# The Song of Praise

## The Gloria

*When appointed, the following hymn or some other song of praise is sung or said, all standing*

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father;  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
✠ in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

It is customary to use the Gloria at all Sunday and Holy Day liturgies, except in the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent. However, the Invitatory or another song of praise may also be used.

Out of respect, some people slightly bow their heads whenever the name of Jesus is mentioned in prayer. This echoes the words of St. Paul in his letter to the church in Philippi (Philippians 2:10-11).

Many people cross themselves at the mention of the Trinity.

## The Kyrie

*On other occasions the following is used*

|                            |           |                         |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| Lord, Have mercy.          |           | Kyrie Eleison.          |
| <i>Christ, have mercy.</i> | <i>or</i> | <i>Christe eleison.</i> |
| Lord, have mercy.          |           | Kyrie eleison.          |

“Kyrie eleison” is Greek for “Lord, have mercy”. It is an ancient part of the liturgy, and today we often use it in Lent.

*or this*

## The Trisagion

Holy God,  
Holy and Mighty,  
Holy Immortal One,  
Have mercy upon us.

The Trisagion comes from a hymn used in the Eastern Christian tradition.

## The Collect of the Day

*The Celebrant says to the people*

The Lord be with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Celebrant* Let us pray.

*The Celebrant says the Collect.*

*People* Amen.

This opening prayer is called a “Collect” because it traditionally followed a period of time when the people all offered individual prayers; the person presiding would “collect” their prayers into a summary prayer. The Collect of the Day still summarizes the theme(s) of the day.

This exchange is called “the Salutation” in liturgical parlance. It has roots in Boaz’s greeting and his reapers’ response in the biblical book of Ruth (2:4).

## The Lessons

*The people sit. One or two Lessons, as appointed, are read, the Reader first saying*

A Reading (Lesson) from \_\_\_\_\_.

*After each Reading, the Reader may say*

The word of the Lord.

*People* Thanks be to God.

*Or the Reader may say* Here ends the Reading (Epistle).

*Silence may follow.*

The Episcopal Church uses the three-year Revised Common Lectionary shared by many of the major Christian denominations. The lectionary cycles the readings that are used. On Sundays and major feast days, there are generally three readings and a psalm:  
1) a reading, usually from the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament), except in Easter, when the reading is from the Acts of the Apostles;  
2) a psalm or canticle, intended as a response to the first reading, not a reading in itself;  
3) a reading from the Epistles (the letters that are included in the New Testament);  
4) the gospel reading about Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John’s account.

**A gospel text must be read at every Eucharistic celebration.** It is the one reading that can never be omitted.

## The Gospel Hymn

(also called the Gradual Hymn or Sequence Hymn)

## The Gospel Reading

*Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying*

✠ The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

According to \_\_\_\_\_.

*People* Glory to you, Lord Christ.

*After the Gospel, the Reader says*

The Gospel of the Lord.

*People* Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The gospels about Jesus hold a special place in our worship as Christians. So we stand rather than sit for the reading, and whereas lay people (those not ordained) usually read the earlier lessons, it is custom that only a deacon or priest reads the Gospel reading. We even have a special – often decorated – book from which we read the gospel text. Often the gospel book is carried in procession before reading; this highlights its importance to us.

Often, at the announcement of the gospel reading, people trace a little cross on their foreheads, then on their lips, and then on their chests. This symbolizes the prayer “May the Gospel be in my mind, on my lips, and in my heart.”

Some people bow during these responses to the gospel introduction and conclusion.

## The Sermon

*On Sundays and other Major Feasts there follows, all standing*

## The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit

he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.

With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

✠ and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The sermon is based on one or more of the readings. It is intended to be an exposition of what has just been read, to help us make the Word a living, transforming reality in our everyday lives.

The Nicene Creed is one of the early summaries of the Christian faith. It dates back to the Church Councils of Nicea (325 CE) and Constantinople (381 CE), when bishops from the whole church gathered to discuss what was most important in the Christian faith. The Creed is recited at most Sunday and major Holy Day services.

Many people bow during these lines mentioning the Incarnation – Jesus humbling himself to take on human form.

In the high church tradition, people bow at the words “worshiped and glorified”.

