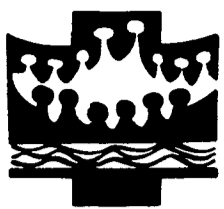


Insights
In Liturgy

By Fr. Robert J. Kennedy



Eucharistic
Prayer

"The Eucharistic Prayer, a prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification, is the center and high point of the entire celebration. In an introductory dialogue the priest invites the people to lift up their hearts to God in prayer and thanks; he unites them with himself in prayer; he addresses in their name to the Father through Jesus Christ. The meaning of the prayer is that the whole congregation joins Christ in acknowledging the works of God and in offering the sacrifice."

This paragraph (No. 54) from the General Instruction of the Roman Missal raises three issues for understanding the Eucharistic Prayer: how it is the "great thanksgiving" prayer of the Church, why it is the whole congregation's prayer although the priest prays it alone, and how this prayer is the "center and high point of the entire celebration."

The Church's great prayer of thanksgiving and praise has its roots in the table prayers required at every Jewish meal. These prayers, known as "berakah," blessed or praised God for his wonderful works on behalf of his people. They acknowledged with wonder and awe the goodness and presence of God, who is faithful to his covenant. The early Christians used this prayer form when they gathered with bread and wine to remember the Lord Jesus. They praised God for the wonderful things he had done in his Son Jesus and was continuing to do in

Clemente
To Lead
Seminar

Virginia Clemente, nationally known marriage and family therapist, will present a seminar for the Ministry to Divorced, Separated, Remarried and Widowed Catholics, 7 p.m., Sunday, April 17, in the cafeteria of the School of the Holy Childhood, 1150 Buffalo Road.

Ms. Clemente, a member of the advisory board for the North American Conference of Separated/Divorced Catholics, and a clinical member of the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists, is perhaps best known for her radio call-in broadcasts.

A \$3 donation will be asked at the door.

CAMP TOPIC

Camp Good Days and Special Times will be the topic for the noon, April 12 luncheon meeting of the Zonta Club in the University Club. Gary Mervis, founder and director, will describe the camp, a summer program for young cancer patients.

them through the power of the Spirit.

Thus the Eucharistic Prayer is the mighty gathering of all the expressions of gratitude of each Christian person into one sacrifice (offering) of praise. When it is prayed the congregation should crackle with ecstatic joy: our God has done great things for us, his love is everlasting!

The prayer is structured around remembrance and invocation. We remember not only the events of Christ's life that bring us salvation, but we also acknowledge how his death and resurrection have had a present, active power in the circumstances of our lives as well. This living memory plunges us into the reality of Christ's presence with us, and leads us to invoke the continued action of the Holy Spirit within us, that we may be considered in Christ's presence and continue to live the Eucharist of unity, peace, justice and hospitality in the world. We bring our many thanksgivings together in one sacrifice of praise that we may draw from it strength for thanksgiving.

This is why the Eucharistic Prayer is prayed in one voice: to symbolize the unity of our thankfulness. The congregation is not passive at this point, but rather actively inserts its own motives for praise into the words and spirit of the prayer, and punctuates its praise with acclamations. Thus, "the whole congregation joins Christ in acknowledging the works of God and in offering the sacrifice."

This prayer of the whole faithful community is meant to be, then, the center and high point of the celebration, since it is both the fullest expression of their gratitude and the means by which they are sanctified in the Spirit of Christ. That is, God receives our offering of praise and returns it to us by consecrating us in his service through our communion with the "bread of life" and "cup of eternal salvation" (Eucharistic Prayer I). This blessing prayer consecrates both our gifts and ourselves, and makes them and us the presence of Christ in the world.

RCIA Ministries
Workshop Topic

An all-day workshop on "Ministries of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults" is slated 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, April 30, at DeSales High School, Geneva.

Father Ronald Lewinski, director of the catechumenate for the Chicago archdiocese, will headline the program cosponsored by the Office of Religious Education and the Office of Continuing Education.

The workshop will provide an overview of the many ministries in the RCIA with special consideration of the

ministry of sponsor and the ministry of catechist.

Father Lewinski will also report on the status of the RCIA in the United States.

The program is open to clergy, parish staffs and parish members in volved in the RCIA process

The fee is \$10 per person, or \$8 per person for a parish which sends three or more representatives. A box lunch is included. Reservations are obtained by calling the Office of Religious Education, (716) 328-3210.

Ophthalmology Topic
For Nursing Program

Ophthalmology will be the topic for the annual In-Service Program sponsored by the St. Mary's Hospital Alumnae Association, 12:30-4 p.m., Thursday, April 28, in the Bishop Kearney Building of the hospital.

The program will deal with all aspects of the subject. During the event, the alumnae will present a donation to Dr. Carlos DeSantis for the Samuel J. Ianacone Eye Center.

Holy Family
Rosary Unit
Notes 75th

The Rosary Society of Holy Family parish in Rochester will celebrate the 75th anniversary of the society at a dinner at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 11, at the Party House on Beahan Road. Mrs. Frank Haag is chairperson. Cost is \$9 and reservations may be made through Mary Ann Walter at 436-8878 or Mrs. Robert Spahn at 235-3136. Deadline for reservations is May 1.

SEED Swim

Project SEED will sponsor what it hopes is its first annual Swim and Fun Day, 11 a.m., Friday, April 22, at the Adams Street Pool. Following a swim, participants will have a bring-a-bag lunch at the Edgerton Recreation Center. All disabled persons and their families are welcome at the event. Both sites are accessible to disabled persons. Further information is available by calling Project SEED, 458-7994.

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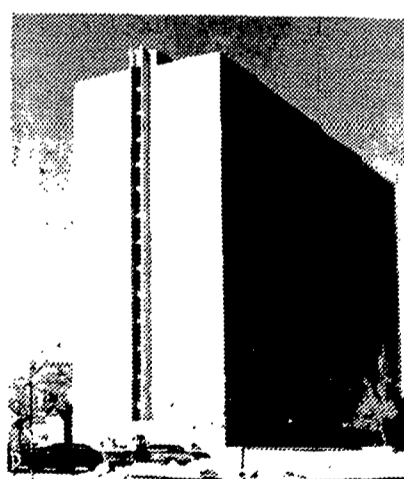
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