

Session 6

Eucharistia: Thanksgiving, Gratitude

“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 Saint Thomas Church. Sessions will include time for questions and responses.

In Session 6, on July 26, we will explore *eucharistia*, that is, gratitude, giving thanks. The Holy Eucharist, celebrated daily at St Thomas Church, culminates in the Great Thanksgiving (also called the Eucharistic Prayer, the Canon of the Mass, or the Anaphora). We give thanks to God for all the blessings of this life, and especially for the promise of eternal life now and in the age to come.

Elie Wiesel, survivor of Nazi concentration camps and 1986 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, identified gratitude as the most human of virtues and sentiments: it is the ultimate expression of our humanity to recognize and acknowledge acts of grace, rescue, and kindness in a world marked by suffering and indifference.

Gratitude does not always come easily, especially for those suffering illness, poverty, oppression or violence. The moral and ethical imperative for us as Christians is to work toward a world in which every human being can experience the grace and blessing of genuine gratitude.

Hymn

1 Now thank we all our God
with heart and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done,
in whom his world rejoices;
who from our mothers' arms
has blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love,
and still is ours today.

2 O may this bounteous God
through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts
and blessed peace to cheer us,
to keep us in his grace,
and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills
of this world in the next.

Scripture:

“...give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

Images for today:





Quiz!

Excerpts are from The Book of Common Prayer 1979, Rite II, Eucharistic Prayer A.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

- Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.
- He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.
- We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.
- Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.
- All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *AMEN.*