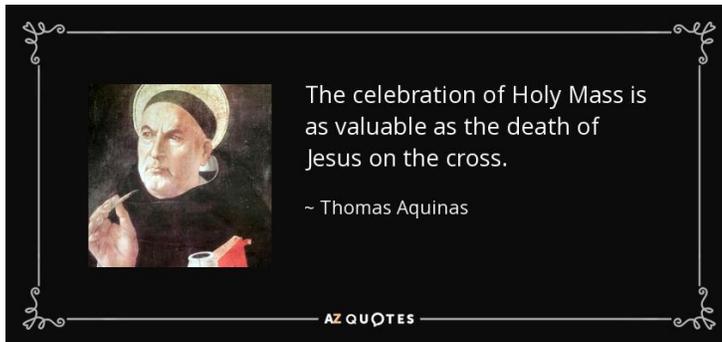




Archdiocesan Program

WHY CATHOLIC?

STRENGTHENING FAITH ... MAKING DISCIPLES



THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY *WE CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENTS*

Biblical Reflection: Act 2:42-47

Liturgy is an “action” of the whole Christ (*Christus totus*). Those who even now celebrate it without signs are already in the heavenly liturgy, where celebration is wholly communion and feast. (CCC 1136).

It is the whole community, the Body of Christ united with its Head, that celebrates. “Liturgical services are not private functions but are celebrations of the Church which is ‘the sacrament of unity,’ namely, the holy people united and organized under the authority of the bishops. Therefore, liturgical services pertain to the whole Body of the Church. They manifest it, and have effects upon it. But they touch individual members of the Church in different ways, depending on their orders, their role in the liturgical services, and their actual participation in them”... (CCC 1140)

... Since Pentecost, it is through the sacramental signs of his Church that the Holy Spirit carries on the work of sanctification. The sacraments of the Church do not abolish but purify and integrate all the richness of the signs and symbols of the cosmos and of social life. Further, they fulfill the types and figures of the Old Covenant, signify and make actively present the salvation wrought by Christ, and prefigure and anticipate the glory of heaven. (CCC 1152)

Sunday, the “Lord’s Day,” is the principal day for the celebration of the Eucharist because it is the day of the Resurrection. It is the pre-eminent day of the liturgical assembly, the day of the Christian family, and the day of joy and rest from work. Sunday is “the foundation and kernel of the whole liturgical year” (CCC 1193). The Church, “in the course of the year,... unfolds the whole mystery of Christ from his Incarnation and Nativity through his Ascension, to Pentecost and the expectation of the blessed hope of the coming of the Lord” Vatican Council II, SC 102. (CCC 1194)

In its earthly state the Church needs places where the community can gather together. Our visible churches, holy places, are images of the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem, toward which we are making our way on pilgrimage. (CCC 1198)

“The Lord’s day, the day of Resurrection, the day of Christians, is our day...” St. Jerome. (CCC 1155)

Questions for discussion:

- What does it mean to you to be a member of your parish?
- How is your participation in the Sunday Mass? How do you prepare for it?
- When you offer the peace to others during the Mass, what feelings do you have?
- Which is your favorite Liturgical time? Why?

Further reading: Catechism of the Catholic Church, numbers 1135-1209