

Notes from the Liturgist, Ace Tupasi

The MASS and It's Meaning

Reference "Journey of Faith" Ligouri Press Publications

This weekend and following weekends I am going to share with you the different parts of the mass and its meaning. Yes, I'm sure that you know these parts already but it is nice to refresh our minds and hearts in this very important liturgy. Refreshing and getting to know more deeply these very essential parts of the mass makes us more mature, prayerful, active and more participative during the Eucharistic celebration.

The Mass is so important to Catholics that we participate in it every Sunday or Saturday evening. Many Catholics also attend Mass on weekdays.

Mass has been important enough over the centuries that people have died defending and exercising their religious freedom to participate in the Mass. In some places still today, Catholic priests offer the Mass in private.

Why Is the Mass so Important?

At Mass, Catholics remember what Jesus did at the Last Supper. Jesus's words, "Do this in memory of me" have been obeyed without interruption for more than 2,000 years. Every time Catholics gather for Mass, we know we're there to do what Jesus commanded. And we believe that Jesus is made present to us.

Also, known as the sacrament or sacrifice of the Eucharist, the Mass is our most precious prayer. It is a liturgy, part of the public worship or work of the Church and is the summit and source of Christian life... In the Eucharist is found the entire treasure of the Church – Jesus Christ.

The Principal Parts of the Mass

The Introductory Rites

The **introductory rites** bring the community together as one. The entrance of the priest and the liturgical ministers completes the community – the people of God – in whose midst Christ is present. As Mass begins, the priest leads us in the Sign of the Cross. We responded, "Amen." Response and participation are essential to liturgy. The prayer comes alive as each of us responds, listens, reflects, speaks, and sings.

Our awareness of God's presence reminds us that we haven't always lived as we should. We take part in a **Penitential Act**, which involves asking for and receiving God's forgiveness, perhaps with a prayer or the chant, "Lord, have mercy."

Next comes the **Gloria**, an ancient hymn of praise. The opening lines from Luke's account of Jesus' birth express our wonder at what God has done. Then the priest says, "Let us pray," and pauses for silence. Moments of silence provide space for a deeper experience of God's presence. The priest gathers or collects our prayers in a prayer called the Collect.

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