The word “catholic” means “universal”. Anglicans/Episcopalians have always professed to be part of the catholic church.

Many people cross themselves at the mention of resurrection and eternal life.

# The Prayers of the People

*Prayer is offered with intercession for*

*The Universal Church, its members, and its mission*

*The nation and all in authority*

*The welfare of the world*

*The concerns of the local community*

*Those who suffer and those in any trouble*

*The departed (with commemoration of a saint when appropriate)*

The Prayers of the People are meant to represent the congregation's prayer intentions for the local community and the world.

The Prayer Book includes six different forms (beginning on page 383). Although these are often used in worship, they are not required. They serve as examples of how a congregation might draft Prayers of the People. Any draft is acceptable as long as it meets the criteria listed here.

## Example: Form III

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

*That we all may be one.*

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;

*That your name may be glorified by all people.*

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

*That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.*

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;

*That there may be justice and peace on the earth.*

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

*That our works may find favor in your sight.*

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

*That they may be delivered from their distress.*

Give to the departed eternal rest; ✠

*Let light perpetual shine upon them.*

Some people cross themselves any time we pray for those who have died.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

*May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.*

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

*Silence.*

*The People may add their own petitions.*

*The Celebrant adds a concluding collect.*

## Confession of Sin

*A Confession of Sin is said here if it has not been said earlier. On occasion, the Confession may be omitted.*

*The Deacon or Celebrant says*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Minister and People*

Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name. Amen

The Prayer Book asks us (*see page 860*) to prepare for Holy Communion by  
1) examining our lives,  
2) repenting of our sins,  
3) being in love and charity with others.  
The Confession and Peace help us to do that preparation work.

Traditionally people kneel, or if standing, they bow, during the words of the Confession and the Absolution.

## The Absolution

*The Bishop when present, or the Priest, stands and says*

Almighty God have mercy on you, ✠ forgive you all your sins  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all  
goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in  
eternal life. *Amen.*

The Absolution is one of the ways that ordained priests and bishops fulfill the commission that Jesus gave to his disciples: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained" (John 20:22-23).

Often people cross themselves as the priest reads the words of absolution.

## The Peace

*All stand. The Celebrant says to the people*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People* And also with you.

*Then the Ministers and People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

Often in Episcopal congregations, announcements follow the Peace.

The Exchange of Peace was a part of early Christian worship, though over the centuries its place in the liturgy changed and its importance diminished. It was restored by the Liturgical Movement. As early Christians did, we observe it before the offertory, with Jesus' words in mind: "When you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister and then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

## The Holy Communion: The Liturgy of the Table

*The celebrant may begin the Offertory with a sentence of Scripture, such as*

Walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God. *Ephesians 5:2*

### Offertory Hymn

*During the Offertory, a hymn, psalm, or anthem may be sung.*

*Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offering of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the deacon or celebrant. The people stand while the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar.*

During the offertory, the altar is prepared for Holy Communion and the bread and wine are brought forward. In the early Church, worshippers actually brought wine and bread for use in the sacrament. Today the Church usually provides these elements, but we still present the gifts from the congregation as a symbol of our labor and our offering to God.

Sometimes this versicle and response, from 1 Chronicles 29:14, are said:

All things come of thee, O Lord:

*And of thine own have we given thee.*

"It is the function of a deacon to make ready the Table for the celebration, preparing and placing upon it the bread and cup of wine. It is customary to add a little water to the wine. The deacon may be assisted by other ministers. During the Great Thanksgiving, it is appropriate that there be only one chalice on the Altar, and, if need be, a flagon of wine from which additional chalices may be filled after the Breaking of the Bread." (The Book of Common Prayer, page 407)

Adding a little water to the wine has been done since the first centuries of the Church. Probably Jesus originally did this because the wine was concentrated and had to be diluted to be palatable. Some have seen this action as symbolizing the water and blood that flowed out of Christ's side on the cross (John 19:34). In the Eastern Church it symbolizes the infusion of the Holy Spirit into the People of God.

It is also customary for the celebrant to ceremonially wash his/her hands, an act called "The Lavabo" (from the Latin translation of Psalm 26:6). This act is a symbolic prayer for purity in preparation for presiding at the holy sacrament.

