

# The Meaning of the Mass

† God's Gift of the Mass †

St. Thomas More Parish RCIA

17 September 2015

- † At Mass, Catholics remember what Jesus did at the Last Supper.
- † The words of Jesus, “Do this in remembrance of me,” have been obeyed without interruption for nearly two thousand years.
- † Every time we gather for Mass, we know that we are there to do what Jesus commanded. And, we believe that in that action that Jesus is present.

(The Journey of Faith Q3)

# Vocabulary

## ➤ 'Mass'

- Ite, missa est! "Go, it is sent." (it, meaning the Church)
- English word "dismiss" comes from the Latin "missa"

## ➤ Other Names for the Mass

- Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Breaking of the Bread, The Lord's Supper

## ➤ Eucharist

- Greek: "Thanksgiving"

## ➤ Liturgy

- Greek: a deliberate public work for the good of the community
- The work of the people
- The official public prayer of the Church

## ➤ Divine

- That which is God or is of God.

# Vocabulary

## ➤ Ritual

- A formal series of actions performed according to a set order

## ➤ Sin

- Separation from God

## ➤ Amen

- So, be it!

## ➤ Alleluia

- The Greek form of the Hebrew phrase Hallelu Yah
- Praise God!

## ➤ Hosanna

- Save us!

# What is the Mass?

A Historical Overview

# The Passover Meal

## † Jewish Feast

- Exodus 12-13

## † Remembrance (to make present)



# The Last Supper

- † A Passover meal
- † Mission to service
- † Christ's gift of self



# The Last Supper

“Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is **my Body** which will be given up for you.

Take this all of you and drink from it, for this is the chalice of **my Blood**, the Blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Do this in memory of me.”





# The Paschal Mystery

- † Paschal comes from the word “Passover”
- † “Paschal Mystery” refers to the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ
- † The Lamb of God
- † Christ’s sacrifice



# The Road to Emmaus

† Luke 24.13-25

- “...they were conversing about all the things that had occurred...”
- “...beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures...”
- “at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them. With that their eyes were opened and they recognized him...”
- “ ‘Were not our hearts burning (within us) while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?’ ”





## **A Closer Look at the Mass**

*(Refer to the Mass Responses Pamphlet)*

# The Elements of the Mass

## † Divine

- Eucharistic Prayer
- Person of the minister
- Scripture
- 'matter'...the bread and the wine
- Cannot change

## † Human

- Vestments
- Language
- Scripture selection
- Can be adapted by the Church over time

# Movements of the Mass

- † Opening Rites
- † Liturgy of the Word
- † Liturgy of the Eucharist
- † Concluding Rite

