

Dear Friends in Christ,

Over the past two weeks in our series *Made for Worship: Understanding the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, we have rejected on why we worship God, the Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word. This week, we arrive at the heart of it all: the **Liturgy of the Eucharist**, where the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross is made present to us on the altar.

Every time we come to Mass, we do not merely recall what Jesus did at the Last Supper or remember His death in a symbolic way. Rather, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we are drawn into the one eternal sacrifice of Christ Himself. As the Catechism teaches, “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). What took place once in history on Calvary is made truly present to us in mystery. The same Jesus who offered Himself for us on the Cross invites us to unite ourselves to His perfect act of love.

This is what we mean when we say that the Mass is a sacrifice. At every Mass, Christ is both Priest and the Victim—He is the one offering and the one offered: the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The priest at the altar acts in persona Christi, in the person of Christ, as he re-presents (not repeats) the one saving sacrifice of Jesus. In that moment, heaven and earth meet; the eternal enters into time. This is the mystery of love that we are invited not only to witness but to participate in.

But how do we take part in this sacrifice? We do so by uniting our own lives—our prayers, our works, our joys, and our sufferings—to the offering of Christ. When the priest says, “Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father,” he is inviting us to place our own sacrifices upon the altar: our hidden acts of love, our struggles, and our efforts to live faithfully each day. All of these, when joined to Christ’s perfect sacrifice, are transformed and taken up into His redeeming love and offered to the Father.

My friends, this is Catholic worship: sacrificial worship. St. Paul expresses it beautifully: “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.” (Romans 12:1). At every Mass, we are invited to do just that: to offer our whole lives in union with Jesus’ self-offering to the Father.

The Offertory, then, is not a mere pause in the liturgy—it is the moment when the Church gathers up all that we are and presents it to God. Bread and wine are brought forward, humble gifts, symbolizing all that we offer to the Lord. On the altar, these gifts are changed into the very Body and Blood of Christ. So too, our lives—offered with faith and love—are changed and sanctified by His grace.

When we receive Holy Communion, we enter into the most intimate union possible with our Savior. The same sacrifice we have witnessed and joined becomes the food that nourishes our souls and keeps us safe for eternal life. What an extraordinary exchange!

As we continue our journey through the Mass, let us remember that every Eucharist is a participation in Calvary. The Cross is not behind us; it is made present before us. And at that altar, Christ invites us to draw near—to lay down our burdens, to offer our lives, and to let our hearts be transformed by the love of His perfect sacrifice.

Next week, we will conclude our series by reflecting on the final part of the Mass—the Concluding Rites—and how we are sent forth to live what we have celebrated.

Have a blessed week!

In Christ, Fr. Bobby