

JOURNEY TO OUR FATHER

FULFILLING HIS DIVINE WILL ON THE PATH TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

Discerning and Living the Authentic Faith and Moral Teachings of the Catholic Church in Our Modern World

THE WORLD WITHOUT THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

By James P. Wasel

Many non-Catholics claim that Jesus Christ offered the one perfect sacrifice, offering His body once and for all Heb (10:10), and that no new sacrifice is necessary or possible for the salvation of the world. They claim that the Catholic Church should not require priests to offer sacrifice (during mass) because Christ died once and for all, and there is no longer any need for new or additional sacrifices as an offering for sin. As Catholics', we also believe that "no new sacrifice is necessary", because the Mass and Calvary are one and the same sacrifice.

Surprising as it may be, it is also Catholic doctrine that no new or additional sacrifice is necessary or possible for the salvation of the world. If this is true, then how does the Catholic Holy Sacrifice of the Mass fit into God's plan for the salvation of mankind? Why do we need priests to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass? Why is it so important and what would be the consequences if the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass vanished from the earth? A detailed examination relative to the meaning and significance of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, and how it fits into the sequence of events for the redemption of mankind, would therefore be helpful to not only non-Catholics but also many current Catholics who may need a better understanding of this mystery, and subsequently to be able to participate more fully while attending Mass.

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST

If one looks up the word redeemer in a dictionary, it says that a redeemer is someone who "recovers by payment or other satisfaction; to make up for; to make amends for; to deliver from sin and its consequences by means of a sacrifice offered for the sinner." That last definition, especially, brings to mind what we have been told about Jesus Christ. You may ask, why did God have to send His only Son, Jesus Christ, God-made-Man, to be our redeemer; why couldn't we redeem ourselves? What

exactly was it that we had lost and needed to restore through this ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

By their sin, our first parents, Adam and Eve, lost sanctifying grace for themselves and their descendants, and fell into the slavery of sin (Sanctifying graces come from God and gives life to our soul; it makes man holy and pleasing to God and helps protect our soul from mortal sin). Thus, by the sin of Adam and Eve the gates of Heaven had been closed. It was as impossible for them or their descendants by their own efforts to arise from their fall. Man of himself could neither atone for the offense he had committed against God nor regain sanctifying grace and the right to Heaven.

No one but God Himself can fully atone for an offense committed against the infinite majesty of God. But God could not make satisfaction *in His own nature*. Therefore, if God required complete satisfaction from men for the offense committed against Him, a Divine Person had to become man and in His human nature make that satisfaction. And this, God in His infinite goodness and mercy determined to do. He promised fallen man a Divine Redeemer, who was to render full satisfaction for our offenses and restore sanctifying grace to man and the right of inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven. Those who lived before His actual coming could not, it is true, enter Heaven, but with the grace which God gave them on account of the Redeemer to come, they could merit the eternal kingdom and then enter into it with Him.

In order that the true faith and hope in the future Redeemer might not vanish entirely from the earth, God chose Abraham and made a special covenant with him that the Messiah should be born of his posterity. God gave the *Law* to the Israelites through Moses on Mount Sinai which obliged them to keep all of the Ten Commandments, and especially through the first of these commandments, to remain faithful to the one true God and to abhor all idol worship. Later on, God raised up other Prophets in Israel, men like Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, and Daniel, who by

their preaching and teachings, their threats and admonitions, again and again converted the people from idolatry, and by their prophecies kept alive among them the hope of the Redeemer to come.

At last, the time fixed by God for the fulfillment of His promise to send a Redeemer arrived, the Son of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, became man through the power of the Holy Ghost, and was born of the Virgin Mary. The Son of God became man means that He took a human body and a human soul; that He could feel and suffer as we can, and that He was like us in all things except sin. (Excepts from Fr. John Laux, M.A., "Chief Truths of the Faith", Tan Books and Publishers, Rockford, IL, 1990)

FRUITS OF THE REDEMPTION

Our Savior chose to undergo the most cruel suffering and to die an ignominious death, the death of a slave and a malefactor, in order to demonstrate before the eyes of the whole world God's horror of sin, as well as God's love for sinners. The Cross of Christ is the eternal monument of Divine Justice and Divine Mercy. Under the Cross mankind learns the divine lesson that the way of the Cross is the only way to victory over sin and the only way that leads to the heights of Christian perfection. "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9,23).

