

SS PETER & PAUL • ST LAWRENCE

AUGUST 6, 2017

THE TRANSFIGURATION OF THE LORD



LESSON THIRTEENTH: ON BAPTISM

Many who were born in the 1960s or before will remember the Baltimore Catechism, one of the most comprehensive teachings of the Catholic Church.

In order to "refresh" ourselves, we will reprint a section over the next months.

152. Q. What is Baptism? A. Baptism is a Sacrament which cleanses us from original sin, makes us Christians, children of God, and heirs of heaven.

153. Q. Are actual sins ever remitted by Baptism? A. Actual sins and all the punishment due to them are remitted by Baptism, if the person baptized be guilty of any.

154. Q. Is Baptism necessary to salvation? A. Baptism is necessary to salvation, because without it we cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.

155. Q. Who can administer Baptism? A. The priest is the ordinary minister of Baptism; but in case of necessity any one who has the use of reason may baptize.

156. Q. How is Baptism given? A. Whoever baptizes should pour water on the head of the person to be baptized, and say, while pouring the water: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

157. Q. How many kinds of Baptism are there? A. There are three kinds of Baptism: Baptism of water, of desire, and of blood.

158. Q. What is Baptism of water? A. Baptism of water is that which is given by pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, and saying at the same time: I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

159. Q. What is Baptism of desire? A. Baptism of desire is an ardent wish to receive Baptism, and to do all that God has ordained for our salvation.

160. Q. What is Baptism of blood? A. Baptism of blood is the shedding of one's blood for the faith of Christ.

161. Q. Is Baptism of desire or of blood sufficient to produce the effects of Baptism of water? A. Baptism of desire or of blood is sufficient to



produce the effects of the Baptism of water, if it is impossible to receive the Baptism of water.

162. Q. What do we promise in Baptism? A. In Baptism we promise to renounce the devil with all his works and pomps.

163. Q. Why is the name of a saint given in Baptism? A. The name of a saint is given in Baptism in order that the person baptized may imitate his virtues and have him for a protector.

164. Q. Why are godfathers and godmothers given in Baptism? A. Godfathers and godmothers are given in Baptism in order that they may promise, in the name of the child, what the child itself would promise if it had the use of reason.

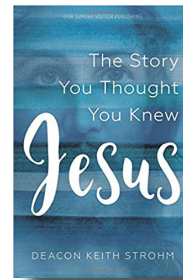
165. Q. What is the obligation of a godfather and a godmother? A. The obligation of a godfather and a godmother is to instruct the child in its religious duties, if the parents neglect to do so or die.

announcements

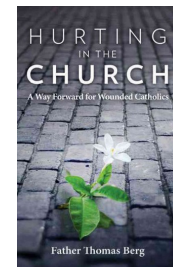
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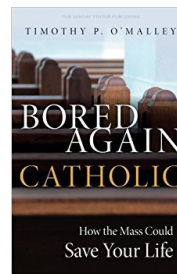
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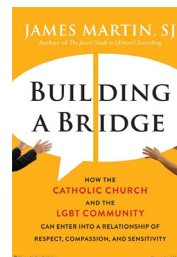
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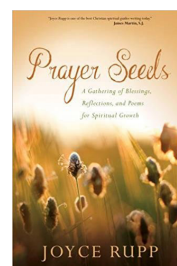
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How to get *more out of Mass*

By deepening our knowledge and gratitude of the Eucharist, our worship becomes more meaningful **Christopher Kaczor | OSV Newsweekly**

St John Vianney once said, "If we really understood the Mass, we would die of joy."

Imagine how intensely we would focus our attention during liturgy if we were present at the very moments of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection. Sometimes, though, the Mass seems distant. Often, from your teenager, co-worker or family member, you might hear the phrase: "I don't get anything out of Mass." You may feel this way yourself from time to time or even regularly.

Consistently, what we "get out" of something is related to what we bring in. What is the difference between people who love to watch the Super Bowl and those who are bored? What is happening on the field is — in one sense — identical for the fans and the bored alike; but while the fans wouldn't miss it for the world, the bored are, well, bored. The fans bring knowledge, an appreciation for the tactics, skill and excitement of the sport, which enables them to appreciate the championship game. The bored often bring a lack of understanding, which results in a lack of appreciation.

