



7th discussion for “Family Night” 10/08

Explanations of the Mass and Symbols in Church

Why do we need to go to church and attend MASS?

Because:

1. The Mass is an important type of worship, meant to draw us closer to God, and the Mass is special, not only because we approach God in it, but because our Lord Jesus Christ comes and meets us in a unique way.
2. We receive our Lord Jesus’ body in Holy Communion; we were commanded to renew the memory of Christ at the Last Supper!!!
3. The priest reflects our Lord Jesus’ action at the last supper;
4. Luke 22:17-19 “Then He (Jesus) took the cup, gave thanks, and said, ‘Take this and share it among yourselves...Then He took the bread, said the blessing, broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of ME”

What symbols do we see in church? What do they symbolize?

1. Holy Water: is placed at the entrance of the church to remind us that through baptism we entered the church.
2. Candles: symbolize the teaching of Christ, “the light of the world”. They also symbolize a prayer for special intentions.
3. Incense: because the smoke of incense floats upward, symbolizing our prayers rising before God.
4. Statues, picture of saints and angels: This custom goes back to the Bible, when God commanded the Israelites to fill their places of worship with images of angels (Exodus 25:18-20, Ezekiel 41:17-20). Churches symbolize heaven, so images of the angels and saints help us to remember what we cannot see.
5. The colors of the priest’s clothing vary according to what season or day it is in the church calendar:
They may be green, for ordinary time.
They may be Purple, for the season of penance (Advent and Lent)
They may be White, for the seasons of special joy (Christmas and Easter) and special days of celebration.
They may be Red, on days such as Pentecost or for the memorial days of martyrs.

How many parts of the Mass are there? What are they?

1. Introductory Rites
 - A. Entrance: Mass begins when the priest and altar servers enter the church.



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- B. Veneration of the Altar: As the priest arrives at the Altar, he venerates it, kissing it as a sign of reverence to God for the place where Jesus Christ will become present in the Eucharist.
 - C. Greeting: The priest and the people make the sign of the cross.
 - D. Penitential Rite: The priest then exhorts the people to prepare to worship God by recalling their sins, repenting of them, and asking for God’s mercy.
 - E. Lord have Mercy: The acknowledgment of our sins concludes by asking God for forgiveness.
 - F. Glory to God in the highest: After having purified our hearts by recalling our sins and asking God’s mercy, it is a moment for praise.
 - G. Opening Prayers: The priest then brings the Introductory Rites to close by a prayer.
2. The Liturgy of the Word:
- A. Scripture Reading: The first reading is drawn from the Old Testament.
Then one of the Old Testament Psalms.
Then the second reading from the New Testament (It comes from any of the New Testament books except the Gospels).
Then we sing Alleluia “Praise the Lord” before the Gospel reading because the Gospel contains the actual story of the life of Christ.
Then the Gospel Reading; we have to stand up as a sign of respect for Jesus, and we make the sign of the cross on the Gospel (to ask God for His light), on our foreheads (to ask for His wisdom) on our mouths (to help us preach His word) and on our hearts (to ask him to remind us to love one another).
 - B. Homily: A homily is preached to help us understand the readings and how to apply them to our own lives.
 - C. Profession of Faith (Creed): The purpose of it is to help the faithful grow in the faith.
 - D. Prayer of the Faithful: in which we pray for various people and their needs.
3. The liturgy of the Eucharist:
- A. Preparation of the Gifts: Here the Gifts are brought to the Altar.
 - B. Prayer over the gifts: The priest asks God to bless the bread and wine that will be used in the Eucharist. During this time also, he pours a little water into the wine in the chalice. This symbolizes the Incarnation of Christ. The water, representing humanity, is united to the wine, representing Christ’s divinity.
Afterwards the priest washes his hands in water, asking God to make him worthy to celebrate the Eucharist. “Lord, wash away my iniquity; cleanse me from my sin”



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C. Eucharistic Prayer:

All kneel as a sign of reverence for Christ.

What does “Eucharist” mean?

Eucharist is a Greek word meaning “Thanks”

There are several Eucharistic prayers that the church uses:

- i. Preface. The Eucharistic prayer begins with a thanksgiving offer to God.
Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.
- ii. Acclamation Sanctus. This joins the prayer of the congregation to the prayer of the angels in heaven. “Holy, holy, holy.” (Isaiah 6:3)
- iii. Epiclesis. This is the most solemn part of the Mass.

