

“Lift Up Thine Eyes”

“Lift Up Thine Eyes” is a series of six talks on the Holy Eucharist using paintings by Norman Rockwell as springboards to deeper reflection, especially on how the various components of the Eucharist have counterparts in ordinary daily life—vital components which elevate and enrich our lives in Christ. *“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”* (John 10:10).

Session 1 (May 31) will be an introduction and overview of the series. Sessions 2-6 will each explore a component of the Holy Eucharist:

June 7	<i>koinonia</i> (κοινωνία)--community, fellowship, gathering
June 14	<i>anamnesis</i> (ἀνάμνησις)--remembering, telling the story
July 12	<i>epiclesis</i> (ἐπίκλησις)--invocation of the Holy Spirit
July 19	<i>thusia</i> (θυσία)--offering, sacrifice, dedication
July 26	<i>eucharistia</i> (εὐχαριστία) (thanksgiving, gratitude).

The series title, “Lift Up Thine Eyes” is from a painting by Rockwell of the Fifth Avenue entrance to the church. Sessions will include time for questions and responses.

'The Elixir' by George Herbert

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things thee to see,
And what I do in any thing,
To do it as for thee:

Not rudely, as a beast,
To runne into an action;
But still to make thee prepossest,
And give it his perfection.

A man that looks on glasse,
On it may stay his eye;
Or if he pleaseth, through it passe,
And then the heav'n espie.

All may of thee partake:
Nothing can be so mean,
Which with his tincture (for thy sake)
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgerie divine:
Who sweeps a room, as for thy laws,
Makes that and th' action fine.

This is the famous stone
That turneth all to gold:
For that which God doth touch and own
Cannot for lesse be told.

Excerpt from “The Shape of the Liturgy”, by Dom Gregory Dix (1945)

“Was ever a command so obeyed?

For century after century, spreading slowly to every continent and country and among every race on earth, this action has been done in every conceivable human circumstance, for every conceivable human need from infancy and before it to extreme old age and after it, from the pinnacle of earthly greatness to the refuge of fugitives in the caves and dens of the earth.

Men [and women] have found no better thing than this to do for kings at their crowning and for criminals going to the scaffold; for armies in triumph or for a bride and bridegroom in a little country church; for the proclamation of a dogma or for a good crop of wheat ... for the famine of whole provinces or for the soul of a dead lover; in thankfulness because my father did not die of pneumonia ... for the repentance of Margaret; for the settlement of a strike; for a son for a barren woman; for Captain so-and-so wounded and prisoner of war ... tremulously, by an old monk on the fiftieth anniversary of his vows, furtively, by an exiled bishop who had hewn timber all day in a prison camp near Murmansk; gorgeously, for the canonization of St. Joan of Arc — one could fill many pages with the reasons why men [and women] have done this, and not tell a hundredth part of them.

And best of all, week by week and month by month, on a hundred thousand successive Sundays, faithfully, unfailingly, across all the parishes of Christendom, the pastors have done this just to make the plebs sancta Dei — the holy common people of God.”