

Why is it important to learn about the Mass?

- We are participants, not spectators!

Why do we go to Mass?

- To have a holy encounter with God
- In the Mass:
  - God speaks to each one of us in Scripture
  - We are nourished by Jesus in the Eucharist
  - And so are fortified for our mission => bring Gospel to the world. “missa = mission”
- First commandment: I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods besides me.
  - In Justice – we owe all to God who created us, and died to save us
  - God knows how fickle we are, how prone we are to chase worldly desires
    - Often these idols are good – but they ARE NOT GOD
      - Hobbies, sport, vacation, time with friends,
    - Cannot replace the Ultimate Good with a lesser good
      - Isaiah: “Why spend your money for what is not bread; your wages for what fails to satisfy?”
    - If God is not at the center – something will fill that spot
    - If we order our lives around worship to God, all else falls into its appropriate place
      - Often this requires sacrifice
      - Others may not understand, but over time they will see the integrity in your actions
        - [Masstimes.org](http://Masstimes.org) / app
      - Holy Mother Church, in her wisdom, puts guard rails in place for her children
        - Thus Worship at Sunday Mass is compulsory
        - To willfully decide not to go: mortal sin which must be confessed before receiving the Eucharist
          - Illness, emergency situation, no access to Mass

## The Introductory Rites

- We enter the Church through the Baptistry
  - It is through Baptism that we are born to new life in Christ
- We genuflect to the Tabernacle as we enter the pew – sign of reverence and pledge of service
- Procession
  - Priest and deacons genuflect to the Tabernacle before stepping up into the Sanctuary
  - Priest and deacon kiss the altar.
    - Jesus is the center, source and goal of our worship, and the altar is the centerpoint of the celebration of the Holy Sacrafice of the Mass
      - Jesus, both priest and sacrifice
    - From this point on, during Mass, the altar is revered by a bow when approaching or passing by
- The Sign of the Cross
  - The Words: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit
    - All the words and actions to follow, are being said/done in the presence of God and with Him as the center and focus
  - The gesture
    - Marking ourselves as set apart, belonging to God
    - Invoking God’s protection for our lives
- Opening Greeting
  - Priest: “The Lord Be with You” (Bishop only: “Peace Be with You”)
    - Affirms the presence of Jesus with those assembled in His name
    - Accompanied a call to mission
      - Moses at the burning bush – God summons Moses to go to Pharoah to convince him to to let the people go. Moses feels inadequate to the task, but God assures him, “ I will be with you”
      - Mary: The angel Gabriel greets Mary, “Hail, full of grace – the Lord is with you”
      - Isaac, Joshua, Jacob, Gideon, David, Jeremiah
  - Us: “And with your Spirit”: Highlights the special activity of the Holy Spirit in the priest at Mass
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- Act of Penance: The Confiteor
  - We are called to prepare ourselves for a sacred encounter with the Lord
    - Israelites prepared for 3 days before meeting with the Lord at Mt. Sinai – would consecrate themselves to God and wash their garments
    - Priest: “Let us prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries”
      - Cleanse our souls from sin as we approach God in the Mass
    - We confess our sins not only “to Almighty God”, but also, “to you my brothers and sisters that I have greatly sinned => sin is not only offense to God, but also affects our relationships with one another
  - In my thoughts, and in my words, in what I have done, and what I have failed to do.
- Kyrie Eleison – Lord Have Mercy
  - Having confessed our sinfulness we turn to God with a contrite heart and He meets us with his Mercy – His tender love for us even in the face of our sins
  - Also a petition, prayer representing the cry of God’s people for assistance in their lives
- Gloria
  - Tone of liturgy moves from sorrowful repentance to joyful praise
  - Sung at Sunday Mass except for during Lent and Advent
  - Opening line taken from the words of the angels announcing the birth of Christ to the shepherds: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased”
  - First section exuberant praise for God our Almighty Father
  - The whole mission of Christ is summed up in next section from his Incarnation, his redeeming death, and his enthronement in heaven.
  - Trinitarian in design as we praise the Father, the Son, and in the 3<sup>rd</sup> part, Jesus is praised “with the HOly Spirit, in the glory of God the Father”
  - “The Gloria is the joyful response to the pleading of the Kyrie” - Pius Parsch, theologian
    - Kyrie: we express our need for salvation and God’s mercy
    - Gloria: we joyfully express our gratitude for having received salvation from Christ
- Collect
  - Gather together the prayer intentions (powerful!!) of the people who have gathered for Mass
    - Remember, we are participants, not spectators!

