

It's Still About Jesus!

Ezekiel 17:22-end; Psalm 92:1-4,12-end; 2 Corinthians 5:6-10,14-17; Mark 4:26-34

He explained everything to his disciples... [Mark 4:34]

It was all about Jesus last week - and it still is.

One thing I forgot to talk about last week - **The sign of the cross** - at Gospel and at the Eucharist - why?

It is a way of staying focused, of blessing ourselves and a reminder that it is all about Jesus.

At the Gospel in particular - that prayer using the cross that the words of Jesus will be in our minds, on our lips and in our hearts.

The Peace

This is so important - we are on a journey together towards Jesus and with Jesus. The peace gives us a chance to say hello to each other, but it gives us a chance to be sure that everything is OK.

Peace is God's gift to us - and one that multiplies when we share it.

The Offertory

There are two elements here:

1. First the bread and wine presented - very ordinary things that we offer to God to be transformed: a symbol of what God does with us.
2. Then we offer to God our tithes and offerings. It is a simple fact that 10% of what we receive belongs to God. When we pass 10% that's when we start to give!

At this point lots goes on to prepare the altar and set out the chalices, paten and ciborium: no mystery but just a bit of order.

Just a word about the hands - again! (The sign of infinity!) They are washed and then the thumb and the forefinger join and, until the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, only touch the bread.

The Eucharistic Prayer

At the beginning - You OK? The Dialogue (formally the *Sursum Corda*) checks that we are in it together as we climb towards God.

(When my hands are together we are praying together and when they are lifted up I am praying as a representative of us all.)

We continue climbing until we can reach no higher - **Holy, Holy, Holy**. Then we need God to reach down to us - **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!**

We then act that out (with hand movements and crosses) in the *Epiclesis* calling God's Spirit down onto the bread and wine - and then simply tell the story focusing on Jesus.

We join together in the *anamnesis* and declare our faith - it's still about Jesus!

We're still on tip-toes in thanksgiving because we are here - which is why we should stand (either stand or kneel, but don't sit - that is unworthy).

Bread is broken and joined - all a symbol of what God has done and then we receive.

Historically, there are three understandings of what happens to the bread and wine during the Eucharistic Prayer:

- ✦ Transubstantiation - the belief that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus.
- ✦ Real Presence - that the bread and wine remain the same but that we receive Jesus spiritually 'in, with and under' the bread and wine.
- ✦ Memorial - that the bread and wine point us back to the cross and the Last Supper.

Take it seriously - we can agree or disagree, but it has to be about Jesus!

Go away!

What we do together only makes sense if, when we leave, it is still about Jesus - so much so that others see it!