

Mass  
R.C.I.A. Supplement to Chpt. 14  
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Many who come to a Catholic Mass for the first time are confused as to what they are experiencing. What is Mass? It is the un-bloody sacrifice of the New Testament, in which the Body and Blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ are offered to God under the appearance of bread and wine. At the last supper, Jesus commissioned His disciples to "do this in memory of me." Humanity's redemption was accomplished when Jesus died on the cross. Mass is the sacrament of sacrifice for our redemption, through which the merit of Jesus' sacrifice is applied to our souls.

At the consecration of bread and wine, Christ, speaking through the priest, portrays the shedding of His blood in dying and becomes truly present in these elements. Christ portrays Himself as victim. Christ presents to the Father through this death, a perfect love, obedience, adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation and petition. In the Mass we offer to God the passion of Our Lord Himself. Perfection offered to perfection. Mass is the orderly presentation of this worship. Its prayers are basically Old Testament and New Testament references. Our worship of God is not just scriptural explanations [as in most other denominations] but a total investment into the life of Christ. This, of itself, requires reverence, respect, devotion, and a total love of God. It is the cause of community and relationships. The assembly for Mass has essentially two elements. The first and foremost is the actions of the priest; secondly the participation of the assembly. Our worship of God must be involvement; it can not be passive. The priest is acting on our behalf, not in deference of us. We express our participation by communal prayers, gestures, song, service, sharing. We are participants, not an audience that seeks to be entertained by acts of worship of God. Entertainment is experienced by applause; worship of God is expressed in inward thanksgiving of the heart. It is a desire to be with and share with its life of love, the Lord Himself, to act as lovers, not just friends. Lovers treat each other differently than friends. I

come to Mass to be with my lover, the Lord Himself, to share with Him my humanity and hope for a share in His divine life. The contemporary concept of celebration of the Eucharist, instead of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass has a tendency to reduce the reverence and respect by the community for what is transpiring. It tends to change our mind set in a subtle way.

There seems to be a growing tendency toward slothful attitudes toward reverence and respect for the Eucharist. As the participation of the congregation gradually erodes; due to the performance nature of [e.g. unfamiliar music] which tends to become entertainment more than meditative; especially at Communion time. It misdirects our attention from the sacredness of experiencing the body of Christ. The Church rubrics direct us to a period of quiet communication during and shortly after the reception of communion to meditate on God's love for us and our love for Him. [Not to be entertained for applause; for this is pure sloth] How can this be the loving of God with our whole mind, whole soul, whole heart at this most intimate spiritual moment? We should use this time to taste and see the sweetness of the Lord.

Sloth is not always an inaction but a distraction from a direction brought about from over familiarity. [been there--done that attitude] It changes sacredness into something contradictory to what it was intended. Jokes, stories, announcements, recognitions, popularity and applause belong outside of Mass and do not add to holiness but become entertainment. We may end up attending Mass for the wrong reason. It adds to the casualness toward the reception of communion; a slothfulness.

Many people who focus on holiness and reverence during communion experience a renewed spiritual life. Others seem to delight in external trappings, which could be a form of paganism; for the accent is on the wrong syllable. [not intentionally] They may just not be fervent; neither hot nor cold. This is a form of neutralism. Slothfulness is to be pitied for it does not experience joy in the source of joy. The surge of Gods' grace at communion is enormous when we

give ourselves to contemplation of divine mercy and the beauty of a child's simple love of God. It is a travesty to be deprived of this opportunity for joy because of distractions of all sorts no matter how well intended the distraction may be.

<b>ORDER OF MASS</b>	
<b>Pre-Vatican II</b>	<b>Post-Vatican II</b>
MASS OF CATECHUMEN	LITURGY OF THE WORD
Prayers at foot of altar	Introduction / greeting
Confiteor	Penitential rite, A-B or C
Introit / Kyrie Eleison	Kyrie Eleison
Gloria	Gloria
Collect / opening prayer	Old Testament reading [new]
Epistle	Psalms [gradual]
Gradual [psalm]	Epistle [New Testament reading]
Alleluia	Alleluia
Tract [during Advent / Lent]	Psalm [during Advent / Lent]
Gospel	Gospel
Sermon	Homily
Creed	Creed
	Petitions
MASS OF THE FAITHFUL	LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST
Presentation of gifts	Presentation of gifts
Offertory	Offertory
Lavabo [washing]	Washing
Secret	Prayer over the gifts
Preface [sanctus]	Acclamation [holy-holy-holy]
Te Igitur	Eucharistic prayers Ia4-4
Communicants	Proclamation of faith
Consecration	Remembrance [thru him etc.]
Offering victim [Amen]	Great AMEN
Remembering the dead	Remembering the dead
Pater Noster	Our Father
	Sign of peace
Breaking of the bread	Breaking of the bread

