

Catholic Discipleship

Unit 9: The Mass

Opening Prayer

O Holy Spirit of God, take me as your disciple. Guide me, illuminate me, sanctify me. Bind my hands that they may do no evil. Cover my eyes that they may see it no more. Sanctify my heart, that evil may not dwell within me. Be my guard. Be my guide.

Wherever you lead me, I will go. Whatever you forbid me, I will renounce. Whatever you command me, in your strength I will do. Lead me, then, to the fullness of your truth. Amen.

- Henry Edward Cardinal Manning, 1809-1892

Orientation

- ▶ The twelve units of *Catholic Discipleship* are helping us explore dimensions of what it means to be a missionary disciple in the Church today.
- ▶ Each unit has an essay section, a spiritual exercise section, and a Scripture passage with reflection questions.
- ▶ Please read the essay section before each meeting.
- ▶ We will do the spiritual exercises together.
- ▶ We will use the Scripture as part of our prayer.

Objectives

- ▶ To understand the Mass as an expression of relationship with God and discipleship
- ▶ To review our understanding of sacraments
- ▶ To think about the role of conversion in worship and how conversion relates to each sacrament
- ▶ To explore the Mass from the point of view of conversion, commitment, and discipleship
- ▶ To see the importance of "sacred space" in our Catholic lives

Sacraments

Baltimore Catechism: What is a Sacrament? Answer: A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

Catechism of Catholic Church: The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The Church celebrates the sacraments as a priestly community structured by the baptismal priesthood and the priesthood of ordained ministers (#1131-1132).

Sacraments

All sacraments are acts of worship in which the Church, in solemn prayer, celebrates the Paschal Mystery.

Receiving a sacrament means that the death and resurrection of Jesus become active in our lives because of the prayer of the Church in the Holy Spirit.

All sacraments involve community.

Sacred Space

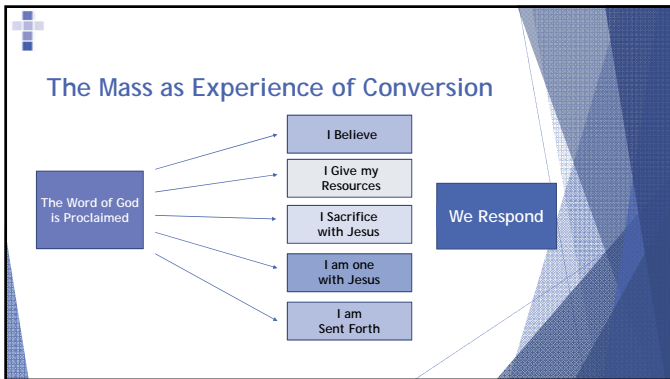
We come together to create a space for our faith, to be strengthened because of the experience of the presence of Christ, in his Spirit, and the presence of our brothers and sisters. In this space we sense not only what God continues to do in our individual lives; more importantly, we sense what God is doing in the world and in the community of faith which God gathers in grace. Our hymns allow us to feel the force of the community whose lives now spill out in song. Our quiet allows us to perceive the subtly powerful work of God in all our lives (p. 61).

Sacrament and Conversion

- ▶ Every sacrament involves proclamation of the Word of God.
- ▶ Every proclamation of the Word of God is a call to conversion.
- ▶ Every sacrament is, then, a re-affirmation of our experience of conversion and our response to the Word.
- ▶ As we experience conversion once again, the Paschal Mystery is renewed in us. That is, we die personally (to sin, egoism, greed, power, using others) and we are renewed personally (to live Christ's life more fully) because of the work of the Spirit inside us.

Sacraments and Conversion

Sacrament	How is conversion happening?
Baptism	
Confirmation	
Reconciliation	
Anointing	
Marriage	
Holy Orders	
Eucharist	

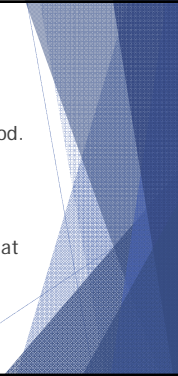


Liturgical Prayer: The Mass

- ▶ [The] Word of God is read aloud as an irresistible call to hear God anew in our lives (p. 62).
- ▶ We recite the Creed, out loud and standing, to show we are proclaiming an important response to the Word of God (p. 62).
- ▶ The Presentation of the Gifts underscores one of the basic foundations of being a disciple: we have come to acknowledge that everything we have received is a... gift from God (p. 62).
- ▶ The Eucharistic prayer... invites us to identify our prayer with the Prayer of Jesus the Priest (p. 63).
- ▶ To receive Communion is to be made one with Jesus (p. 63).
- ▶ The Mass sends us forth as converted disciples into the world... (p. 63).

God's Space


If personal prayer opens up a sacred space, can we even begin to grasp the kind of space the Eucharist opens up? When believers come with daily lives and concerns, bringing what they have to the altar of Christ, all our lives and hopes, all those prayers, are now made one with the eternal prayer of Jesus. Heaven and earth touch, interchange, and share love when disciples gather for worship (p. 64).



Spiritual Exercise (p. 66)

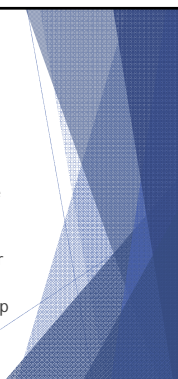
Explore those moments when you felt closest to God.

Begin with a few moments and then can continue at home during the week ahead.



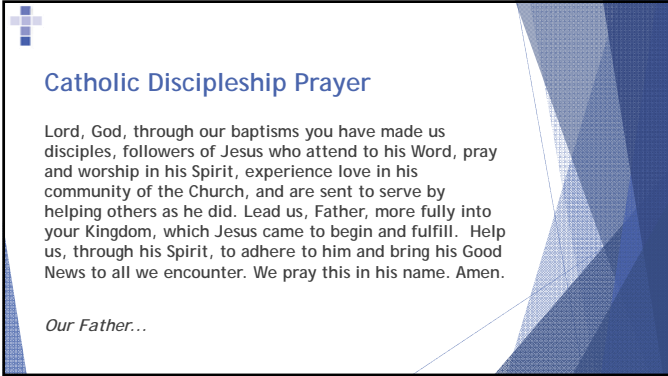
Scripture—John 6:35-40

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life: whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst. But I told you that although you have seen [me], you do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it [on] the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him [on] the last day."



Conclusion

- ▶ Thank you for coming and participating.
- ▶ Please think of bringing a friend along next week.
- ▶ You may bring your Bible next week, although we will be focusing on other themes of discipleship, such as community.
- ▶ We invite you to spend some time in hospitality after our session.
- ▶ Please stand and recite together the Catholic Discipleship prayer and the Lord's Prayer.



Catholic Discipleship Prayer

Lord, God, through our baptisms you have made us disciples, followers of Jesus who attend to his Word, pray and worship in his Spirit, experience love in his community of the Church, and are sent to serve by helping others as he did. Lead us, Father, more fully into your Kingdom, which Jesus came to begin and fulfill. Help us, through his Spirit, to adhere to him and bring his Good News to all we encounter. We pray this in his name. Amen.

Our Father...
