



The PILGRIM

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THE HOLY MASS - THE GREATEST of PRAYERS

A Book Review of "*The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*" by
Father Michael Müller, C.S.S.R. by Toni Blackman.

In response to a request from **Kathleen**, I took a copy of this book and in reading it, I highlighted significant passages. I have tried to provide a review [by typing those significant passages] of the book so that more of you would be touched with the richness and magnificence yet simplicity of the Holy Mass.

If you are interested in acquiring the book once you read this summary you can order it for \$20 plus \$3.20 **Priority Mail** postage and use it to increase your understanding and awareness as you participate in the GREATEST of PRAYERS - THE HOLY SACRIFICE of the MASS.

As it turns out, each quoted [or simply typed] passage speaks for itself. What you read here are directly excerpted passages from **Father Müller's** book. Footnotes and page references were left out for the sake of brevity and easier reading. BECAUSE of its LENGTH, THIS BOOK REVIEW APPEARED in THREE PARTS. PART I of 3 was printed in *October 1993*, PART II was printed in *NOVEMBER 1993* and PART III was printed in *DECEMBER 1993*.

NOTE from Publisher:

A version of the introduction shown above appeared in each issue of the **PFMC NEWS** in which a part of this book review was printed. The final paragraph above was modified to make one statement for all three parts which now appear together in this special issue. The comments in brackets [] were inserted to clarify that what you are reading are quoted excerpts from the book without the quotation marks or individual footnotes.

Communication with **TAN BOOKS AND PUBLISHERS, INC.** Rockford, Illinois 61105 obtained permission for the publication of this book review which contains extensive excerpts from the book. This publication was based on the **PFMC** efforts to get the book into the hands of those who wanted to see more of the words from this very devoted priest. This review covers only the first 30 chapters or 361 pages. The remainder of the 599 pages regards how Catholics should deal with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and the Love of God.

This book received the *Imprimatur*: **John Card. McCloskey, Archbishop of New York** as well as a commendation letter from him dated *July 22, 1874*.

How amazing it is that what **Father Müller** wrote to his readers over a hundred years ago is so applicable to most of the modern Catholics who seem to have lost sight of what the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is all about.

This book was first published in 1874, by **Fr. Puster** (New York and Cincinnati) as *The Holy Mass – The Sacrifice for the Living and the Dead: The Clean Oblation Offered Up Among the Nations from the Rising to the Setting of the Sun*. It was republished in 1884 by **Benziger Brothers, Fr. Pustet & Co., and B. Herder** (St. Louis) as *(The) Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*. It was retypeset and republished in 1992 by **TAN Books and Publishers, Inc.** (Rockford, Illinois)

We hope that you have touched on the magnificence of the Holy Mass in a new way and will not hesitate to order this book from the **PFMC** or your local Christian religious goods store. Use it constantly for reference and to evangelize your FAITH to your family and friends.

PART I

MASS: THE MERITS OF CHRIST

The Love of our dear Saviour for His Heavenly Father and for men was so great that, had it been necessary, He would have been willing to remain on the Cross till the end of the world. Our Lord instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in order thus to be ever in a state of sacrifice, to renew His Passion, apply more effectually to our souls its all-sufficient merits, and to manifest His most wonderful love for us, His creatures.

The only sacrifice which our Saviour offers up forever, and which continues forever, is the Sacrifice of His Body and Blood in the Mass.

Sacrifice is the most perfect form of worship.

While our divine Saviour was hanging on the Cross on Good Friday, He performed every act of worship of which the human soul is capable. He prayed, He loved God, He praised Him, He gave thanks, He made acts of resignation, in a word, He offered to God perfect worship. **In the Holy Mass, the very same worship is offered to God.** The Sacrifice of the Mass is the very same in all essentials as the Sacrifice of the Cross. It differs from it only in appearance.

The price He paid on the Cross for our salvation is of infinite value. **Only through His merits does the way of pardon lie open to us.** All the graces we have or can have are due to that precious blood-shedding.

