**Liturgy Matters Lesson #22**

**Dialogue to the Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer (part 2)**

**By Bishop Chad Zielinski**

I am Bishop Chad Zielinski serving the Diocese of New Ulm. Thank you for joining me and asking the Holy Spirit to guide us as we continue our lessons on “What Happens at Mass.”

As we continue our lesson on the Dialogue to the Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer, with the next exchange, the priest is already and entirely within his role as Christ at the head of his body. With a voice of authority but a voice also filled with excitement and love for what is about to happen, he commands the people, “Lift up your hearts.” In Latin, *Sursum corda* is like a shout out, literally meaning “Hearts on high!” It is Christ the head telling his body where we are going, and we are going there fast. In response, the body answers its head and says, “We lift them up to the Lord,” that is, we have our hearts where you told us to put them. In effect, this summons on high is being brought into the all-at-once of Christ's Resurrection, into his hour, where past and future are both made present to us. We are obeying the apostle’s injunction when he said, “Since you have been raised up in company with Christ, set your heart on what pertains to higher realms where Christ is seated at God’s right hand. Be intent on things above rather than on things of earth” (*Colossians 3:1-3*). Once we have joined with Christ in the higher realm, he announces the purpose of our being there: “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.” The assembly immediately assents to the proposal: “It is right and just.” In this response, we are thanking God for all the mighty deeds that God has ever worked for our salvation. Christ himself thanks the Father for his Resurrection, a thanksgiving which includes his joy that we can be made members of his risen body. And for this wondrous gift, we, of course, also thank the Father together with him. Thanksgiving is what the Greek word Eucharist means. It is why we can call all that happens at Mass the Eucharist, the thanksgiving.

Thank you for joining me today as we continued this lesson on the Dialogue of the Preface to the Eucharistic Prayer. I look forward to sharing Lesson #23 with you next week as we continue our lessons on the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Let us keep one another in prayer. May God bless you and your families.