

LITURGY BYTES

The Sanctus



Another part of the Eucharistic Prayer is the “Sanctus” or the “Holy, Holy, Holy.” It is not just a musical interlude but a joining together of the voices of the Church on earth with heaven.

The text consists of two biblical passages linked to one another. The first is from the book of the prophet Isaiah and the second one is from the Gospel of Matthew. In the first text from the Old Testament, it is important to know that God’s name is revealed as holy and sacred. In fact, to say the name of the Lord is to invoke the Lord’s presence. All of what we experienced in the first part of Mass prepares us to be able to call upon the name of the Lord when we sing the “Holy” at Mass. In the second passage from Matthew’s Gospel, we see the familiar acclamation of “Hosanna to the Son of David” as Jesus enters the city of Jerusalem. You may recall hearing this on Palm Sunday at the beginning of the Mass. This song, offered by the crowd, is a greeting to the presence of the King of Israel. So, too, the Church sings this praise as we enter into the Eucharistic Prayer. On the altar the crucified and risen King will become present.

The “Sanctus” is both a song of joy and a song to purify our hearts. It is a song of expectation, of desire, of longing. The Mass is not just our celebration, the gathering of this community here and now. It is always the liturgy of heaven and earth where God’s glory is revealed. As we stand and kneel, we do not simply pray with our minds and the words that come out of our mouths. We pray with our bodies realizing Our Lord is with us!

Have a safe, blessed and joy-filled week ahead! ~Michele Hall