The Love of Jesus destroyed the power of sin which kept us out of heaven. God opened the gates of heaven to welcome His Son, and Jesus went home to heaven to prepare a place for us. By His death Christ redeemed us from sin, from the slavery of satan, and from eternal damnation. Christ's atoning sacrifice won for us the right to inherit heaven and all the graces necessary to secure our inheritance. (Excepts from Fr. John Laux, M.A., "Chief Truths of the Faith", Tan Books and Publishers, Rockford, IL, 1990)

SHARING IN HIS VICTORY

The soul of a baptized person is cleansed from all sin and is sanctified by the grace of God. It makes us Christians, children of God, heirs of heaven and members of the Catholic Church, with a right to receive the other sacraments. It removes from us that mark which keeps us under the slavery of Satan. It frees us from slavery, and it communicates to us the very life of God through sanctifying grace. We live in God and He lives in us through this bond which unites us. It makes us heirs to the redeeming sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. Baptism is necessary for salvation because Jesus said: "Unless one

is born of water and spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (Jn. 3:5).

Christ will not take us up to Himself unless we freely give ourselves to Him. This death to the life of sin, this sharing of the divine life, is Baptism. Once the Jews had crossed the Red Sea, another symbol was used to "separate" them as the people of God, and that was circumcision. Not only was it a token of their covenant or testament with God, but it was required of all Israelites who partook of the Passover. In the New Testament, the same order is followed. Baptism, or incorporation into the Church, is the condition of reception of the New Passover, the Eucharist.

The actual moment of Baptism comes when the priest pours water on the head of a person, saying: "I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." The sign of the Cross represents the Holy Trinity. The sign of the Cross represents our Baptism, which initiates us into the family of God, the Holy Trinity. It is a reminder that we were not only washed by the Blood of the Lamb, we were baptized into His family by His death. When our Lord died for us, we were "washed in His Blood, Baptized into His death and given life in Him." (The sign of the Cross is the oldest gesture of our Faith) Baptism blots out our debt of sin to God, original sin if it be an infant, original and personal sins if it be an adult. The baptized person is made a partaker of the divine nature and, therefore, a sharer in divine life. This sharing of the divine nature makes us the adopted sons of the eternal Father. As circumcision was an incorporation into the spiritual body of Israel, so Baptism is incorporation into the spiritual body of the Church. (Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, "These are The Sacraments", Hawthorn Books, Inc., NY, NY, 1962, pp 15-34)

THE NATURE OF SACRIFICE

When God raised up Moses to lead His people from Egypt to the Promised Land, God made some changes. God specified exactly the kinds of sacrifices that were to be offered to Him from then on; and God established an official and hereditary priesthood. With the coming of Jesus Christ a new age began, the Christian Age in which you and I are living. All that had gone before was but a preparation for this final stage in God's plan for man's salvation.

Sacrifices of the Old Law, included *unbloody sacrifices*, such as the first fruits, also bread, oil, and wine. But the chief sacrifices were *bloody*: the offerer brought his goat, ox, or sheep, laid his hand on it to show that he gave it God, and its throat was cut; then the priest sprinkled the blood round the altar, and the victim was

entirely burnt (holocaust) or partly burnt and partly eaten by the priests or by the offerer and his friends at a common meal (sacrificial banquet). The sacrifices of the Old Law, especially that of the paschal lamb and the yearly sacrifice of atonement, were typical of the great sacrifice that the Redeemer was to offer on Calvary.

The Sacrifice of the New Law took the place of the sacrifices of the Old Law; the *One Sacrifice* supplanted the *many*. This new and true sacrifice is the *Sacrifice of the Cross* and its continuation, the *Sacrifice of the Mass*. The Sacrifice of the Cross, the Sacrifice of the New Law and the Most Perfect Sacrifice, is the Son of God Himself, who, by His death on the Cross, offered Himself to His Heavenly Father in our stead and "obtained everlasting redemption" for us (Heb. 9,12). The sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is called a sacrifice of redemption, because by it He ransomed us from the slavery of sin.