# Opening Rites

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## † Sign of the Cross

- We acknowledge our Baptism / that we are members of the household of God

## † Greeting

- Bringing peace



## † Penitential Rite

- We acknowledge we are sinners
- Striking our breast
- absolution

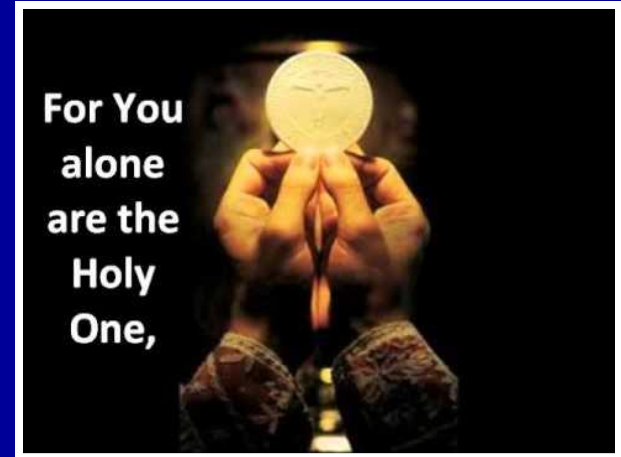
## † Kyrie

- Asking God for mercy

# Opening Rites continued...

## † Gloria (except Advent and Lent)

- Response to the fact that God has forgiven our sins...
- Singing God's praise



## † Opening Prayer/Collect



# Liturgy of the Word

# Liturgy of the Word

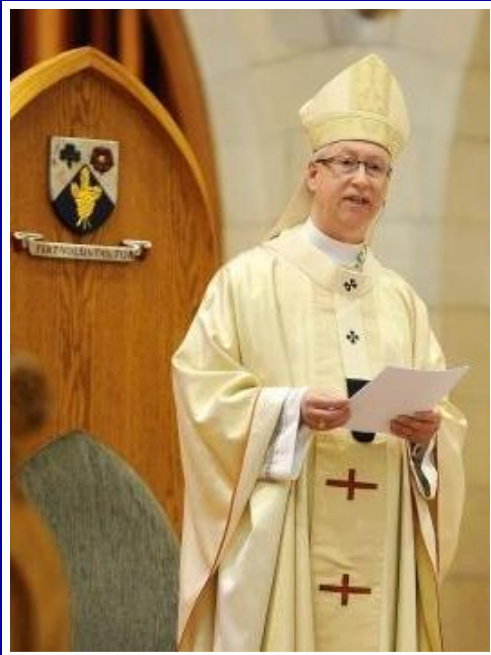
- † Proclaiming the Word of God
- † Recounting salvation history
- † Prepares us for the Eucharist
- † 1st Reading
  - Old Testament  
(Easter: Acts)
- † Psalm
- † 2nd Reading
  - Epistles (Letters),  
Acts, Revelation



# Liturgy of the Word continued...

## † Gospel—The Good News

- Alleluia (*Hebrew: Praise the Lord*)
- Sign of the cross—forehead, lips, heart
- Life and words of Jesus (4 Gospels)
- A (Matthew), B (Mark), C (Luke)



## † Homily

- Interpretation of Scripture
- Priest or Deacon

## † ‘Response’

- Creed
- Prayers of the Faithful

# **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

## ***(The Great Thanksgiving)***

# Liturgy of the Eucharist

## † Preparation of the Gifts

- The community offers



- Water added to Wine

- Washing of hands



# The Eucharistic Prayer

## † Eucharistia

- *Thanksgiving* (Greek)

## † The heart of the Mass

## † Makes present Christ's sacrifice on the Cross

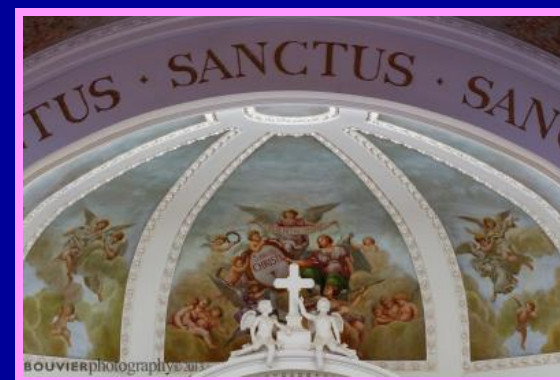


# The Eucharistic Prayer continued...

## † Preface

- “Lift up your hearts!”
- Thanksgiving

## † Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)



## † Epiclesis

- Invocation of the Holy Spirit



# The Eucharistic Prayer continued...

## † Institution Narrative

- “Before he was given up to death...”
- From bread and wine to Body and Blood
- Transubstantiation
- Body, Blood, Soul, Divinity of Glorified (Resurrected) Christ





# The Eucharistic Prayer continued...

## † Memorial Acclamation

- Proclaiming the Paschal Mystery

### Memorial Acclamation

*We proclaim your Death,  
O Lord, and  
profess your Resurrection  
until you come again.*

## † Intercessions

- Prayers for the Church
- Prayers for all who will be nourished by Christ's Body and Blood
- Prayers for the living and the dead

# The Eucharistic Prayer continued...

## † Doxology (*Greek: Praise*)

- Words of Glory to the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)

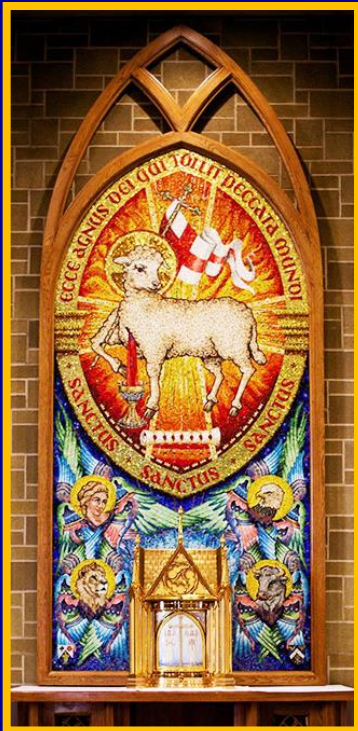
## † The Great Amen



# Communion Rite

† The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)

† The Sign of Peace



† The Lamb of God

† “Lord, I am not worthy...”