Time for self-reflection

If I don't get much out of Mass, I may want to ask myself what I am bringing to Mass. If I don't understand what is going on during the Eucharist, then, of course, I am not going to get much out of it. One way to get more from Mass is to bring a deeper knowledge of what the liturgy is.

Both the mind and the heart need to be brought to Mass. If we understand what we are seeing and hearing, we recognize the liturgy as a memorial of Jesus' passion, death and resurrection. Eucharist is the Greek word for "thanksgiving," and each Mass can be a time to thank God for the blessings that are in our lives. Despite the evident pain and suffering in people's lives, there also is always much to be thankful for, beginning with life, friends and family, and the freedoms we enjoy.

In the United States, Thanksgiving is celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November, but Catholics have the opportunities to celebrate Thanksgiving every Sunday (or every day, for that matter). To get more from Mass, consider all that you have been given by God in the previous week, and in grateful joy give back to God your awareness and gratitude for these gifts. Each Eucharist can become like a "thank-you note" written to a kind friend who has done us a great service.

We also can bring our sacrifices, troubles, doubts, worries and needs to Mass. Each Mass recalls the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, and we can recall the sorrows, troubles and difficulties that Christ and his mother endured. Jesus went through very serious difficulties, including literal trials that culminated in his condemnation, torture and death. We, too, can bring our trials before the Lord during the Mass. The suffering that we are going through finds an echo in the life, suffering and death of Jesus.

The message of the Mass does not end with suffering and death, however. Each Eucharist commemorates the death and resurrection of Christ. Each Mass is a reminder that no matter the depths of our suffering and trials, these evils are not insurmountable and permanent. We share, by Jesus' work, the hope of the Resurrection, and the final reversal of all evils, sufferings, hardships and deaths.

Positive exposure

Even if you don't feel like you're getting anything out of Mass, this feeling may be mistaken. A person might feel sick but be quite healthy. Conversely, a person can feel perfectly fine and have a deadly disease.

How we feel about a situation and the reality of the situation are not always identical. Some people who feel that they are not getting anything out of Mass are actually getting quite a bit out of it.

In the world of advertising, the mere-exposure effect — or the familiarity principle — states that repeated exposure tends to lead people to a preference for the thing to which they are exposed. In the Mass, a person is exposed to the life and person of Jesus in the Gospel accounts, as well as in holy Communion. As a person hears the stories of Jesus' compassion, forgiveness, courage and kindness, that person perhaps grows in valuing and emulating the example of Jesus.

When a person worthily receives Communion, that too leaves an effect on the recipient — an effect that, even if not felt emotionally, may move a person toward choosing greater love for God and neighbor.

God's love for us can move us to love others more. As Saint John Paul II noted, "From the Eucharist comes strength to live the Christian life and zeal to share that life with others."



Do the right thing

Finally, other people are getting something out of your presence at Mass. Your neighbors, children, spouse or family members may be inspired by your example. Part of responsible living is doing your duty even though you may not feel like it.

God has asked us in the Ten Commandments to keep holy the Sabbath, to set time aside to worship. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church (No 2180) notes, "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass." This is a serious obligation and to fail to do so is seriously wrong.

In response to all that God has given to us, it is more than fitting that we set aside at least one hour from the other hours given in the week to attend Mass — whether or not we feel that we get anything out of it.

In his essay "Calvary and the Mass," Venerable Fulton Sheen noted that Jesus "himself told us that he came 'to give his life a redemption for many'; that no one could take away his life; but he would lay it down of himself. If then death was the supreme moment for which Christ lived, it was therefore the one thing he wished to have remembered. He did not ask that men should write down his words into a Scripture; he did not ask that his kindness to the poor should be recorded in history; but he did ask that men remember his death. And in order that its memory might not be any haphazard narrative on the part of men, he himself instituted the precise way it should be recalled."

Christ commanded us, "do this [the Eucharist] in memory of me," so in obedience to what Jesus asks, we should do it. Indeed, as we repeatedly do the right thing, we become, grow and develop into people who enjoy doing the right thing.

Are you having trouble getting anything out of Mass? Try bringing more knowledge, gratitude and sense of doing the right thing to the liturgy and see what happens.