# The Great Thanksgiving

## *Eucharistic Prayer A*

### The Dialogue

*The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says*

The Lord be with you.  
*People* And also with you.  
*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.  
*People* We lift them to the Lord  
*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
*People* It is right to give God thanks and praise.

This dialogue is called the “Sursum Corda”, from the Latin words for “lift up your hearts”. It is an ancient part of the liturgy, and has been used since the earliest centuries of the Church. It is a remnant of an early Jewish call to worship.

### The Preface

*Then, facing the Holy Table, the celebrant proceeds*

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

*Here a Proper Preface is sung or said all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.*

The Proper Preface often mentions the themes of the day or the church season.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

### The “Sanctus”

*Celebrant and people*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
✠ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.

The Sanctus, from the Latin word for “holy”, is also an ancient part of the liturgy. The first part comes from Isaiah’s vision of heaven: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.” (Isaiah 6:3)  
The second part comes from the gospels’ description of Jesus’s entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday: “Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” (Matthew 21:9)

Some people bow during the first part of the Sanctus out of respect for the awesomeness of God. Many people cross themselves at the second part.

# The Prayer of Consecration

*The people stand or kneel*

*Then the Celebrant continues*

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human Nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

*At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.*

The Institutional Narrative

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. ✠"

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." ✠

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

*Celebrant and People*

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

This phrase, anticipating the Anamnesis, is referred to as a Memorial Acclamation. It can be said or sung.

The earliest prayers of consecration probably consisted of the story of the Last Supper and a prayer asking for the Holy Spirit to bless the bread and wine. Over time, the prayer evolved to include several basic parts:

- 1) Oblation – a prayer of offering,
- 2) Institutional Narrative – recalling the Last Supper and Jesus's "Words of Institution",
- 3) Epiclesis – invoking the Holy Spirit to consecrate the gifts.
- 4) Anamnesis – recalling Jesus's death and resurrection, while expecting his eventual return,
- 5) Doxology and Great Amen – the Trinitarian ending and people's "Amen".

The words spoken by Jesus are called the Words of Institution.

Some people cross themselves after each part of the Words of Institution, in reverence for the holiness of the sacrament.

The Institutional Narrative comes from the account of the Last Supper recorded in the gospels (Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:19-20) and in Paul's letters (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

*The Celebrant continues*

Anamensis { We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father,  
in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

Oblation { Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension,  
we offer you these gifts.

Epiclesis { Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the  
Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new  
and unending life in him.

✠ Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament,  
and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day  
bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

Many people cross  
themselves during this  
invocation of God's blessing  
on them.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ.

Doxology { By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit  
all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.

Great Amen { *AMEN.*

The "Great Amen" is the people's  
ratification of the Eucharistic Prayer.

## The Lord's Prayer

*[The Celebrant continues]*

And now, as our Savior  
Christ has taught us,  
We are bold to say,

The Lord's Prayer, called the "Our Father"  
or *Pater Noster* by some, has been recited  
by the Church in worship since the earliest  
followers of Jesus. This traditional version  
of the Lord's Prayer comes from the  
English translation used in the first Book  
of Common Prayer, published in 1549.  
Jesus taught the prayer to his disciples  
when they asked him how they should  
pray (Matthew 6:5-13 and Luke 11:1-4).

*People and Celebrant*

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

## The Breaking of the Bread

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.*

*A period of silence is kept.*

In the ancient tradition of the Church, the presiding clergyperson waits to break the bread until after the Lord's Prayer. It is a reminder of the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood on the cross.

## The Fraction Anthem

*Then may be sung or said*

[Alleluia.] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
Therefore let us keep the feast. [Alleluia.]

*In Lent, Alleluia is omitted, and may be omitted at other times except during Easter Season.*

*In place of, or in addition to, the preceding, some other suitable anthem may be used.*

This Fraction Anthem, called the Pascha Nostrum (from its Latin translation, comes from Scripture (1 Corinthians 5:7b-8a).

In the Western Church, it has been a long-standing tradition to avoid the word "Alleluia" in the season of Lent.

The following is a commonly used Fraction Anthem:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:  
grant us peace.

