The Final Doxology & Amen

In the Roman Canon, we find a short prayer which introduces the doxology. A doxology is a Greek word that means "a word of praise." "Through him [Christ] you give us all these gifts," as spiritual nourishment and redemption. "You fill them with life and goodness," by means of transubstantiation. "You bless them," because we receive abundant grace through this sacrament, "and make them holy."

This prayer marks the flow of divine gifts coming down to us through Christ. And then, in the Final Doxology, all praise and honor from the entire creation rise up to God through Christ.

All the Eucharistic Prayers end with the Final Doxology. It is a song of praise to God, beginning with the Preface. The priest takes the chalice and the paten with the host and, lifting them up, sings or says,

Through him, with him, in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honor is yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.

These words are said by the priest alone. Taken in part from St. Paul (Romans 11:36), they are to be found in the earliest forms of the Anaphora.

- Through him: Through Jesus' mediation, we have access to God. "No one can come to the Father except through me" (Jn 14:6), Jesus says. He introduces us to his Father, and on his account, the Father hears us favorably, forgives us, and loves us.

- With him: We are children of God, through the adoption Christ merited for us, and, as a consequence, we are made co-heirs. "Without me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5), he says. With him, our lives will glorify God on the earth. On the altar, Jesus unites us to his perfect obedience. He wants us, throughout the whole day, to be with him in work and in prayer, he wants us to be his companions, in expiation and in apostolate.

- In him: There is one and the same life in him and in us. "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him" (Jn 6:56), Christ says. So his life flows out into ours, from the Head to us as members of his Mystical Body. Our nothingness, our sins, our miseries are, as it were, absorbed by Christ, and they disappear in his infinite perfection. In him, too, we love our brothers and devote ourselves to their service.

- In the unity of the Holy Spirit: The Church is a unity brought together by the Holy Spirit. He joins us together as believers and gives us the life of grace by which we become children of God. He dwells in us, enabling us to offer the sacrifice of praise to God, together with the entire Church.

The Great Amen

We now acclaim the "Great Amen." This is both an assent and a conclusion. Our offering, which is Christ's offering on the cross, calls for a unanimous and enthusiastic Amen. Saint Augustine said that "Amen is the people's signature."

Usually the "great amen" is sung, and repeated a number of times in a joyous manner to emphasize that we give our assent to the prayer over and over.

We have remained kneeling for the Eucharistic Prayer; now we stand. The movement usually happens almost instantaneously with the singing of the amen. It is as though the congregation cannot contain themselves but must rise to give their assent to the prayer that the priest has prayed in their name.

As the priest holds the paten and chalice, let us remember that Mary also held her Son's body after the crucifixion. Together with our Mother, Mother of the Church, we unite ourselves to the offering of the Church.