

CATHOLIC WORSHIP- THE CATHOLIC MASS (EUCHARIST).

PART 1A: THE INTRODUCTION.

God's revelation and the human need to communicate with Him
The study of human history from its different perspectives like; religion, and anthropology just to mention a few, attest to the fact that right from the beginning, the human person has had the need to communicate with some higher Being.

And God in turn, in His divine plan has responded and revealed Himself in different ways during different phases of human history: He revealed Himself in nature (He still does); His Creation, He spoke through the prophets (in the plan of salvation), and in the written works (scripture), but then in these days, as we read from the letter to the Hebrews, he has spoken to us in his divine Word, Jesus Christ.

Throughout these phases of God's revelation, human person has responded to God's revelation in different ways, but also through some kind of worship, using rituals, chants, songs, dances, celebrations and objects that have been available to him. And God in turn, has continued to reveal Himself and made Himself present through the language that was! is best known to the human person: our own language.

It is therefore important to note that, looking at the history of the human person and his desire and effort to reach The Other, looking also at the message of the Gospel, and our belief as Christians, that God has spoken to us in a very clear way through Jesus, then it is right to conclude that, on His part, God has been pleased to speak to us, only in the way and in the language that we understand. And that He has chosen to reach us, touch us, and reveal Himself to us, only in the manner that we are able to grasp and understand; In the way we worship, in using the normal signs, symbols, vessels, vestments, books, colors, rites and rituals that would make meaning to us (who use them) and also would enable us to enjoy His grace and His presence.

Worship

And so worship in its various forms is as old as human history. And through worship, the human person has tried, in his own way, to understand, to appease, to praise, to adore, and to thank or just cry out to the supreme deity for some kind of divine intervention. And as human beings, we have done this in our own language, in our own cultures and traditions.

Christian Worship.

Christian worship has gone through a lot of changes through out history. It has its roots in Jewish worship, which is still apparent in the way we pray till today. In our Christian or Catholic worship, we have used rites and rituals that would bring some meaning in our lives. And these too, have gone through some changes in the history Christian/catholic worship.

The Catholic Mass.

For Catholics, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the highest form of worship; it is The Prayer and the center of Catholic faith. We believe that it is through this prayer, that God speaks to us and gives Himself to us in a very special and powerful way. We believe that it is through mass that we share in the life of Jesus Christ in a very clear way when He comes to in the Bread of Life; Holy Communion. We believe that during Mass we Celebrate not only His Passion, death and resurrection, but also that, we join in worship and adoration, with the whole Universal church: the church in heaven and the pilgrim church here on earth. It is at the altar of the sacrifice, during mass

that heaven and earth, the human and the divine, meet in a very unique, powerful and mysterious way.

It is in this worship of the mass, where we come the way we are; as humans, with all our weaknesses, and shortcomings, worshiping a God who embraced our humanity, in our own language, using things and signs that we are familiar with, to commune with our God. And by the time we are done, we have shared in the life of the divine in a very powerful and mystic way. The mass is both a holy sacrifice and a holy meal. The Eucharist is a sacrifice because it makes present the sacrificial act of Jesus at Calvary. The same Jesus who once offered himself in a bloody manner on the Cross to save us from our sins and give us divine life, now offers himself on our altars in a bloodless manner.

The Mass is also a holy meal, a sacred banquet where we partake of the Body and blood of Christ. In the liturgy of the Mass Jesus becomes present to us not only in the Eucharist, but also in his Word and in the assembly (congregation) gathered in worship. At Mass we adore the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist when we bow or genuflect.

And so next week we reflect on the scriptural basis or background of the Mass, and Preparation we are called to make before Mass, and what we need to do as we enter the church and just few minutes before the Mass begins.

Amen