But all sacrifice was not to cease with the death of Christ on the Cross, for sacrifice is the most perfect visible expression of the adoration we owe to God. The sacrifices of the Old Law were types and figures of a perpetual sacrifice in the New Law. A perpetual sacrifice was not only prefigured in the Old Law; it was also expressly foretold by God: "For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation" (Mal. 1,11). As this sacrifice cannot be of less value than the sacrifice of the Cross, it follows that, if Christianity is to have a sacrifice at all, the sacrifice which Christ offered once on the Cross must be continued to the end of time. The *Holy Sacrifice of the Mass* is this perpetual renewal and continuance of the Sacrifice of the Cross. (Fr. John Laux, M.A., "Mass and the Sacraments, A Course in Religion Book II", TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., Rockford, IL 1990)

The offering of a sacrifice is an act of *social* worship, of group worship. This means that the one who offers the sacrifice does not offer it as a private individual in his own name only. He offers the gift in the name of the group whom he represents, in the name of the group for whom he is the spokesman.

This brings us to the final requisite for a genuine sacrifice: there must be a priest. The one who offers the sacrifice must have the right to represent the group in whose name the gift is offered, and he must have the right to speak to God in the name of God's people. Directly or indirectly, he must have his mandate from God. The priest who through the sacrament of Holy Orders has received from God not only the mandate but also the *power* that is required to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. Strangely enough the word, "priest," is one word that has not acquired any other

meaning. Even today, when used literally, *priest* has only one specific meaning; it is applied only to a man who offers sacrifice. That is why non-Catholic clergymen are not called priests. They do not offer sacrifice; they do not believe in sacrifice.

This human priest however is but a secondary figure; It is Jesus Himself who *really* represents God's people, a people purchased with His own Blood. It is Jesus Himself who is the real priest in every Mass; Jesus the Priest offering Himself, Jesus the Victim, to God for all of us. The human priest simply is the agent of Jesus. By the sacrament of Holy Orders Jesus has designated and empowered this man to be His free and cooperating instrument; to speak the words by which Jesus, at this particular point in time and space, will renew for us the offering of Himself upon the Cross. (Leo J. Trese, "The Faith Explained", Fides Publishers Association, Chicago, IL 1959)

THE LAST SUPPER, THE CROSS AND THE MASS

When the priest consecrates the Body and Blood of Christ, He offers up to God the Victim of the Passion, the "Sacrifice of our Ransom," as St. Augustine says. By pronouncing the words of consecration he is doing the same thing which was done by Christ before him. He is carrying out the command given to the Apostles and their successors by Christ Himself at the Last Supper: *Do this for a commemoration of Me*.

Christ at the Last Supper offered up to God His Passion and Death for the redemption of mankind. "This is My Body," He says, "which is delivered up for you; this is My Blood which is shed for you unto the remission of sins." This One Offering was completed and carried out on the Cross. The sacrifice which Christ offered at the Last Supper and the sacrifice of the Cross are not two sacrifices, but one and the same sacrifice. By the words: "Do this for a commemoration of Me" He gave His Apostles and their successors not only the *power*, but the *command* also, to do what He Himself had just done. He made them priests and thereby perpetuated the Sacrifice of our Redemption in His Church.