The Lamb of God, or Agnus Dei (from the Latin), is also an ancient Fraction Anthem. It originated in the Syrian tradition around 700 CE and spread throughout the western church when Syrian-born Sergius I became Pope. It harks back to the words of John's gospel, when John the Baptist calls Jesus "the Lamb of God" (John 1:19).

## The Invitation to Communion

*Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation*

✠ ~~The Gifts of God for the People of God.~~

*and may add* ~~Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.~~

~~This invitation is commonly used at St. John's rather than the preceding:~~

✠ ~~These are the gifts of God for all the people of God. This is God's table. All are welcome here, and there is a place for anyone from anywhere around God's table.~~

This Invitation is a modern rendition of the ancient Church's Invitation to Communion: "Holy things for the holy", which was used in the Eastern Church from at least the fourth century.

Some people cross themselves at the words of invitation as part of their personal preparation to receive the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.

## Holy Communion

*The ministers receive the Sacrament in both kinds, and then immediately deliver it to the people.*

*The Bread and the Cup are given to the communicants with these words*

✠ ~~The Body (Blood) of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life. [*Amen.*]~~

*Or with these words*

✠ ~~The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven. [*Amen.*]~~

✠ ~~The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation. [*Amen.*]~~

In the Anglican tradition, the people are always offered both the Bread and the Cup. At the same time, the Church has always believed in concomitance, that is, that Christ is fully and equally present in both elements and to receive one is sufficient.

It is common for Anglicans to cross themselves before receiving each element, and then again before leaving the altar.

## The Communion Hymns

*During the ministration of Communion, hymns psalms, or anthems may be sung.*

Following the communion of the people, the paten (plate) and chalice (cup) are ceremonially cleaned with water.

## The Ablutions

If any of the consecrated Bread or Wine remain, apart from any which may be required for the Communion of the sick, or of others who for weighty cause could not be present at the celebration, or for the administration of Communion by a deacon to a congregation when no priest is available, the celebrant or deacon, and other communicants, reverently eat and drink it, either after the Communion of the people or after the Dismissal. [The Book of Common Prayer, pages 408-409]

The remaining consecrated elements, called the Reserved Sacrament, are kept for clergy and Lay Eucharistic visitors to take Communion to the sick and those who are homebound or in nursing homes. Until distribution, the Reserve Sacrament is kept in a locked cabinet, called a tabernacle or aumbry, in the sanctuary. The presence of the Reserved Sacrament is marked by a lit red candle that hangs nearby.

## The Postcommunion Prayer

*After Communion, the Celebrant says*

Let us pray.

*Celebrant and People*

Eternal God, heavenly Father,  
you have graciously accepted us as living members  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,  
and you have fed us with spiritual food  
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.  
Send us now into the world in peace,  
and grant us strength and courage  
to love and serve you  
with gladness and singleness of heart;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Or the following*

Almighty and everliving God,  
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food  
of the most precious Body and Blood  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;  
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries  
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,  
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.  
And now, Father, send us out  
to do the work you have given us to do,  
to love and serve you  
as faithful witness of Christ our Lord.  
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
Be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

## The Blessing

*The Bishop when present, or the Priest, may bless the people*

There are blessings that change with the church seasons. One common blessing follows:

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; the blessing of  
God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

It is customary for a prayer of thanksgiving to be said following Communion. On normal Sundays it is said by the Celebrant and People together. On other occasions (weddings, funerals, ordinations), there are special post-Communion prayers that are substituted by the Celebrant for the ones here.

This second option for a post-Communion prayer is a modern revision of the traditional prayer that has been used in versions of The Book of Common Prayer since 1549.

This traditional blessing is based on the words of Paul to the Church in Philippi: "And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

## The Closing Processional Hymn

A hymn may be sung before or after the postcommunion prayer.  
(The Book of Common Prayer, page 409)

## The Dismissal

*The Deacon, or the Celebrant, dismisses them with these words*

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

*or this*

*Deacon* Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

*or this*

*Deacon* Let us go forth into the world,  
rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

*or this*

*Deacon* Let us bless the Lord.  
*People* Thanks be to God.

*From the Easter Vigil through the Day of Pentecost “Alleluia, alleluia”  
may be added to any of the dismissals.*

*The people respond* Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.

## The Postlude

Often there will be an instrumental piece of music immediately after the liturgy has ended.