**Liturgy Matters Lesson #30**

**The Mystery of Faith**

**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."

After the priest has genuflected in adoration before the blood of Christ present in the consecrated cup, he sings or says solemnly the words, “The Mystery of Faith!” This is not so much a rubrical instruction like, “Stand up now” or “Start singing.” It is an exclamation of awe and wonder and is the supreme moment in the liturgy for using this word Mystery. Something is hidden in the bread and wine. Faith perceives it. As if in answer to the priest's exclamation, the voice of the assembly rings out, declaring what is perceived: “Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.”

There are other possible responses with which the assembly may answer the priest’s exclamation. In all of them, we are announcing what is hidden in the bread and wine. We should be aware that each of the possible formulas is a condensed expression of the center of our salvation and mentions the past event of Jesus' death, the present reality of his Resurrection, and his future coming in glory. All of that - past, present, and future - is hidden in what lies on the altar, and faith perceives it and proclaims it.

What the people express in the condensed formula of the Mystery of Faith anticipates what the priest says and does next. The last words of Jesus, which he pronounced over the cup of wine, were, "Do this in memory of me." The Greek word in this text is anamnesis, and, similar to the word epiclesis, it has long been used as a technical liturgical term designating a particular part of the Eucharistic prayer. The anamnesis is this part that we are beginning now, and the word literally means “a memorial.” Insofar as the whole Eucharistic prayer has a narrative strand that runs through it, it is all memorial or anamnesis. In a stricter sense, the anamnesis is this prayer that follows the proclamation of the Mystery of Faith.

Thank you for joining me today in this lesson on “The Mystery of Faith." I look forward to sharing Lesson #31 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.