

Knowing Our Catholic Faith

(9)

The Mass



For all Catholics, Sunday is a HOLIDAY! We are glad, we put on our best clothes, we do not work, we spend time with family, because this day we celebrate something big: the resurrection of Jesus! Yes, every Sunday of the year we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

THE MASS

WHAT IS THE MASS?

First of all, the Mass is a party. Why have a party? Because, thanks to Jesus' resurrection, all men can be saved, or, in other words, after we die we can go to heaven and live there forever with God. Of course we have celebrate this!

In addition:

1) The Mass is the MEMORIAL of the sacrifice of Our Lord. This means that Jesus Christ when he left this world, did not leave us only a painting or a statue of himself, but he left the TRUTH of his PRESENCE in every Mass that is celebrated.



2) The Mass is a BANQUET. Just as our body needs to eat to live, our soul needs Jesus to be happy and to get to heaven. In the Mass we receive communion and Jesus comes to our soul.

3) The Mass is a SACRIFICE. The Church teaches that in every Mass we relive Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross, Christ offers himself to die for us and forgive us our sins.

WHY GO TO MASS?

When Catholics go to Mass:

1) The most important thing is that in the Mass we PRAISE God, that is, we say that He is the greatest thing that exists, that we love Him and that we respect Him.

2) In the Mass we GIVE THANKS to God for all the good things he has given us.

3) In the Mass we ASK God's FORGIVENESS for the times that we have offended Him, although we know that serious sins are forgiven only in Confession.

4) In the Mass we OFFER OURSELVES to God, because we love him, and we promise that we will try to be better. Each of us knows what it is that Jesus wants us to change.

5) In the Mass we ask Jesus for his HELP. Remember that alone we can not accomplish many things, but with God's help we can. We need to put ourselves in His hands.

WHAT HAPPENS AT MASS?

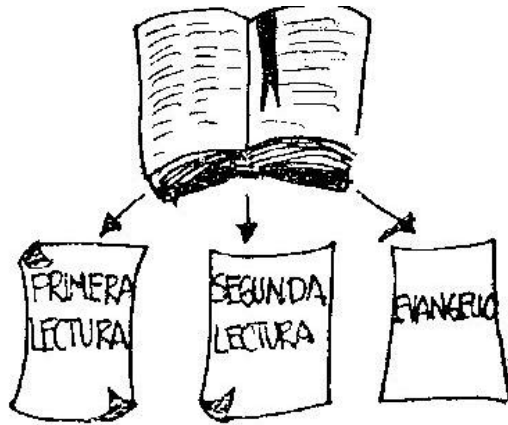
- The Mass is divided into two parts. The first is called THE LITURGY OF THE WORD and the second THE EUCHARIST. We will explain what we do in each one of them:

The Liturgy of the Word:

- In the first part of the Mass, we prepare to receive the message of Christ. How do we prepare?

- 1) First, we ask God for forgiveness for our offenses in the PENITENTIAL RITE. "
- 2) Then we pray the GLORIA. With this prayer we say HE is the greatest thing and that we respect Him.

Now that we are prepared, we hear Jesus' message in three readings. All of them are from the Bible:



- 1) The FIRST READING consists of messages that were written many many years before Jesus was born.
- 2) In the SECOND READING, we almost always read letters written by the Apostles.

3) The GOSPEL tells us about the life of Jesus, and tells us how He wants us to behave and what we should do to be saved. This is the most important reading and that is why we listen to it standing up.

4) Then follows the priests SERMON where he explains the readings and gives us advice.

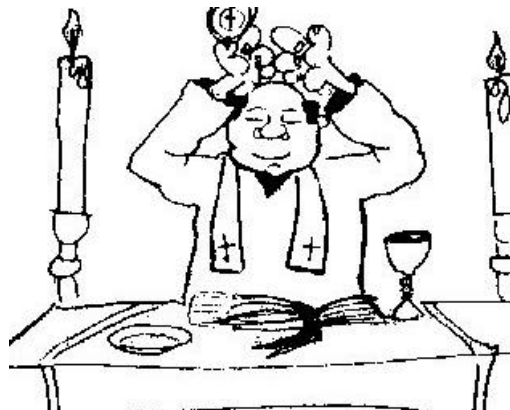
5) Then all pray the CREED, where we state everything we Catholics believe.

6) At the end of this part of the Mass, all ask God for different things and all answer: "We pray to the Lord".

The Eucharist

- This is the second part of the Mass and the most important because it is here that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus.

- 1) First the offerings of bread and wine are brought to the altar.
- 2) Then the priest washes his hands, this is done to remember that his soul should be clean to say Mass.



3) Then comes the most important part: THE CONSECRATION. In it the priest repeats the same words that Jesus said in the Last Supper, it is then that the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Jesus.

4) Then we pray the Our Father.

5) Then we share sign of peace, we shake hands in token of the love that should exist between all the people.

6) At the end, comes something very important: COMMUNION. Imagine, you are able to receive Jesus himself in your soul! The following moments are perhaps the sweetest of the entire Mass. We can talk to the Jesus himself in our hearts, to tell Him things, and ask for His help!

GOAL OF THE MONTH: Now that you know better what the Mass is, try to pay close attention and feel closer to Jesus during it.