The sacrifice which Our Lord offered at the Last Supper cannot be separated from His Sacrifice on the Cross; neither can the Sacrifice of the Mass be separated from the Sacrifice of the Cross. Hence the sacrifice of the Last Supper, the Sacrifice of the Cross, and the Sacrifice of the Mass are not three sacrifices, but the selfsame Sacrifice. Jesus Christ is the "Eternal Victim", offering Himself through His Church by the priest and the faithful; to give honor and glory to God, and to apply the fruits of

His Passion and Death to our souls according to our dispositions. By accepting the Sacrifice of the Cross, God also accepted the Sacrifice of the Mass, which is a continuation of the Sacrifice of the Cross. (Fr. John Laux, M.A., "Mass and the Sacraments, A Course in Religion Book II", TAN Books and Publishers, Inc., Rockford, IL 1990)

SACRIFICE OF THE PHYSICAL BODY VERSUS THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST

The Mass is the Sacrifice of the Mystical Body of Christ, and is one with Calvary, which was the sacrifice of the physical body of Christ. The Mass is by which the glorified Christ in Heaven pro-longs His sacrifice on the Cross by and through us. Though He is Priest and Victim the manner of offering is not the same in both the Mass and the Cross. On the Cross He was alone; in the Mass He is with us. On the Cross He offered up His Life for all who would one day be incorporated into His Mystical Body; in the Mass He renews the Sacrifice for all who are actually incorporated into that Mystical Body. On the cross the Historical Christ offered Himself, in the Mass the Mystical Christ (which is Christ *and* us) offers Himself. The Mass is the same Cross made actual throughout space and time. There is no time or space between Calvary and now. On the Cross the human nature of Christ was susceptible of suffering; in the Mass His human nature is glorified and hence He cannot suffer except through other human natures which make up His Mystical Body. The Cross purchases Redemption; the Mass applies it. The Mass is the tremendous experience of the reality of Golgotha with its forgiveness and its love, its power and its pardon, extended and prolonged even unto this hour.

The Mass is the sacrifice of the Mystical Body, the Church, and not a mere empty symbolism of Calvary. On the Cross, Our Lord took the human nature which He assumed from His Mother, and, as Priest on the Cross, offered it to His Father in reparation for the sins of men. That human nature after the Resurrection and Ascension was elevated to the glory of heaven. The human nature of Jesus can therefore never suffer again.

Mystically divided by the separate consecration of the bread and wine, Our Lord thus renews the sacrifice of Calvary's Cross. But Our Lord is not alone. Just as the Offertory of the Mass is the *offering* of Christ and us, so the Consecration of the Mass is the *sacrifice* of Christ and us. The Vine sacrificed Himself on the Cross; the Vine and the Branches now sacrifice themselves in the Mass. The primary meaning of the words of Consecration then refers to the Vine: This is the Body and this is the Blood of Christ, renewing the sacrifice of Calvary. But the

secondary meaning refers to the branches united to the Vine to form the Mystical Body. I offered myself with Thee at the Offertory; now I immolate myself with Thee at the Consecration. Take my body and my blood with Thee to the Cross; take my body and blood with all the pains, sorrows, agonies; with their capacities for love, for service, and for repentance; take them with Thee to the Cross, that they may be united with Thy sacrifice which alone makes them acceptable to Thy Heavenly Father. Take them, make them one with Thy sacrifice as the drop of water becomes one with the wine. Possess them so that the Heavenly Father in looking down upon Thy renewed Calvary may find that there is but one Body and one Blood which is that of His Beloved Son, in "Whom the Father is well pleased."

The Mass is Calvary realized, made present, contemporized, lifted out of the limits of space and time, living in the members of the Mystical Body, sealing us, separating us from the world, sacrificing us, changing our crosses into crucifixes and making us so much one with Christ that the Heavenly Father sees but Him Whose sacrifice alone is acceptable and Whose prayers alone are heard.

Our sufferings and our pains, our disappointments and our poverty, our mental anguish and our tears, of and by themselves would make us pessimists. But now they are offered in the Mass. They have Christ's name stamped on them, and they become precious because they are part of His sacrifice. Only when they are "massed" in Calvary's sacrifice, do they become acceptable sacrifices; only when they are one with the Cross do they become redeeming as the Cross; only when they are crucified with Christ do they hold the pledge of His Resurrection. Hence the prayer of the Mass, said after the consecration:

