



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 3: Prayer

Chapter 2. The Mass



The faith of St Francis, who often said 'I see nothing bodily of the Most High Son of God in this world except his most holy body and blood,' should be the inspiration and pattern of their life. Rule 5

...it is the liturgy which, especially in the divine sacrifice of the Eucharist, 'the work of our redemption is accomplished,' and it is through the liturgy, especially, that the faithful are enabled to express in their lives and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the real nature of the true Church.

At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the ages until he should come again, and so entrust to his beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us. The Church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators...they should take part in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration.

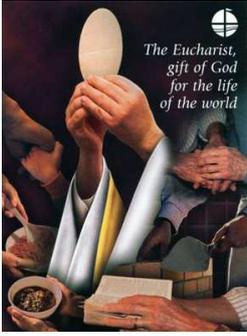
(Vat II *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 2, 47-48)

The Eucharist is the centre of the life of the Church. Christ unites us to himself and to one another as a single body in it. Therefore, the Eucharist should be the centre of the life of the fraternity. The brothers and sisters should participate in the Eucharist as frequently as possible, bring mindful of the respect and love shown by Francis, who, in the Eucharist, lived all the mysteries of the life of Christ.

Constitutions art 14.2

Why was the mass in Latin for so many centuries, and what prompted the change to the vernacular?

What, for you, is the most moving part of the mass?



Scripture—

John 6.25-38, 47-50

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.' Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom the Father has sent.' So they said to him, 'What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe in you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." ' Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is what which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me yet you do not believe. Everything that the Father gives to me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day.'

'I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate manna in the wilderness and died. I am the living bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give him for the life of the world is my flesh.'