

The Mass

Eucharist



Lord's Supper



The Breaking of Bread



*The memorial of the Lord's
Passion and Resurrection*



The Holy Sacrifice



The Holy and Divine Liturgy



*The Mass was described by
John Paul II as
"Heaven on Earth"
He explained that the
liturgy we celebrate on
earth is a mysterious
participation in
the heavenly liturgy."*

*From his Angelus Address,
Nov. 3, 1996*

Why do we celebrate Mass?

We celebrate Mass or the Liturgy because Jesus commanded us to do this ~ on the night before His death he said:

"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." Luke 22:19

Jesus commanded us to continue to celebrate this meal – the Eucharist – our Mass. The Mass is our family meal which unites us to Christ and to the family of God. In the Mass we receive the Body and Blood of Christ. – His true presence. He nourishes, strengthens and heals us through this Holy Meal. Remember that God fed the Israelites manna in the desert – they needed physical nourishment and God provided. God has given us much more than physical nourishment in the Eucharist. He has given us food for our souls. Just as we cannot live without bodily nourishment, our souls cannot live without spiritual food. CCC1337-1344

The Eucharist is:

-thanksgiving and praise to our Father in Heaven. through the Eucharistic celebration we offer ourselves in thanksgiving to the Father as Jesus offered himself to the Father. We unite ourselves to Christ's sacrifice.

-the sacrificial memorial of Christ's Passover. This memorial is not just a recollection of past events but actually **makes present** the sacrifice of the cross.

-the presence of Christ by the power of his word and of his Spirit. Jesus is present in many ways to his Church: through his Word, the Sacraments, his people, the Mass, the minister but most especially through the Eucharist. Christ told us that he would not leave us orphans and He did not!!! He is with us through the Eucharist. CCC1356-1382

Eucharist is:

"the source and summit of the Christian life."

CCC1324

The Roots of the Mass

"Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh."

John 6:49-51

Let's recall the roots of the Mass by looking at the Passover meal when God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.

"The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, "This month shall be for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month they shall take every man a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household; and if the household is too small for a lamb, then a man and his neighbor next to his house shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old; you shall take it from the sheep or from the goats; and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs in the evening. Then they shall take some of the blood, and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat them. They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it. Do not eat any of it raw or boiled with water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. And you shall let none of it remain until the morning, anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. In this manner you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. The blood shall be a sign for you, upon the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt." This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance for ever."

Exodus 12:1-14

God commanded the Jewish people to celebrate the Passover yearly in remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt. Now let's look at the Last Supper which was the last Passover meal that Jesus celebrated with His apostles. With the Last Supper the traditional Passover was transformed into our Eucharistic celebration – the Mass. Jesus became our sacrificial Lamb with His death on the cross – he became the sacrifice that sealed the covenant.

"And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him .And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God. "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 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 cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood." Luke 22:14-20

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