- Collect for Sunday 5/1:
  - May your people exult forever, O God, in renewed youthfulness of spirit, so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption, we may look forward in confident hope to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

### **The Liturgy of the Word**

“In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven meet his children with great love and speaks with them” - *Vatican II, Dei Verbum*

- Cycle of reading: Sunday Mass – 3 year cycle. Daily Mass – 2 year cycle
  - Beginning in Dec 2022: Cycle A – Matthew is primary Gospel (not during Easter)
- First Reading
  - Typically from OT (During Easter – often from Acts)
  - Usually a thematic tie between the First Reading and the Gospel
  - Reading consistently from the OT is important – must understand the story of Salvation in its entirety. We need to know the story that came before to more fully understand Jesus, his Incarnation, ministry, establishing the Kingdom, Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension
  - “The Word of the Lord” - Joyful and reverent acknowledgement that God has just spoken to us
  - “Thanks be to God” - our grateful response
- Responsorial Psalm
  - We respond to God with His inspired words of praise, thanksgiving, petition
  - We are a universal Church – the Psalm is expressing something on behalf of someone in the Body of Christ somewhere in the world – sometimes it is us!
  - We all respond because we are all members of the Body of Christ!
- Second Reading
  - Most often from an Epistle
  - Practical applications for living our life in Christ – strengthening, encouraging, admonishing
- Gospel
  - Our principal source for the life and teaching of our Lord, Jesus Christ
  - Only clergy may proclaim the Gospel in Mass

- We stand – sign of reverence – stand to welcome Jesus proclaimed in the Gospel reading (also in OT, in Nehemiah, the Jews stood while Ezra read from the book of the law)
  - We sing Alleluia – Hebrew: “Praise Yahweh!” (Except during Lent)
  - Priest quietly prays for himself or over the deacon: “Cleanse my heart and my lips, almighty God, that I may worthily proclaim your holy Gospel”
  - The Gospel is processed from the altar to the ambo, sometimes accompanied by candles and incense
  - Three-fold sign of the cross over the forehead, lips, and heart – we consecrate our thoughts, words, and actions to the Lord, asking that his Word be always on our minds, on our lips and in our hearts.
  - Not merely hearing about Jesus speaking 2k years ago, but we hear Him speak TO US directly!
- Homily
    - “Homily” means “explanation” in Greek
    - Purpose: To explain the meaning of the Scriptural readings and draw out the application for our lives
    - Rooted in Jewish custom
      - In Nehemiah 8:8 – “Ezra read clearly from the book of the law of God, interpreting it so that all could understand what was read”
      - Also the custom in the synagogues
      - Can only be given by clergy. As a successor of the apostles, the bishop (and the priests and deacons with whom he shares his authority) have the responsibility to proclaim the Gospel and pass on all that Christ taught the apostles
      - The homily being given by an ordained minister is meant to be a sign or guarantee that the preaching is passing on the Church’s apostolic faith, and not merely the private thoughts or experiences of an individual
- The Creed
    - Summary statement of our faith. Ensures right doctrine and curbing heresy
    - Moves from creation to Christ’s incarnation, death and resurrection, to the sending of the Holy Spirit, to the era of the Church and finally to the Second Coming
- Prayers of the Faithful
    - In the GIRM (gen. Instruction of the Roman Missal), says that in these intercessions, the faithful exercise their priestly function. We are baptized priest, prophet, and king
      - We participate in Christ’s priestly prayer for the human family

- “Up to this point in the Mass, the faithful have heard the Word of the Lord proclaimed in Scripture, expounded upon in the homily and summed up in the Creed. Now having been formed in God’s word, the faithful respond with the heart and mind of Jesus by praying for the needs of the Church and the world
- Universal in scope – typical order of intentions, broad to narrow, all the way to “those we pray in the silence of our hearts”

### The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Bread and wine are offered as gifts by the people and then consecrated and changed into the body and blood of Christ, which we receive in holy communion. Three parts: Preparation of the Gifts, Eucharistic Prayer, and the Communion Rite

### The Preparation of the Gifts

- Presentation of the Gifts – under normal circumstances gifts are processed up to the altar by representatives of the congregation
  - Bread and wine – why?
  - Simple but profound gifts – Jesus elevates and multiplies the simple gifts we offer
  - Bread: staff of life – sustaining, never outgrow the need for it
  - Wine – gladdens hearts
  - They both represent gifts of creation and the fruit of our labor
    - “Fruit of the earth and work of human hands”
    - Symbolizes our giving of our entire lives to God
  - OT sacrifices and offerings (thanksgiving, expiatory)
  - Also includes our financial offering offered to God
  - We are bringing our entire lives and all our little sacrifices, symbolized by the gifts to the hands of Jesus Himself (Priest is present “in persona Christi capitus”. The priest then brings our gifts to the altar, the place where Christ’s one sacrifice on Calvary is made present, in order to express our union with Christ’s offering to the Father
- Mixing of water and wine
  - Prayer: By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity”
    - The wine symbolizes Christ’s divinity and the water our humanity. This points to the Incarnation: mystery of God becoming man, and points to our call to share in Christ’s divine life
- Prayer over the bread and wine – modeled after the Jewish blessings over bread in wine used in meals: would hear this at daily Mass – on Sunday offertory hymn covers it up

- “Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: Fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life”
  - Response: “Blessed be God Forever”
- Washing of hands
  - Recalls the priests of the OT – ritual washings before the priests could perform their duties in the sanctuary
  - At Mass, the priest is about to stand in a most holy place – at the altar where bread and wine will be changed into the body, blood, soul and divinity of Christ through the action of the priest acting “in persona Christi capitus”
    - “Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin”
  - Priest: “Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father”. The “my” part is Christ’s sacrifice which will be made present through the ordained priest acting in persona Christi. The “your” part refers to the entire Church offering itself in union with Christ. Both will be united and offered to the Father.
    - Response: “May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name for our good and the good of all his holy Church.”
    - We stand

