

Canon Andy writes The Lord's Supper- a guide for the masses



I've been asked recently to provide a quick explanation about what to expect at some of our services, especially those which all appear to be the same thing. The one sacrament with many names. Thanks for the question- the names we use tell you the nature of the liturgy being used:

Holy Communion- The name given in the Prayer Book (1662 Book of Common Prayer) to this sacrament and service. We use this for services that use this beautiful liturgy such as Sunday 8ams and Friday 12pms. Normally said with one minister officiating. The bible portion is offered as 'lessons' as at Evensong and Mattins (also BCP rite).

Eucharist- The name given in the Church of England's modern language liturgical rites 'Common Worship' to the same. From Greek eukharistia "thanksgiving, gratitude". We use this for all other said services. Normally in smaller side-chapels celebrated (led) by one priest as president (now I'm changing that word too!) and the bible portions are offered as 'readings'.

Festal Eucharist- The same, except during the day on a feast or festival day, and often with different 'propers'. That is, particular liturgical distinctions proper to the occasion- such as particular blessing on a saints day. Again- often small and said.

Sung Eucharist - A modern language rite with musical parts that we regularly provide on Wednesday, Sunday and on other 'red letter days'* On Wednesdays this music is an organ and cantor (singer) and on the other days organ and choir, *(that is those feasts of the church that are designated in bold red type in the lectionary (which is the table of readings for the church year). Not to be confused with festivals/ lesser festivals- also in red type but not bold. For

instance Pentecost is a Feast and St Benedict a festival. (NB We also observe additional local festivals for Winchester saints and elevate some festivals to feasts because they are our Patronal Festivals (that is, those saints after whom the cathedral is named)).

Roman Catholic Mass- By special arrangement the cathedral hosts a Roman Catholic Mass once a month. This is a public service at which Roman Catholics may receive the sacrament. They are celebrated by an authorized Roman Catholic Priest. It is probably so called from the concluding words of the service, *Ite, missa est*, "Go, (the prayer) has been sent," or "Go, it is the dismissal." Also the root of the word 'mission'. Not to be confused with mass that is celebrated as an Anglican service and is, again, the same thing as the eucharist, but, if it be called such, is likely to be a more anglo-catholic liturgy. We don't use that term here for the service as we 'go by the book'!

The Lord's Supper- We don't do that here either except that we actually do, because it is just another name for the same thing and actually the first given name in the BCP- "The Lord's Supper or Holy Communion", thereafter referred to as holy (small h) Communion (big C). Make of all that what you will!

Other names are available: Sometimes also called Holy Eucharist, the sacrament of Sacraments, the Blessed Sacrament, the Holy Mysteries



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