

What am I supposed to do at Mass?

- Be a participant, not a spectator. Pray the prayers; sing the songs. Your mind should be attuned to your voice. Cooperate with the divine graces and gifts. Get used to the gestures: kneeling, standing, sitting, and making signs of the cross. Become comfortable keeping reverent silence.

- “In the Eucharistic Prayer, we hear that Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, made it his Body, and gave it for our salvation. One way of identifying with this is to pray, ‘Lord, take me. Bless me. Break me. Make me part of your saving, sacrificial gift for the world’s bodily and spiritual needs.’ Having offered ourselves to the Father in union with Christ, we practice active participation in the Mass in its highest form” (United States Catholic Catechism for Adults 226-227).



Wittman

Faith Reflection:

How might we come to know Christ more fully at Mass?

Receive Love, Give It to Others

At the end of every Mass we are challenged to go forth and bring Christ to others through our words and actions. This is evangelization. Every Mass offers the challenge to go be Christ for one another. This is exactly what St. John Chrysostom taught in his homilies about the link between Mass and our behavior:

“Of what use is it to weigh down Christ’s table with golden cups, when he himself is dying of hunger? What if you were to see Jesus clad in rags and stiff from the cold, and were to forget clothing him

and were to set up golden columns for him, saying you were honoring him? Let us learn, therefore, to be people of wisdom and honor Christ as he desires.”

After we receive Communion, the church is quiet. In silence we are called to listen to Jesus in our hearts and minds. The sacrament of the holy Eucharist is transformative. An encounter with the person of Jesus Christ is meant to change us, renew our spirit, and deepen our faith.

What the Church Teaches

- Jesus instituted the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of the Christian life. He did this to abide with us and help us partake in the graces of his passion, death, and resurrection.
- The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* lists several names for the Eucharist: the Lord’s Supper, the Breaking of the Bread, a holy sacrifice, the Blessed Sacrament, Holy Communion, and Holy Mass.
- In the Eucharist, Christ is present in his body, soul, and divinity, truly, really and substantially. The consecration of the bread and wine changes the substance of bread into Christ’s body and the substance of wine into Christ’s blood.
- The Mass has two parts that together form a single act of worship: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
- The Mass is both a holy meal and a holy sacrifice. St. Paul urges us to live the Mass we attend. He writes, “I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship” (Rom 12:1).
- Christ’s gift of the holy Mass is the greatest source of our spiritual and moral development.



Crosiers

Additional Resources

Books

- Gateways to God: Celebrating the Sacraments*, Fr. Robert J. Hater. (Our Sunday Visitor, 2011).
- The Holy Eucharist Prayer Book*, Rev. Alfred McBride, O.Praem. (Our Sunday Visitor, 2005).
- How to Get the Most Out of the Eucharist*, Michael Dubruiel. (Our Sunday Visitor, 2005).
- Lectio Divina: The Sacraments in Scripture*, Stephen J. Binz. (Our Sunday Visitor, 2011).

Websites

- “The Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist: Basic Questions and Answers.” *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*, www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/resources-for-the-eucharist/
- “Note with Pastoral Recommendations for the Year of Faith.” *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/

To view PDFs of additional pamphlets or order bulk copies of this pamphlet, go to www.osvparish.com/pamphlets

Our Sunday Visitor

Bringing Your Catholic Faith to Life

1-800-348-2440 • Fax: 1-800-498-6709 • www.osv.com

By Rev. Alfred McBride, O.Praem.
Copyright © by Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.

No part of this pamphlet can be reprinted or reproduced in any form.



Inventory No. P1381
Nihil Obstat: Rev. Michael Heintz, Ph.D.
Censor Librorum
Imprimatur: ✠ Kevin C. Rhoades
Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend
July 21, 2012

The Scripture citations used in this work are taken from the *Second Catholic Edition of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible (RSV)*, copyright © 1965, 1966, 2006 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Catechism excerpts are from the English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition*, for use in the United States of America, copyright © 1994 and 1997, United States Catholic Conference — Libreria Editrice Vaticana. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

US \$14.95



9 781612 786759

Eucharist: Sacrament of Faith



Crosiers

“Behold what you are.
Become whom you receive.”

—St. Augustine

For Review Only. Copyright Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.

“At the Last Supper Jesus knew he was about to die. He knew that he would not be able to eat Passover again. Fully aware of this he invited his disciples to a Last Supper of a very special kind. During the meal, he gave them something new: he gave them himself as the true Lamb and thereby instituted his Passover.”

— *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week*,
Pope Benedict XVI p. 113



Crosiers

A Holy Sacrifice

The Mass is a unique and marvelous sacrifice. It is the mystical reality in which Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is renewed. The Mass is also a sacred banquet where together as the Church family we fulfill Jesus’ command at the Last Supper to “Do this in memory of me.”