# Communion Rite continued...

## † Holy Communion

- Climax and aim of Mass
- A Taste of Heaven
- Union with Christ
- Union with each other in heaven and on earth (through Christ)
- Receiving love and forgiveness on your tongue



## † Receive a blessing

- Place your right hand across your heart



# Concluding Rite

(the Mass is not over after you receive Holy Communion)

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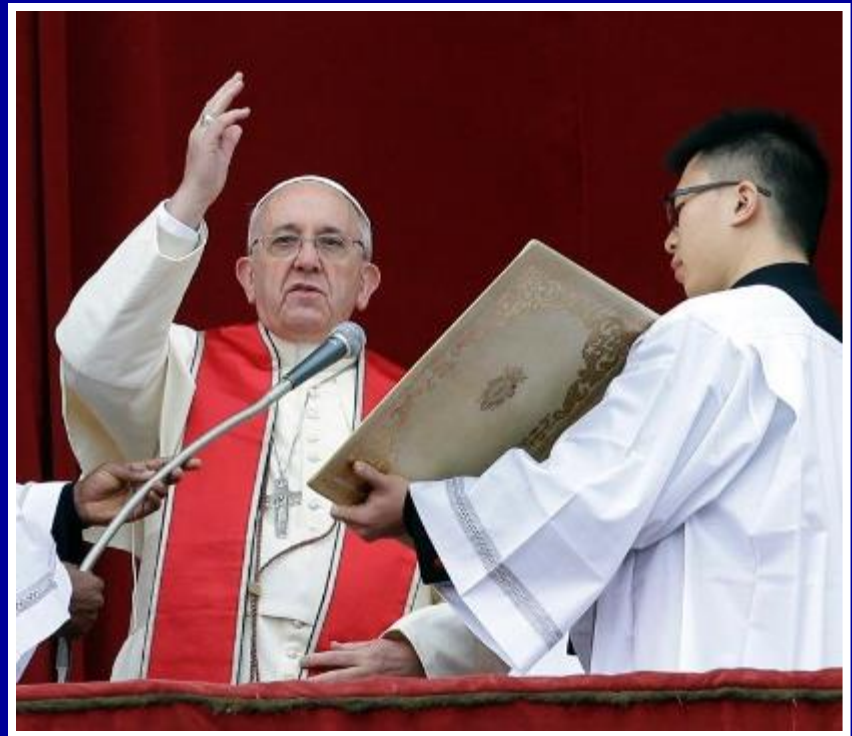
† Prayer after Communion

† Final Blessing

- Sign of the Cross

† Dismissal

- Mission



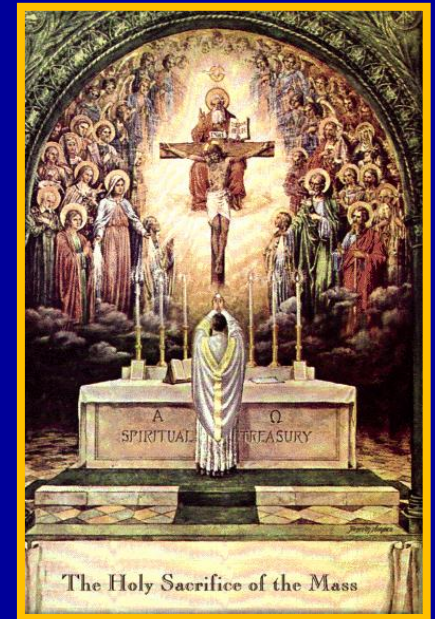
# Fruits of the Mass/Holy Communion

*(CCC 1391-1401)*

† Proclamation of the Faith

† Union

- with Christ
- with the Church
  - The Pope and our Archbishop/Bishop
  - The other faithful
  - The saints



† Forgiveness of sin (not grave sin)

† Grace and sanctification (to make holy)



# Points to Consider

## The Mass within Scripture

*(The verses below will give a topic  
, and the chapter/verse found in the book of Revelation..)*

Sunday worship 1:10.  
A high priest 1:13.  
An altar 8:3-4; 11:1; 14:18.  
Priests (presbyteroi—Greek word for priest anew) 4:4; 11:15; 14:3; 19:4.  
Vestments 1:13; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9; 15:6; 19:13-14.  
Consecrated celibacy 14:4.  
Lamp stands 1:12, 2:5.  
Penitence ch. 2 and 3 as a whole.  
Incense 5:8; 8:3-5.  
The book, or scroll 5:1.  
The Eucharistic Host 2:17.  
Chalices 15:7; ch. 16; 21:9.  
The Sign of the Cross (the tau) 7:3; 14:1; 22:4.  
The Gloria 15:3-4.  
The Alleluia 19:1, 3, 4, 6.  
Lift up your hearts 11:12.  
The "Holy, Holy, Holy" 4:8.  
The Amen 19:4; 22:21.  
The "Lamb of God" 5:6.  
Acknowledgement of the Virgin Mary 12:1-6; 13-17.  
Intercession of angels and saints 5:8; 6:0-10; 8:3-4.  
Participation of St. Michael, archangel 12:7.  
Antiphonal chant 4:8-11; 5:9-14; 7:10-12; 18:1-8.  
Readings from Scripture ch 2-3; 5; 8:2-11.  
The priesthood of the faithful 1:6; 20:6.  
Catholicity, or universality 7:9.  
Silent contemplation 8:1.  
The marriage supper of the Lamb 19:9, 17.