What does “Epiclesis” means?

Epiclesis a Greek word meaning “calling down upon.”

The priest calls upon God to send His Spirit upon the bread and wine so that they may become the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Often a bell is rung to signal that the most important part of the Mass is beginning

- iv. Consecration. The priest recalls the very first Mass itself as part of the Last Supper and repeats what Jesus himself said: “This is my body” and “ This is the cup of my blood.” As the priest says these words, God performs a miracle that transforms the elements of bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, together with His Soul and Divinity.

It is at this point that Jesus becomes really present in the Eucharist.

Frequently a bell is rung after the Consecration.

Then the priest holds up the hosts and the chalice so that the people can see them and worship Jesus.

- v. The Mystery of Faith. Because of this great mystery, the priest asks us to proclaim the mystery of our faith. “When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus, until you come in Glory”.(1 Corinthians 11:26)
- vi. Anamnesis. Jesus told the apostles to celebrate the Eucharist in memory of Him.
(Luke 22:19). The priest now recites a prayer that commemorates God’s saving action in history, especially the life, death and Resurrection of Christ.



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- vii. Offering. The priest then asks God to accept and bless our offering of ourselves together with Christ in the Eucharist.
- viii. Intercessions. The priest then asks the Father to bless the whole Christian family—living or dead- and to give us His mercy. Then everyone responds “Amen”

What does the word “Amen” mean?

Amen is a Hebrew word used to signify agreement with a prayer and confidence that God will hear and respond to it.

D. The liturgy of the Eucharist:

The faithful prepare to receive Jesus Christ in Holy Communion.

- i. The Lord’s Prayer. “Our Father” is the model of all Christian prayer (Matthew 6:9).
- ii. The Rite of Peace. Jesus asked us to be reconciled with our brethren prior to coming before God (Matthew 5:23-24), making the Rite of Peace a fitting preparation for communion.
- iii. The Breaking of Bread. The priest then breaks the consecrated host, symbolizing the breaking of Christ’s body on the cross. He drops a small part of the host into the chalice, symbolizing the resurrection of Christ (reuniting body and blood as a living whole).
- iv. Communion. The priest then offers a prayer and holds up the Eucharist to us, inviting us to share the supper with Jesus Christ. Then we answer with the HUMBLE words of the Roman centurion (Matthew 8:8) “Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed.” We kneel as a sign of reverence for Christ.

So, when we receive communion (Jesus Christ himself) we need to do it with so much respect and return to our seats with respect.(holding our hands together a sign of being united with Jesus)

- v. Prayer after communion. After we receive “Communion” we return to our seats to PRAY and GIVE THANKS to God for the wonderful gift of receiving His Son in such a miraculous and intimate manner.

4. Concluding Rites:

- A. Blessing. We should not leave the Mass before we receive the Blessing from the priest.
- B. Dismissal. After the blessing, The priest dismisses us and sends us out to do good in our lives, based on the grace and empowerment we have received at the MASS.

What is the meaning of “MASS”?

Mass is a Latin word –missio- “sending forth”.



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It’s easy for us to sit back in church and be entertained, but that doesn’t really impact us. We have to get involved in worship, not just be spectators!!

And we need to dress up with respect when we accept Our Lord’s invitation to come and share His Supper Feast at church.

Men, please button up your shirts. Women, please NO sleeveless or revealing outfit.

Thank you so much.... God Bless you all...

Let us Pray:

Lord, Use Me to Touch

The Lives of Others

Lord, show me what you want me to do today to be a blessing to others. I don’t want to get so wrapped up in my own life that I don’t see the opportunity for ministering Your life to those around me. Show me what you want me to do and enable me to do it. Give me all I need to minister life, help, and healing to others. Make me to be one of your faithful intercessors, and teach me how to pray in power. Help me to make a big difference in the world because You are working through me to touch lives for Your glory. May my greatest treasure always be in serving You.

Amen

Our next Family Night discussion is going to be is on Saturday- November, 22 after the Mass.

Please don’t forget to bring Snacks (Finger food) and Water.

Bible Study and Arabic learning will be prepared for our kids by Lima Musharbas.

For more information, please contact Christina Ennabe. 909-261-4777 chrise121@aol.com

Prepared by: Christina Ennabe with Fr. Rick’s help.

Reference: The ABC’s of Worship Mass Appeal, by Jimmy Akin

7th Family Night Meetings