The Eucharistic Prayer (4 Eucharistic Prayers that the priest may choose from)

- The Preface:
  - Starts with a 3-part dialogue that is first reported in the Eucharistic prayer of St. Hippolytus (circa 215 A.D.)
  - Priest: “The Lord be with you”
  - People: “And with your spirit”
  - Priest: “Lift up your hearts”
  - People: “We lift them up to the Lord”
  - Priest: “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
  - People: “It is right and just”
  - “Lift up your hearts”
    - In the Bible, the heart is the center from which our thoughts, emotions, and actions flow. So in lifting our hearts we are called to give our fullest attention to what is about to happen – set aside all other concerns. Reminiscent of St. Paul’s call to seek the things that are above, where Christ is
  - “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God”

- We have so much to be thankful for!
  - We thank God for saving us from sin, and in acknowledgement that that redemptive act is about to be made present to us in the Eucharist!
- Preface prayer – the priest then goes on to offer a prayer of thanksgiving on our behalf to God – one version: “It is truly right and just our duty and our salvation always and everywhere to give you thanks almighty God...”
- The Sanctus
  - The opening words come from Isaiah 6 where he has a vision of the Lord sitting on a throne surrounded by seraphim (means “burning ones” – they are so close to God that they reflect his radiance). And yet even they who are so close to God dare not behold the full glory of God and they cover their faces with their wings, calling out to one another in praise: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory”. When they sing the foundations of the Temple shake and room is filled with smoke – Isaiah realizes his unworthiness to stand in the holy presence of God
  - We are joining our voices with the angels and saints in heaven!
  - Second half: we repeat the words the crowds used to greet Jesus as he processed into Jerusalem – so do we welcome Jesus into our churches for He is about to become present in the Eucharist on our altars
  - We fall to our knees
- The Epiclesis
  - Means “invocation upon”. The priest prays that the Father send the Holy Spirit so that the gifts of bread and wine be changed into the body and blood of Our Lord.
  - EP II: “Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by sending down your Spirit upon them like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ”
    - Deacon drops to his knees
- Words of Institution and Consecration
  - Jesus institutes the Sacrament of Eucharist at the Last Supper
    - In the context of the Passover – sacrifice of the lamb before Israelites delivered from slavery – celebrated annually by the Jewish people - anamnesis
    - Jesus is the Lamb of God – John the Baptist announces this!
    - Jesus lays the foundation for this in the Bread of Life discourse – John 6
    - Jesus sacrifice on the cross saves us from the slavery of our sin and our separation from God brought about by the fall of our first parents
    - This is the “new and eternal covenant”



- Anamnesis – the one eternal sacrifice at Calvary is made present to us sacramentally so that the saving power of his Passion may be applied to our lives and so that we can unite ourselves more deeply to Christ
    - St. Paul “In my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the Church”
      - Christ’s sacrifice is complete, but he offers us the opportunity to join our prayers, sufferings, works and sacrifice in union with his perfect sacrifice
    - “Do this in memory of me”. Priest elevates the paten or chalice and then places back on the altar and genuflects
- Mystery of Faith
  - 3 versions: at SPX: “When we eat this bread....”
- Doxology
  - “Through him and with him and in him, O God almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever”
  - The Great Amen!
  - We stand
- Our Father
- The Sign of Peace
  - We are united to Christ in the Body of Christ, and we share the peace of Christ with one another
- The Lamb of God – the Agnus Dei
- The Fraction rite, and the commingling of the Body and Blood of Christ
  - Occurs while the Agnus Dei is prayed
  - Fraction rite: Priest breaks the Eucharistic host
    - Jesus does this multiple times – feeding of 5k, at the Institution of the Eucharist, Road to Emmaus, etc
  - Commingling
    - After breaking the consecrated host, the priest places a small piece into the chalice and prays
      - Used at one time to express the unity of the Church – bishop would send a small portion of the Blessed Sacrament to the priests in his area who would place it in their chalices as a sign of their unity with the bishop

- Also expresses the reunion of Christ's body and blood in His Resurrection
- Elevation of the Blessed Sacrament
  - "Behold the Lamb of God. Behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb"
    - We respond: Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof. But only say the word and my soul shall be healed"
      - Roman Centurion knows that he is not worthy to have Jesus come to his home, and yet he believes that Jesus can heal his servant and to do so from afar, simply by speaking his word"
- Communion Rite
  - Remember that you must be in a state of grace to receive
  - We come forward to receive our Lord
  - We receive, we do not take
  - Our Amen expresses our grateful assent that we are indeed receiving the Body of Christ
  - When we come back to the pew, we don't genuflect for in that time we are living Tabernacles, each of us with the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus within us!

### **The Concluding Rites**

- The final prayer and blessing
- Priest or Deacon: "Go forth, the Mass is ended" - Ite Missa est – we are sent forth – mission!
- "Thanks Be to God"
- Priest kisses the altar, followed by the procession