

## Breaking Open the Word Format

Breaking Open the Word should begin after the Rite of Acceptance and the Rite of Welcoming. Look at the Rites book to see how the candidates and catechumens should be dismissed. (Rites Manual #67 for the unbaptized or #528 for combined rites)

### I. Breaking Open the Word

- Ask the candidates and catechumens to re-read the first Reading and the Gospel.
- Provide them and yourself with a notebook. Ask them to write down what touched them in the readings and from the homily.
- Invite each person to share how they were touched by the Readings.
- The facilitator needs to have read over a good commentary and have a very simple way of explaining the main point of the two Readings and how they are connected – how Jesus fulfilled what happened in the Old Testament.

Each week, present a simple explanation of one part of the Mass.

**A. Entering Church, using Holy Water to bless themselves, will remind them**

of their Baptism and how the waters of Baptism cleanses us of our original sin – the cross is the Sign of how this is able to happen – Jesus died on the cross so that our sins can be forgiven.

Genuflecting – saying in your heart, My Lord and My God is how we acknowledge that Jesus is truly present in the tabernacle. We want to bow down before Him, knowing that He is God and we are not.

Kneeling down in the pew and praying: quieting down, opening with the Our Father or any other prayer, and asking the Holy Spirit to help you to enter into the Sacred Mysteries of the Holy Eucharist. We ask the Holy Spirit to help us prepare to receive the Word of God and the Body and Blood of Jesus into our heart. In receiving His Word and His Divine Life within us, He gives us the desire and strength to love Him more and follow Him more closely.

**B. Go through the missalette, showing the major prayers, the readings and how they are for each Sunday and the prayers for the consecration.**

**C. We prepare to enter the Sacred Mysteries by calling to mind our sins – the ways that we have failed to follow Jesus Christ and His Way**

How have we offended other people, ourselves or God.

Think especially of one or two areas of your life that you need help to change the attitude behind the behaviors. We pray “I confess to Almighty God. . . “

Asking God to forgive us so that our hearts are better ready to worship and adore Him.

**D. Explain very simply the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist**

**E. Explain the Nicene Creed:**

The three major divisions are about the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

**F. Explain the Offertory**

We offer our gifts of bread, that will become the Body of Christ and the wine that will become the Blood of Christ and the money as our gifts back to God.

Tithing is giving back to God a 10<sup>th</sup> of what He has given to us.

**G. Explain the words preparing for the consecration (= change)**

Lift up your hearts. We have lifted them up to the Lord. Etc.

We lift up our hearts with Jesus in offering them in thanksgiving to the Father for all He has given us. Eucharist means thanksgiving. We offer our hearts with Jesus in this Holy Sacrifice of Calvary that is being made present on the altar. Jesus offered Himself to the Father as the price for the forgiveness of our sins and so we could be reunited with the Father – we are reunited with the Blessed Trinity when we receive the sacraments. We receive God’s Divine Life within our soul in the sacraments. Jesus gave Himself to the Apostles at the Last Supper – the pre-presentation of the sacrifice of Calvary. Jesus allowed Himself to be offered in the Sacrifice of Calvary and the priest re-presents the Sacrifice of Calvary at each Holy Eucharist – Jesus is not being sacrificed again but the Sacrifice of Calvary is being made present.

**H. Go through the words of consecration and explain how it commemorates the Last Supper. Through the words of Jesus, “This is my Body,” the Holy Spirit changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus.**

Transubstantiation means change of substance. Jesus does not become bread.

**I. What we say when the priest holds up the consecrated Host and the Precious Blood during the consecration:**

“My Lord and My God”

**J. Through Him, with Him and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor are Yours, Almighty Father forever and ever. Amen.**

This is the sacrifice of Jesus offering Himself to the Father, and we offer ourselves with Him to the Father in a sacrifice of love. That means that we desire to be more united with Him, to be more attentive to what He is calling us to do, and we respond to His will, because it is the best thing for us.

**K. The words Our Savior gave us, the Our Father**

Simply explain the Our Father - first 3 petitions asking the Father that His name be made holy draws us into His plan of loving kindness for the fullness of time. Asking for His Kingdom and His Will to be done.

Last 4 petitions are for what we need. (See the Catechism 2803-2865)

**L. How to prepare to receive and to receive Holy Communion**

What we say when the priest holds up the Host:

“Lord, I am not worthy to receive You, but only say the word and I shall be healed.”

These are the words of the centurion on speaking about Jesus coming to his house to heal his servant. Hands folded as we come to receive the Lord of Lords. Keep your eyes lowered so that it is easier to stay focused. Otherwise, you can be distracted by everything and forget what is happening. Prepare your heart to receive Jesus.

A bow or genuflection is a sign of worship. Receive in the hand as a throne or on the tongue, saying Amen (I believe) after the priest say “Body of Christ.” Keep your head down as you go back to the pew to remain focused on Our Lord and that He is in your heart. Prayers to pray: Close your eyes in order to stay focused on Him. You can pray a memorized prayer or spontaneous prayer after thanking Him for giving Himself to you! Talk to Him, He is listening and listen to what He wants to say to you.

**M. Closing Prayer and Blessing**

We are now sent forth to live the Holy Mass. Jesus has given Himself completely to us in love. We are to give ourselves in service to those who come into our life – by serving them: our family members, neighbors, friends, those in need etc.