Agnus Dei [Lamb of God]	Lamb of God [Agnus Dei]
Communion	Communion
Post communion	Period of silent reflection
Blessing	Solemn blessing
Last gospel	Dismissal [new]
Prayers at foot of altar	

## EXPLANATION OF TERMS

CONFITEOR	A general confession of sinfulness and plea for Gods' forgiveness.
INTROIT	Means entry or beginning. Usually a few verses of a psalm as ministers enter the sanctuary.
KYRIE ELEISON	Greek, meaning "Lord have mercy"
GLORIA	A hymn of praise, adoration, and thanksgiving. Words sung at Jesus birth.
COLLECT	A prayer of petition offered in the name of the congregation.
EPISTLE	A letter or New Testament reading which inspires or teaches a lesson.
GRADUAL	Usually a psalm recited after the epistle while proceeding from the altar to the pulpit or ambo. The word means "step".
ALLELUIA	A Jewish expression meaning "Praise the Lord". It is appropriate to praise the Lord for the good news of the Gospel.
TRACT	A psalm read in place of the Alleluia during lent, advent and funerals.
GOSPEL	The good news of salvation. God speaks to us through the words of Jesus.

CREED	Our profession of faith in which we express our acceptance of Gods' revelation and instruction.
OFFERTORY	In the name of the whole church bread and wine [mixed with a drop of water] is offered to God to be changed into the body and blood of Jesus. For practical reasons today a money offering is made by the community in place of the bread and wine. We also offer ourselves to God by an act of submission to His divine will. We accept joy or suffering; good fortune or bad because lye recognize that God's will is for our ultimate happiness. [heaven]
LAVABO	Washing of hands. An act of Jewish purification. It has become a sign of inner purity; the manner in which the faithful should approach the Lord in communion for the worthy reception of His body.
SECRET	A petition to God to receive favorably the offerings of the church. It is said quietly, therefore it implies that it is a secret.
PREFACE / SANCTUS	Usually a hymn of thanksgiving because Jesus instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the last supper. It concludes with a joyful praise of the angels in Isaiah [6:31, called the sanctus [holy].
TE IGITUR	Imploring Gods' favor [we humbly beg] for the church in general and anyone special for whom the Mass is offered
COMMUNICANTS	Naming special saints and begging God that through their merits and prayers we may be brought to the kingdom of God'
	CONSECRATION: Speaking through the

priest, the high priest Jesus, changes bread and wine into His own body and blood. The holocaust of the crucifixion and death is renewed sacramentally.

OFFERING VICTIM	Recalls the sacrifice of Christ on the cross' and the resurrection and ascension of Jesus which is Gods' acceptance of this sacrificial offering. The priest pleads that the now body and blood will also be accepted and lead to our resurrection and entry into heaven.
COMMEMORATION of the DEAD	The priest prays for all the faithful departed and in particular for those whom he wishes to remember.
MINOR ELEVATION	Priest prays for us sinners to share in the joy of the saints. It concludes with a praise for the Holy Trinity [doxology] [Through Him, with Him, and in Him etc.]
PATER NOSTER	The Lords' prayer. Fittingly our daily bread is the living bread of the Holy Eucharist which preserves us to eternal life.
BREAKING of the BREAD	Imitating the action of Jesus at the last supper. Jesus broke the bread and gave it to His disciples and said: take and eat, this is my body etc.
AGNUS DEI	A petition of or for mercy to apply the benefits of Jesus sacrifice to our own souls.
COMMUNION	The actual reception of the body and blood of Christ by the faithful, as the twelve disciples received from the Lords' hands.
POST COMMUNION	Prayer of thanksgiving. An earnest endeavor to live a better Christian life. A thanksgiving for the graces we have received through God's love for us.

## CHANGES IN THE MASS RITUALS

- \*Speaking in local language instead of the use of Latin.
- \*Priest faces the people instead of his back
- \*Simplified vestments
- \*Peoples' participation in public prayers.
- \*Service includes use of laity.
- \*Elimination of excess decorations.
- \*Elimination of communion rail and bells.
- \*Includes Old Testament readings.
- \*Includes local petitions and needs.
- \*Public statement of faith.
- \*A more pronounced penitential rite.
- \*Provides for more flexibility for local customs. [music]
- \*Optional reception of communion.
- \*Position of the tabernacle.
- \*Communion under both species.