"We humbly beseech Thee, Almighty God, to command that these things - Christ's Body and Blood, as well as ourselves, our vows and prayers be borne by the hands of Thy Holy Angel to Thine Altar on High, in sight of Thy Divine Majesty, that so many of us as at this Altar shall partake of and receive the Most Holy Body and Blood of Thy Divine Son, may be filled with every heavenly blessing and grace, through Christ Our Lord. Amen." (Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, "The Fullness of Christ, The Sacrifice of the Mass", Our Sunday Visitor, Huntington IN, 1935)

THE SACRIFICIAL BANQUET PARTAKING IN THE EUCHARIST

Jesus said: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever;... he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has

eternal life and... abides in me, and I in him" (Jn 6:51, 54, 56). ("Catechism of the Catholic Church" (CCC) 1406)

As we discussed in a previous paragraph, in the sacrifices of the Old Law, the offerer brought his goat, ox, or sheep, laid his hand on it to show that he gave it God, and its throat was cut; then the priest sprinkled the blood round the altar, and the victim was entirely burnt (holocaust) or partly burnt and partly eaten by the priests or by the offerer and his friends at a common meal (sacrificial banquet). This sacrificial banquet in the New Law is our receiving of the Eucharistic Jesus during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. "The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ's Passover, that is, of the work of salvation accomplished by the life, death, and resurrection of Christ, a work made present by the liturgical action." (CCC 1409)

"It is Christ himself, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant who, acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. And it is the same Christ, really present under the species of bread and wine, who is the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice." (CCC 1410) At the consecration of the Mass, the Crucified Christ becomes present on the altar Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the form of the bread and wine, and is offered up once again in an unbloody manner to the Father along with all our personal petitions and supplications, acts of reparation for our sins and those of others (living or dead), and loving expressions of adoration and gratitude, praises and thanksgiving for our God.

In order to receive the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ worthily in Holy Communion, we must be free from all mortal or serious sin. "Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance." (CCC 1415)

When we receive Jesus in Holy Communion worthily, Jesus unites with us so closely that we live in Him and He lives in us, and we receive sanctifying grace which gives life to our soul, protects us from mortal sin and makes us more pleasing to God. Just as our body needs food in order to grow and keep healthy, so does our soul need the heavenly food of the Holy Eucharist. Each Holy Eucharist received worthily helps lessen our inclinations to do evil and helps us practice good works. "Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ." (CCC 1416)

The Holy Eucharist is your greatest treasure, for it unites you with God on earth and prepares you for heaven, where your union with Him will be continued forever. You must prepare well for the visit of Jesus in your heart by the frequent use of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. "Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints." (CCC 1419)

THE PURPOSE OF THE MASS

The Mass makes present and effective for us, right here and now, the Victim on the altar of the Cross. The death of Jesus is more than a mere fact of history. It is an eternal sacrifice. There are no yesterdays with God. In the infinite Mind of God, to Whom all things past are present, Jesus hangs eternally upon the Cross. At Mass, time and distance are annihilated in a mystical sense; and you and I stand beneath the Cross as the Son of God offers Himself in sacrifice for us. In the Mass Jesus Christ the Priest offers Himself, the perfect Victim, the infinitely precious Gift, to God for us.

The Mass has a fourfold purpose, and these four purposes or aims are rooted in the relationship that exists between God and ourselves. God is the Lord and Master of all creation. Everything that exists, He has made. We are God's creatures, God's property; body and soul we belong to Him. From the very nature of this relationship of creature to Creator, certain inescapable duties arise.

First of all we have the obligation to acknowledge this relationship: to acknowledge God's infinite power and wisdom and goodness, to acknowledge that He is everything and that we are nothing as compared to Him. The very purpose of our existence, the reason why God made us, is to give glory to God. With his immortal soul, with his free will and power of thought and speech, man must be more than a mute witness to God's glory. With the freedom that is uniquely his, man must freely give glory to God, must freely voice God's praises.

In short, man must *adore* God. To adore God is man's first duty. Adoration is the most basic element of prayer and is the primary purpose of every sacrifice; and consequently is the primary purpose of the Mass. In the Mass for the first time mankind is able *adequately* to adore God in the Person of God's own Son Who represents us.

