

**APOSTLES OF THE REAL PRESENCE**  
**Devoted to Restoring the Faith and Understanding in the Real Presence of**  
**Jesus Christ in the Eucharist**

**THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS**  
**IT'S MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The Holy Mass is the highest form of worship. It is the sacrifice of Calvary renewed. The Mass is not just a way to remember Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross. It is the same sacrifice of Jesus, re-presented (made present) under the sacramental sign of bread and wine...it is the sacrifice that Jesus offered on Calvary, present in the consecrated bread and wine of the Eucharist." In the Holy Mass, it is Jesus Christ, God, as well as Man, Who is your intercessor, our Priest and our Victim. Being God-as well as Man-His prayers, merits, and His offerings are infinite in value.

In the "Truth About the Eucharist," published by Liguori Publications(1996), Reverend John Dowling states that "In the Mass the Catholic faithful, moved by and united in the Spirit, proclaim the mighty deeds of God in Word and in sacrament; the Liturgy of the Word and sacrament is the foundation and apex of Christian worship. This celebration is not an attempt to manipulate our God; rather it is a Spirit-filled encounter with a God who comes to us in his Word, feeds us with bread from heaven, and quenches our thirst with the cup of salvation.

But what is most significant at the Mass is that when the species (the bread and wine) are consecrated by a priest or bishop, Jesus becomes really and truly present. We call this the Real Presence. It is no longer bread and wine, but really Jesus Himself. The substance (what the thing is) of bread and wine is changed into the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus, even though we can still see and taste the accidents (what we see or taste) of bread and wine. [Taken from the booklet "The Little Catechism on the Holy Eucharist," Catholic Bishop of Lincoln, Nebraska, 1995]

Pope John Paul II says, "Our participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice should deepen our desire for the whole human family to come to the light of the faith... It should inspire us to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all those who do not yet believe in Him." We who are God's children by faith and baptism share in Christ's priesthood. In the Mass we join our High Priest in offering the Sacrifice of His Body and Blood. With the whole Church we unite the offering of ourselves and of all created things with Christ's offering to the Father. We adore God, we thank Him, we atone for our sins and we ask Him for help. The Mass nourishes us with the Word of God and the Body and Blood of Christ. In Holy Communion, Christ comes to our souls to give us a fuller share in His Sacrifice and unite us more closely to Himself and to one another.

**Why We Should "Go To Mass".** There are many reasons why we should "go to Mass." It is hoped that one or another of the following reasons will motivate us to a better participation in the Eucharistic celebration.

- 1) Since the work of our salvation is commemorated and continued in the Mass, gratitude demands that we take part in the Eucharistic liturgy.
- 2) Christ saved us, but he did not intend to save us without our cooperation. The purpose of the Eucharist is not only to renew Christ's sacrifice, but also to join the sacrifice of ourselves to his, in order to indicate our desire and cooperation to be saved.
- 3) If we believe that Christ redeemed us, we should desire to publicly profess this belief by taking an active part in the Mass which continues his redemptive work.
- 4) Since Christ distributes his redemptive graces most abundantly in the Mass, it is necessary that we should come into vital contact with him in the Mass, in order to receive all the graces he desires to impart to us.

5) At Baptism we have received a share in the divine life, but we need Jesus in Holy Communion in order to maintain and develop this life; for, as he said: "I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you" (Jn. 6:53).

6) Through Baptism we share in the priesthood of Christ. The function of the priesthood is to worship and offer sacrifice. Hence, it is our vocation, privilege, and duty to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice.

7) Only perfect worship is worthy of the heavenly Father, and only the Mass is perfect worship. Not even the greatest amount of prayers, recited with the greatest devotion, can come close to the value of even one Mass.

8) Finally, some may say, "Why should I go to church? I can pray anywhere, and I can pray by myself." True, we can pray anywhere and by ourselves, but we should also worship with others because through Baptism we have become members of the Christian community. We should go to church in order to receive Holy Communion which is necessary for our spiritual life. We should go to church because, aside from a few exceptions, we do there something which we do not do anyplace else, namely, offer the best prayer, the best form of worship, the holy sacrifice of the Mass. (Rev. Maynard Kolodziej, "Understanding the Mass", Catholic Book Publishing Co., NJ, 1998)

**General Intercessions of the Eucharist.** The Liturgy of the Eucharist is the great act of intercession of the Church. By interceding, the Church exercises her role as Bride of Christ, reigning and ruling with Him. Like the queen she is, the Church intercedes with her all-powerful King. I can offer the Immaculate Victim and in union with Him I can offer myself. As a royal priest I can offer my whole being - body, soul, and spirit. I can offer "always and everywhere" even the least of my sufferings, or rather *especially* my little sufferings, because those are often the only ones I have. In union with the Immaculate Victim, the Eucharistically offered Victim, the eternal Priest and Victim, Jesus Christ, Who offered Himself on Calvary for the salvation of us all – in union with Him my smallest offerings become His and so of the greatest worth and power. These little sufferings are so precious we should not waste them, but rather offer them in union with the one eternal sacrifice going on this very moment in thousands of Masses around the world. Always and everywhere I can offer up the present situation. Nothing is too small to offer, nothing insignificant when offered Eucharistically, when offered in union with Jesus for the salvation of souls to the glory of the Father. It is called intercession. We are all called to it. (Rev. George W. Kosicki, C.S.B. "Intercession Moving Mountains Eucharistically," The Riehle Foundation, PO Box 7, Milford, OH (513) 576-0032)

It is a common practice to limit our prayers to petition. This is a mistake. While prayer of petition should not be forgotten (for in it we beg God for the favors of which we stand in need), we owe God, first of all, adoration; secondly, gratitude. We can never thank Him sufficiently, though we were to employ eternity in so doing, for the innumerable gifts, material and spiritual, temporal and eternal, which He has bestowed upon us. Life, redemption, our Catholic faith, preservation from grave sins, the grace of conversion, health, relatives and friends – these are but a few of God's gifts. Let us rejoice, therefore, to thank God by means of the Holy Mass. After adoration and thanksgiving comes atonement. Prostrate at the foot of Calvary's cross, down which the most precious Blood of Jesus Christ flows from His gaping wounds, we should beg pardon for our sins which have thus nailed Christ to the cross. Let us ask Him to pour His precious Blood over our souls that they may be cleansed from their polluting stains. ("Eucharistic Vigil Guide," prepare by Apostles of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 4<sup>th</sup> printing, June 1977)

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