

IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH: THE MASS

Introduction

This is article 1 of 21 of the Mass series

St. Augustine said, "Believe what you see, see what you believe and become what you see ---the Body of Christ."

The celebration of the Eucharist makes us realize the importance of the bread being blessed, broken and shared just as his body is broken and shared for us. Broken as we are, every time we receive Jesus, we are one with him since we become part of His body.

Do we believe this? This question challenges us to dig deeper into the significance of the Eucharist in our lives as Christians. This series on the Mass aims to help us understand what we do and why when we gather in the Eucharist.

The Constitution on Sacred Liturgy #14 teaches "Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy."

First, full participation means that one must be present for the entire liturgy, meaning that one arrives early enough to prepare for mass and stays through the singing of the closing hymn. Second, actively participating means engaging in all parts of the liturgy while looking for the message God is sending to each one of us every time we step into the church for mass. This outward participation is not only for ourselves, but by doing all we can to participate we share the work of the liturgy and help each other to actively pray.

Third, it is not only the outward signs of our participation that are important, but that we are conscious of what it is we are doing when we gather to pray. It is not enough to simply say the words of the prayers, to participate in the singing, to make the sign of the cross, etc. if there is not something deeper happening within each one of us. This process of transformation should be deepening each week when we attend the liturgy together.

My hope is that by beginning with these three simple practices we can continue to deepen our prayer together and participate fully, actively and consciously each time we gather for the celebration of the Eucharist.

This week's *In Spirit and Truth* is written by Fr. Ken