

Activity: Eucharistic Prayer of the Mass

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Goal: To connect with the Eucharistic prayer in personal ways so as to be prepared to participate at Mass with reverence, attention and devotion.

The Canon of the Mass (*the Eucharistic Prayer*) is the solemn prayer during which the bread and wine are consecrated and changed into the body and blood of Jesus. Besides Eucharistic Prayers I, II, III, and IV that appear in most missalettes, the priest-celebrant may proclaim one of the Eucharistic Prayers for Masses of various needs and occasions or for Masses with Children. (A comparison chart of I, II, III, and IV is available at <http://catholic-resources.org/ChurchDocs/RM3-EP1-4.htm>).

Directions:

Use a disposable copy of a Eucharistic Prayer – either on a handout or within a used missalette. If the parish uses a particular canon as a pattern, chose that one. Read the canon together as a family and underline or highlight any phrase that “pops out” as having meaning to you. Discuss your choices with each other.

For example, from *Eucharistic Prayer IV* one person was deeply touched by these phrases:

“We give you praise, Father most holy, for you are great, and you have fashioned all your works in wisdom and in love. **You formed man in your own image** and entrusted the whole world to his care, so that in serving you alone, the Creator, he might have dominion over all creatures.

And when through disobedience he had lost your friendship, **you did not abandon him** to the domain of death. For **you came in mercy to the aid of all**, so that those who seek might find you. **Time and again** you offered them covenants and through the prophets taught them to look forward to salvation.

And you so loved the world, Father most holy, that **in the fullness of time** you sent your Only Begotten Son to be our Savior. Made incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, he shared our human nature in all things but sin. To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation, to prisoners, freedom, and to the sorrowful of heart, joy.

To accomplish your plan, he gave himself up to death, and, rising from the dead, he destroyed death and restored life. And **that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him** who died and rose again for us, he sent the Holy Spirit from you, Father, as the first fruits for those who believe, so that, bringing to perfection his work in the world, he might sanctify creation to the full.