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The Holy Mass

“And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’ And likewise the chalice after supper, saying, ‘This chalice which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.’”

Luke 22:19–20

Every Sunday we go to church to do what Jesus told the twelve Apostles to do when He said, “Do this in memory of Me.” You see, the Last Supper was the very first **Mass**.

At the Last Supper, Jesus changed bread and wine into His Body and Blood. He gave the Apostles the power to do this, too. The Apostles passed on that power to other men. That is why our priest today can change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ at every Mass.

At Mass we offer the same sacrifice that Jesus offered for our sins. That is the **sacrifice** which Jesus offered to

the Father when He died on the Cross. Sacrifice means giving up something dear to us completely to God. Jesus gave Himself up to God the Father for us. This is the sacrifice we offer at every Mass.

We also celebrate the Resurrection. That is why we go to Mass on Sunday, because Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday. Each Sunday is a "little Easter." This is a community celebration and that is why we all come together on Sunday.

Why do we go to Holy Mass?

We go to praise our God, Who is great and good.

We go to say "thank you" to God for all the good things He has given us.

At Mass we tell God we are sorry for our sins, and we ask His help to be better.

We also pray for the things we need, and for the needs of others.

If we listen carefully to the Mass and try to say the prayers, God will give us His grace and blessing. Taking part in the Mass will help to prepare you for your First Communion.

26 What We Do at Mass

“Praise the LORD!
Sing to the LORD a new song,
his praise in the assembly of the faithful!”

Psalm 149:1

The Mass has many parts leading up to the coming of Jesus in the Eucharist. They prepare us to meet and receive our Lord.

We begin the Mass by singing a hymn or saying a prayer while the priest goes to the altar. Then we make the Sign of the Cross.

Next the priest asks us to think of the ways we have hurt God and others. We say the *I Confess* prayer which asks forgiveness. This prayer also asks Mary, the saints, and those in church to pray for us. Then comes a song of praise, *Glory to God*.

The Liturgy of the Word begins and we sit down to hear the *Word of God*. The lector and the priest read to us from the Bible. We learn about God’s Chosen People, and about the life of Jesus. The priest gives a homily to help us understand the Bible and lead good lives.

We stand to say the *Creed*. The Creed tells what we believe as Catholics. It tells what our parents promised we would believe at our Baptism. Then, as a Church, we pray for the needs of God's people.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the *Offertory*, when the bread and wine are brought to the altar. We offer ourselves as a gift to God. Also, we give our money to help our church.

Then we kneel down, and the priest says a long prayer to prepare us for the *Holy Eucharist*. He says the words of Jesus:

"This is my Body."

"This is the chalice of my Blood."

And the bread and wine become Jesus, our Savior.

After this we stand and say the *Our Father*, then give the sign of peace to one another. Then the people go to receive our Lord in *Holy Communion*. They kneel down and spend some time talking to Jesus, Who now lives in their souls.

The priest ends Mass with a *Blessing*, and says, "Go forth, the Mass is ended." We leave the church, and we try to spend the rest of the day in a way that is pleasing to God.

Parts of the Mass	What the Priest Does	What We Do
Entrance:	goes to the altar gives greeting	sing a hymn or say opening prayer ask forgiveness for our sins
Readings:	reads from the Bible	listen to the Word of God
Offertory:	offers the bread and wine to God	offer ourselves to God
Consecration:	changes the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Jesus	offer Jesus as sacrifice to the Father
Communion:	gives the people the Body and Blood of Jesus	receive the Body and Blood of Jesus
Blessing:	blesses and dismisses the people	receive God's blessing

Altar	The table on which Mass is offered.
Chalice	The cup of precious material that holds the wine that becomes the Blood of Jesus at Mass.
Ciborium	The cup of precious material that holds the bread that becomes the Body of Jesus, which people receive at Communion.
Cruets	The bottles that hold the water and wine.
Missal	The book with the prayers for Mass.
Paten	The plate of precious material that holds the Host, the Body of Jesus, at Mass.

Q. 55 *How can we participate in the Mass?*
 During the Mass, the faithful may sing the hymns, listen to the Word of God in the readings and in the priest's homily, offer themselves in union with Jesus to the Father, and receive our Lord in the Holy Eucharist (CCC 1368, 1369).