After adoration, our second duty to God is one of gratitude. Since God is the source of all good, it follows that everything we are or have or hope for, comes from God. So, thanksgiving is the second basic element in all

prayer and in every true sacrifice, and therefore, is the second purpose of the Mass. In the Mass Jesus Christ offers to God for man a thanksgiving, an infinite thanks, for God's gifts to us.

Besides adoration and thanksgiving, our relationship to God imposes another duty upon us: we must ask God for the graces which we and others need in order to reach Heaven. Having given us free wills, God makes our salvation dependent upon our free cooperation; He will not force upon us graces which we do not want. We show our eagerness to cooperate by asking God for the graces we need.

God also has made our salvation dependent to some degree upon each other. Jesus Christ has deigned to allow us to share in His work of redemption; our prayers will profit others, even as their prayers will profit us. Since it is God's law that we love our neighbor as ourselves, it follows that we must pray for our neighbor for the graces he needs—even as we pray for ourselves. We pray of course for those who are bound to us by ties of blood or of duty or of affection; but our prayers must also go beyond them to embrace all mankind. So, petition is the third basic element of prayer and of sacrifice; and is the third purpose for which Mass is offered, Jesus Himself making intercession to God with us and for us.

Besides adoration, thanksgiving and petition, we also owe God reparation for our sins. By the nature of our relationship to God—that of creature to Creator—absolute obedience to God's will is our duty. To rebel by sin against the God Who made us is an act of outrageous ingratitude. If we have so rebelled, it is our duty to restore the balance to justice by making reparation for our sin. Moreover, because of the oneness of the human race and our interdependence upon each other, it also is necessary for us to make reparation for the sins of others. We must remember again that God wills us to participate in the redemptive work of His Son.

The infinite value of Christ's satisfaction on the Cross for sin does not of course excuse us from making reparation ourselves. It is precisely because of the infinite satisfaction for sin made by Jesus on the cross that our own acts of reparation, offered in union with His, have value in the eyes of God. This is the fourth purpose then for which Mass is offered: to make satisfaction to God for the sins of men. To adore God, to thank God, to petition God for grace, and to atone to God for sin: as we assist at Mass, this four-fold purpose should be primary in our own intentions as we offer the Holy Sacrifice. (Leo J. Trese, "The Faith Explained", Fides Publishers Association, Chicago, IL 1959)

FRUITS OF THE MASS

Even as He offers infinite homage to God, Jesus Christ in the Mass also bestows great graces upon us. The graces which God, through the merits of His Son, gives to us through the Mass are called the "fruits" of the Mass.

First of all there is the *general* fruit or what might be called "communal graces" of the Mass. In accordance with the intention of our Divine Lord and His Church, the priest at every Mass offers the Holy Sacrifice for those who are present, for the Church, for the Pope, for the bishop of the diocese, for all faithful Christians living and dead, and for the salvation of all mankind. By the will of Christ and His Church these intentions are present in every Mass.

Besides the general fruit of the Mass, there also is a *special* fruit which is applied to the person or persons (living or dead) for whom the Mass is offered by the officiating priest. In the Offertory we present our gift, our love, our *self* (represented by the bread and wine); we unite ourselves with Christ Who is about to present Himself, the Perfect Gift, to the Most Blessed Trinity. In the Canon of the Mass Jesus consecrates our gift and carries us with Himself, the infinitely Perfect Gift, to God. In the Communion of the Mass God, having accepted our gift and transformed it into the infinitely precious Person of His Son, returns the Gift to us. In the Offertory we united ourselves with Jesus in spirit; in the Communion we are united with Jesus in reality, to grow and to live unto life everlasting. (Leo J. Trese, "The Faith Explained", Fides Publishers Association, Chicago, IL 1959)

