

## WORSHIP



### In Preparation for the Teaching Masses On October 16-17th The Sacrifice of the Mass – Part 5



#### **“The Liturgy of the Eucharist”**

“The Dismissal: Sending Us Out into the World”

*“Peace be with you...As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” John 20: 21*

When friends who have been visiting are ready to leave, there is usually an exchange of hugs or handshakes, waves, and parting words. This is a ritual that brings the visit to a close. The Concluding Rites of the Mass offer the same “closing” for all assembled: some announcements, a blessing, a verbal dismissal, and usually a closing song or instrumental to accompany the recessional. They appear simple and straightforward, but actually they do much more than to signal the end of Mass.

*“Go in peace to love and serve the Lord and one another.”*

The liturgy that we just experienced as the Body of Christ is our sign of Christ’s presence in our world. Our full participation in the liturgy prepares us for the life of holiness to which we are called. But we are mistaken if we feel that is our only calling. The laity has been given a specific ministry in the world and it has been defined in the documents of the Second Vatican Council. It states that the ordained priest consecrates the bread and wine, and lay people are called to consecrate the whole world! While those who are ordained work to keep the Church holy, each lay person works within the world to make it holy.

#### *Consecrating through “sacrifice”*

A sacrifice implies that something is offered up. Traditionally Catholics “offer up” or sacrifice something during the season of Lent. Within the Mass we are again taking part in the sacrifice that Christ made to the Father, his own life sacrificed for our redemption. AND we are offering ourselves, along with Christ, as an offering to the Father. We specifically do this during the Eucharistic Prayer. In the offering of ourselves as baptized people we are committing to a life of living out the Gospel as Christ instructed us to do.

#### *What is the mission of all baptized people?*

Quoting Capuchin Fr. Edward Foley: “Sadly, for many Roman Catholics today, a spirituality grounded in Christ’s sacrifice calling us to pour ourselves out in mission has been replaced by a spirituality focused on receiving Communion, where we seem more concerned with our own self-nourishment and contentment.”

Communion does indeed nourish us on our faith journey, but we cannot rest in that alone. Our mission is to spread the Gospel by living lives that are faithful to it. This is not a passive activity but an active one. We are called to care for our brothers and sisters in the world, to treat all with justice, and especially to love with the same Love that embraces all. It is not an easy task when in our everyday world, but the sacraments sustain us, and God has promised us that we are not alone.

As we leave the church building and the Body of Christ that was assembled there, do we close the door ending our religious obligation until the next weekend or do we show evidence of the sacramental grace from receiving the Eucharist by working to build the Kingdom of God in each moment of our lives until we return?

*“Our problem is how to live what we pray,  
how to live in consonance with what we promise,  
how to keep faith with the vision we pronounce.”*  
Abraham Joshua Heschel