

# Dear Padre,

**My children, who go to Catholic school, refer to our Sunday celebration as the “Eucharist.” I grew up calling it the “Mass.” Why the difference?**

*Eucharist* comes from the Greek word *eucharistein*. This word simply means “to give thanks.” In the Eucharist we Catholics celebrate, we give thanks to God for giving us Jesus. We also give thanks to Jesus, who shares his Body and Blood with us. “Eucharist” was used to describe the early Church’s gathering, where the people repeated the stories of the Lord and shared the bread and wine, as the Lord commanded them to do.

The word *mass* comes from the Latin word *missa*, which means “the sending.” This refers to the words of dismissal at the end of Mass. The priest or deacon invites us to “go in peace to love and serve the Lord.” In the Latin Mass, this phrase is “*ite missa est*.” No one quite knows why the Eucharist came to be known as the “missa” or “mass.” Some think it is because of the way monastic prayers were conducted in the early Middle Ages. When the monks gathered for prayers, they often concluded with a short eucharistic celebration. These celebrations sometimes lasted only ten minutes or so, and as they marked the end of the whole set of prayers, they signaled the end of the service. This, it is suggested, is why the Eucharist came to be known as the “dismissal,” or the “Mass.” ●



— **The Redemptorists**  
**DearPadre.org**

## Do you have a question for the Padre?

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MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
December 19	December 20	December 21	December 22	December 23	December 24	December 25
Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Advent Weekday	Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)
Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a Lk 1:5-25	Is 7:10-14 Lk 1:26-38	Sg 2:8-14 Lk 1:39-45	1 Sm 1:24-28 Lk 1:46-56	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 Lk 1:57-66	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Lk 1:67-79	Is 52:7-10 Heb 1:1-6 Jn 1:1-18



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## A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

**Saint Joseph appears as a strong and courageous man, a working man, yet in his heart we see great tenderness, which is not the virtue of the weak but rather a sign of strength of spirit and a capacity for concern, for compassion, for genuine openness to others, for love.**

**HOMILY, MASS FOR BEGINNING OF  
PETRINE MINISTRY, MARCH 19, 2013**