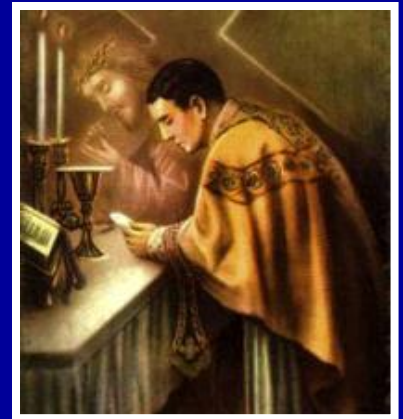
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## † The Mass comes from Scripture/the Bible

- See the book of Revelation

## † Why a priest?

- In persona Christi



## † The significance of the Altar

- Altar of sacrifice & Table of the Lord



# Points to Consider

## † Silence

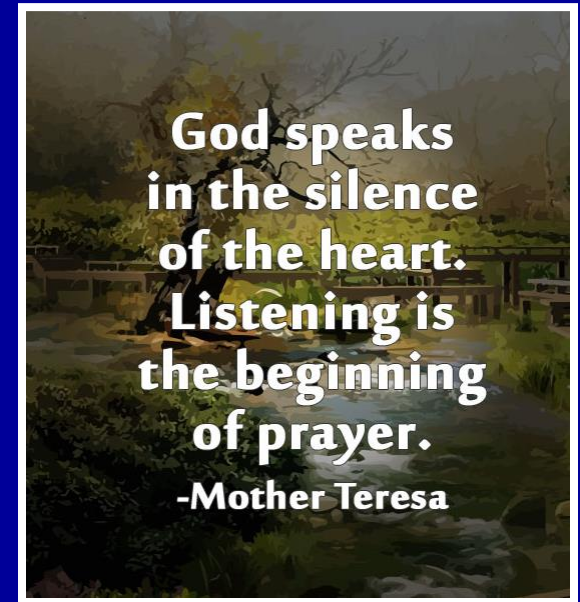
- Prayer, recollection

## † Response

- Responding to the gift
- God initiates, we respond

## † Posture

- Standing—prayer
- Sitting—listening
- Kneeling—adoration, humble submission to God's will



# Points to Consider

## † Universal

- Catholic



## † Ritual

- allows you to enter into the mystery more deeply

**What is Our Part in the Mass?**

# Entering the Church

## † Consider the doors to the Church

*Revelation 3:20 "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me."*

## † Holy water/Baptismal Font

- bless ourselves in the name of the Father, Son & Holy Spirit
- remember our baptisms or our baptisms to come

## † Genuflect to the tabernacle

## † Bow to the altar

## † Become aware of God's presence

# How Do We Prepare for Mass?

- † Must be in a state of grace to receive Eucharist
- † Read the lessons beforehand
- † Fasting for at least one hour (includes no gum chewing)
- † Modest and respectful dress
- † Come early, make time for prayer
- † Know that everything has a meaning

# Respond to the Gift of the Mass

## † Assist at the Mass:

- Be in attendance for the entirety of the Mass/the whole of the prayer (from the opening rites until the celebrant has left)
- Learn the responses
- Participate!

## † Weekly obligation to God

- We GET to go to Mass!

# Resources

- † Catechism of the Catholic Church
- † The Lamb's Supper: *The Mass as Heaven on Earth* (1999)
  - Dr. Scott Hahn
- † Understanding the Mystery of the Mass (2005)
  - Fr. Matthew Buettner
- † The How-To Book of the Mass (2006)
  - Michael Dubriel
- † A Biblical Walk Through the Mass: *Understanding What We Say and Do in the Liturgy* (2010)
  - Dr. Edward Sri
- † Catholic Mass for Dummies (2011)
  - Rev. John Trigilio Jr., Rev. Kenneth Brighenti,  
Rev. Monsignor James Cafone
- † Living with the Prayers of the Mass (2013)
  - Bernadette Gasslein

† *All the good works in the world are not equal to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass because they are the works of men; but the Mass is the work of God. Martyrdom is nothing in comparison for it is but the sacrifice of man to God; but the Mass is the sacrifice of God for man.*

– Saint John Vianney



# Discussion Questions

- † What did you learn about the Mass that you did not already know?
- † Now that you know about “our part” of the Mass, how will you apply what you have learned?
- † Have you experienced God in the Mass?
- † Questions?