OUR WORLD WITHOUT THE MASS

The Mass is a barrier that Jesus instituted to prevent sin from spreading its darkness and evil rapidly throughout the world. If this sacrificial and perpetual offering of Jesus for the offenses against God by sin would cease to exist, His sacrificial offering on Calvary would still be intact and redemptive, nothing can ever change that, but it would change from a perpetual offering to being a sacrifice of the past. Since God is a God of the present, He would be denied the present and perpetual offering that Jesus planned to offer and that God is most deserving of. Jesus knew that sin would exist throughout time. He died for the remission of all of these sins even before they were ever thought of or committed. His unbloody offerings united through the Mass to His one time offering and death on the Cross is the redemption for all sins throughout all time. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is to be a perpetual offering made present by Jesus through the priesthood to God the Father. It's Jesus' perpetual atonement for sin that is due to God because of

His goodness, mercy, grace, generosity, and divine providence towards all of his creatures. In all of time God is due an offering of reparation for the offenses committed against His goodness, which is absolutely necessary for the mitigation of His justice which is due when sins are committed.

Of our own selves we are remiss in being able to offer God any such mitigation. Being finite we can never offer reparation to the infinite being of God. Only Jesus, true God and true man, can rightly do so. In order to continue this perpetual offering to God The Father, Jesus instituted the holy priesthood at the last supper. Through the ministry, body, and soul of the priest, Jesus is able to make a perpetual offering for sin to God The Father. Through this perpetual offering grace and mercy flow freely from God through the priest for all sinners.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass praises God, asks pardon for sin, offers thanksgiving and gratitude to God most deserving of it. The Mass is also a petition and intercession for ourselves and for others both living and deceased. It's the most perfect prayer of the Church offered up to God on behalf of all of His children. We are immensely blessed by God for every Mass we attend with reverence and love. There we truly enter into the mystery of God to become one with Him at Holy Communion. It's a small taste of heaven and of the eternity. At Mass we go to Calvary and we are joined to heaven, we receive Jesus and we are blessed beyond our imagination, are delivered from evil and united to God. Blessed Padre Pio has said "It would be better to have a day without sunshine than to have a day without the holy sacrifice of the Mass."

For every Mass which is not said, the redeeming effects of His sacrifice is diminished, and subsequently sin can then flourish more and more. It is important to note that in failing to fulfill our Sunday obligation to attend Mass, we miss out on the redeeming effects of His Sacrifice. A further consequence is the loss of all the beneficial sacramental graces proper to this Most Holy Sacrifice, including the graces afforded by the worthy reception of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Think of all the redeeming power of His sacrifice which has been diminished by the loss of all the Masses that could have been said since the Protestant Reformation of the 1500's. If the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass were to disappear entirely from the face of the earth, God's justice would then rule over sinners instead of His loving and tender mercy. Remember the flood in the days of Noah? That was an example of God's justice for sin! The fate of Sodom and Gomorrah was another example of God's just due. A further example would be the destruction of thousands of Israelites in the desert when they wouldn't repent from idolatry of the golden calf. God's justice prevailed there

too! All these are only a few examples of what God's justice demands in repayment for sin. Let's never forget to praise and thank God for the graces and mercy we receive because of Jesus' perpetual offering of the Mass, and pray that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass may flourish in our world. Surely we would be lost without it! (St. Leonard of Port Maurice, "The Hidden Treasure, Holy Mass", Tan Books and Publishers, Rockland, IL)

JOURNEY TO OUR FATHER
FULFILLING HIS DIVINE WILL ON THE PATH TO
RIGHTEOUSNESS

Our lives here on earth can be described as a constant journey to the home of the Father. The love of our Heavenly Father is ever reaching out for His wayward children and the greatest sign of His love was shown 2000 years ago when He sent His son, Jesus, to show us the way back to the Father.

We show our love for Jesus by doing His will. We do His will by following and living by all the authentic faith and moral teachings of the Catholic Church. Drawing people back to the authentic truth about the Catholic faith helps us to be reconciled with our God, and obtain peace, holiness and happiness in this sinful world; and eternal salvation with our loving God in the next world.

"Journey to Our Father" is helping to bring people back to the authentic teachings of the Catholic Church, and to develop a closer more loving and holy relationship with their God. All material within our publications is quoted from solid Catholic sources which have an Imprimatur/Nihil Obstat. A copy of the Imprimatur/Nihil Obstat page from each source is available upon request.

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