

Children's Defense Fund: Eucharistic Liturgy

(Imagine this on Christmas Eve!)

The Word of God

Opening Sentences

Celebrant Blessed be the one, holy and living God.

People Glory to God forever and ever.

Celebrant may say

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Collect of the Day On the Children's Sabbath

Celebrant God be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Let us pray.

Gracious and almighty God, source of all love and justice: Help us on this day of celebration to hear your call to care for children. Strengthen our hands and embolden our hearts that we may act with your love and speak with your justice, to the end that no child will be left behind and every child will have the start in life that you intend; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

The Prayers of the People

With all our heart and with all our mind, let us pray to the Lord, saying "*Lord, bless the children.*"

For the Universal Church, that we more closely follow the steps of your Son who came to serve and blessed the children, let us pray to the Lord. *Lord, bless the children.*

For our nation and our leaders, that we put children and families first, giving every child a healthy start, a head start, a fair start, a safe start, and a moral start in life, let us pray to the Lord. *Lord, bless the children.*

For children everywhere, especially the children dying from preventable illness and malnutrition, denied educational opportunity, stunted by poverty, scarred by ware fare, and questioning their worth, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, bless the children.

For ourselves and our local community, that we discover greatness in serving children and those most in need, let us pray to the Lord. *Lord, bless the children.*

For those who suffer, especially the millions of children in our rich land who live in poverty, lack health care, and are wounded by violence, let us pray to the Lord. *Lord, bless the children.*

For all who have died in the hope of the resurrection, and for all the departed, especially the children who died from lack of health care, poverty, violence, and suicide, we pray to the Lord. *Lord, bless the children.*

We pray to you also for the forgiveness of our sins.

The Holy Communion

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
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 our thanks and praise.

Celebrant We give you thanks, living and loving God, for calling your world into being --for making earth and water, plants and animals, and then for making each and every one of us in your image -- every woman and man, every girl and boy, every race and place, rich and poor.

We give you thanks for loving each of us as a mother loves her children, for promising to be our God no matter what -- welcoming us as a father even when we have done wrong.

On this day, we thank you especially for youth, for the ways they are eager to learn and for the things that they teach us, for the challenges that don't stop them and for the successes they celebrate, for the way in which each one is wonderfully made, a gift from you.

And so we join the saints and angels in proclaiming your glory, as we sing,

Celebrant and People

Holy, Holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are fully of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The Celebrant continues:

We praise you, O God; You sent your beloved Jesus to enter our world as a baby, to grow as a child in mind and body, to teach others that God loves us as a parent, to hug the children close and bless them, to tell all people that it is only by being like a child that we may enter God's reign, to heal children and adults who were sick in their bodies, minds, and hearts, to be a friend to people who were poor, looked down upon, left out by others.

Jesus went even to the cross that we may know your love, triumphant even over death, that frees us to live as your beloved children.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing the wine to be consecrated

On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends, He took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. As you do this, remember me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again, he gave thanks, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, remember me."

Around your table, as your children, O God, we remember Jesus Christ, who came in love, lived in love, and died in love, who was and is and is to come. We offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and we offer to you our lives.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be for us the Body and Blood of Christ, that they strengthen us to welcome the children, to show your love, to work for your justice.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The Lord's Prayer

The Breaking of the Bread

We break this bread to share in the Body of Christ.

We who are many are one body, for we all share in the one bread

Post Communion Prayer:

God of abundance, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of salvation;

you have united us with Christ and one another;

and you have made us one with all your people in heaven and on earth.

Now send us forth in the power of your Spirit,

that we may proclaim your redeeming love to the world

through serving the children whom you created and love

and continue forever in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen

The Blessing

The Wisdom of God,

the Love of God,

and the Grace of God

strengthen you to be

Christ's hands and hearts in this world,

in the name of the Holy Trinity.

Amen.

The Dismissal

Celebrant

Remembering especially all children, let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People

Thanks be to God.