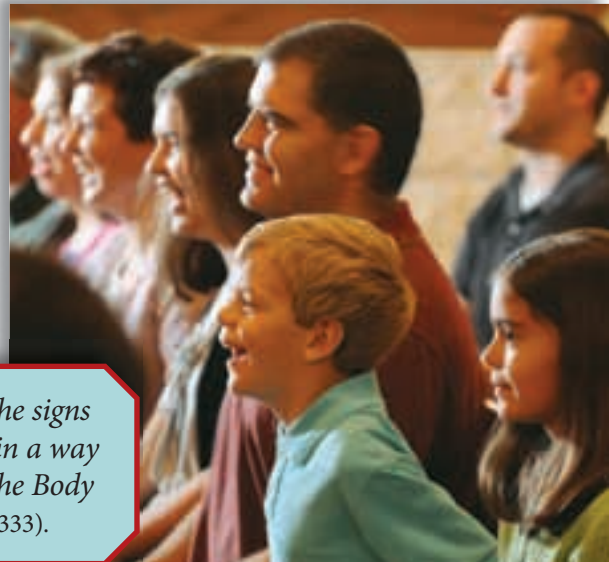
The Eucharist is the sacramental celebration of the Paschal Mystery — the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Greek word *eucharistein* means “to give thanks.” At every Mass, we give thanks for Christ’s one and abiding sacrifice for the life of the world.

The Eucharist makes present the saving death and resurrection of Christ. We are invited to unite our sufferings, wounds, and trials to Christ in the liturgy of the Eucharist. As St. Paul tells us, we are called to imitate what we worship — Christ — and offer ourselves as “a living sacrifice” (see Rom 12:1). This is exactly what should happen at Mass.

The Church teaches that “*the signs of bread and wine become, in a way surpassing understanding, the Body and Blood of Christ*” (CCC 1333).

Faith Reflection:

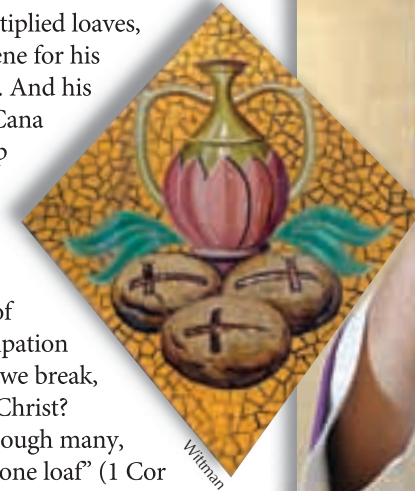
How are you transformed by the gift of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross?



Jim Olvera

The Eucharist in Scripture

- Scripture is filled with anticipations of the Eucharist. Christ’s spectacular miracle of the multiplied loaves, reported in all four Gospels, set the scene for his offering of himself as the Bread of Life. And his miracle of turning water into wine at Cana prepared the way for his taking the cup of blessing filled with wine, which he transformed into his saving blood.
- St. Paul stressed the unifying quality of Christ’s body and blood: “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf” (1 Cor 10:16-17).
- In the Gospel of John, Jesus told his disciples that they must eat his flesh and drink his blood (see Jn 6:53-56). And we believe that Christ formally instituted the Mass at the Last Supper when he says, “This is my body” and “This is my blood” (Mt 26:26-28).
- The Acts of the Apostles reminds us that the first Christians maintained the celebration of the Eucharist. “They devoted themselves to the teachings of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42).



Widman



Jim Olvera

Faith Reflection:

How have you come to know Jesus “in the breaking of the bread”?

A Holy Meal

Active participation in the liturgy is central to our Catholic faith. It is here that we are formed in the Christian life.

“In the Eucharist,” says Pope Benedict XVI, “the faith of the Church is proclaimed, celebrated and strengthened. All of the faithful are invited to participate in the Eucharist actively, fruitfully and with awareness, in order to be authentic witnesses of the Lord” (*Congregation*

for the Doctrine of the Faith, “Note with Pastoral Recommendations for the Year of Faith”).

We believe that the risen Christ is really and truly present in four ways in the liturgy. In the holy Eucharist, we experience his real presence — body, blood, soul, and divinity. Christ is also present, albeit in a different way, in the presider, in the Word as read from the sacred Scriptures, and in the community gathered together.

Today’s liturgy stresses the importance of gathering all believers around the table of the Lord to be nourished by Christ himself. We participate in the Eucharistic sacrifice with reverence and prayer and “each has his own part to play in the liturgical action” (*Lumen Gentium* 6). As we receive holy Communion, we are transformed into the living body of Christ in the world.