



THE EUCHARIST

THE NAMES THAT ARE USED

The act of Christian thanksgiving appears under many different names

The breaking of Bread The Lord's Supper

The Eucharist The Mass

The Holy Communion The Divine Liturgy

ORIGIN

The church service has its origins in an event in Jesus' life. On the night that he was arrested he shared a Passover meal with his 12 disciples in Jerusalem. The words he used on that occasion form the basis of this service. *St Matt 26:26-29.*

CELEBRATING THE EUCHARIST

There are differences in the way the Eucharist is celebrated among the churches but almost all forms of this act of worship have a similar structure.

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

This is the first part of the service where there is a **Collect**, two or three **Bible readings** and possibly a **sermon**.

It may also be the part of the service where the congregation make a group **confession** of their sins. **Prayers of intercession** may be said for those in need and the congregation may share **the Peace**.

MINISTRY OF THE SACRAMENT

This begins when the priest on the **altar** prepares the bread and wine.

THANKSGIVING

A long prayer, which speaks about the importance of the action for Christians and contains a reminder of what Jesus said and did on the night before he was crucified.

THE BREAKING OF BREAD

The bread and wine are consecrated by the minister or priest and the Lord's Prayer is said.

Some of the following practices can be associated with this reading.

Bowing or **genuflecting**

Censing

Lifting up the bread and wine

Ring of bells

SHARING THE BREAD AND WINE

In the Orthodox Church the bread and wine are distributed to the congregation by dipping a piece of **bread** in the **wine** and then giving it them on a small spoon.

In Baptist, Methodist and URC Churches, the wine is often distributed in **separate glasses** by church leaders. People do not drink from the same cup or **chalice**.

In the Anglican Church the congregation usually receives the bread and wine kneeling at the altar. Equally though there may be a tradition of receiving the Communion standing round the altar or table in small groups.

THE DISMISSAL

After the sharing of the bread and wine there is a short act of dismissal which might include prayers, and a **blessing**.

WHEN IT HAPPENS

In Roman Catholic Churches Mass takes place daily.

In Anglican Churches it may be a daily or more likely a weekly event.

Other Protestant Churches vary in their approach, but often there is only a celebration once a month.

In some parts of Scotland - once a year!