The merits of Jesus Christ must be imparted to us so that they may be a healing and health-giving medicine to our souls. They must be applied to the soul so as really to cleanse and transform her into a true copy of Christ crucified. When I eat the living divine Victim, come down from Heaven, Jesus is ALL mine; His divinity as well as His humanity, His wisdom, power, mercy - all His adorable perfections are mine, since He offers them for my happiness. Our Lord once said to *Saint Mechtilda*: "**At the moment of Consecration, I come down first in humility so deep that there is no one at Mass, no matter how vile and despicable he may be, toward whom I do not humbly incline and approach if he desires Me to do so and prays for it.**"

MASS: THE RENEWAL OF THE MYSTERIES OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Our Lord Jesus Christ wished to stay with us Himself in person, in order that His own Presence might constantly recall to our mind all that He had done for us. **He instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, not only to apply to our souls more effectually the all-sufficient merits of the Sacrifice of the Cross, but to be a perpetual memorial of all that He has done and suffered for us and a sure pledge of His undying love for our souls.**

Our dear Saviour knew this fickleness and instability of the human mind and heart. So He instituted the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, wherein the Sacrifice of the Cross is daily renewed in order thus to remind us continually of His sufferings and death. "**Do this,**" said He to the Apostles, "**in remembrance of Me.**" His whole life on earth is one great act of sacrifice, one mighty action undertaken out of love for us. He commenced this great act of sacrifice interiorly at the first moment of His Incarnation, and exteriorly at His birth, appearing amongst us in human form to be immolated for the expiation of the sins of men, and the consequent reparation of His Father's glory, thus to consummate the great work of our Redemption. It took Him thirty-three years and a half to consummate it, whilst at Mass it takes but a few minutes to renew and consummate the whole of the great work of our Redemption.

In holy Mass therefore is present our Saviour incarnate for us, born for us, dead for our salvation, risen for our justification, ascended to Heaven as our eternal hope.

Mass, then, is the renewal of His Incarnation, of His birth, of His hidden and public life, of His Passion and death, of His glory; it is the living representation of the infinite love and compassion of God toward us, which He has revealed and still reveals daily in the delivering up of His only begotten Son. The firm, unwavering faith that Christ before our eyes offers Himself up for us to His eternal Father cannot but produce most admirable effects, piercing into the inmost mind, heart and will of man so that sin in its germ should be plucked from the will, and the faithful soul be unable to refuse consecrating her whole life to God.

MASS: THE RENEWAL OF THE INCARNATION

Turn for a moment to the Catholic altar. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is being offered up. As yet there is only bread in the hand of the priest, and wine in the chalice before him. The priest utters the divine life-giving words of Consecration; and that which was bread and wine, is bread and wine no longer, but the true Body and Blood of Our Lord Himself. **It is that same Body that was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary.**

In the Incarnation the Son of God employed His omnipotence to make Himself man; but in the Mass the Son of God employs His omnipotence to change bread and wine into His Body and Blood. In the Incarnation the Son of God descends from the height of His glory into the womb of a Virgin, and conceals His Divinity in taking human nature. But in the Mass He conceals His divinity and Humanity under the forms of bread and wine, in order that we may eat Him. In the Incarnation, God has received man into His bosom by uniting human nature to the divine Word, and in the Mass He swishes man to receive Him into his heart. Man is united to God by the astounding miracle of the Incarnation. "**He who eats My Flesh and drinks My Blood abides in Me and I in Him.**" What can be more admirable than this?

MASS: THE RENEWAL OF CHRIST'S LIFE IN THE WOMB OF MARY

The Son of God annihilated Himself in the Incarnation in the sacred womb of His Virgin Mother. But He has gone still further in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. In the womb of His Mother He was a tiny, helpless infant. But on our altars He has surrendered even the appearance of a reasonable creature. He is enclosed in a little host, and even in each particle of the host; He is imprisoned in the species of bread and wine, for these sacred species are only

We recognize and accept that the final authority regarding the apparitions, locutions and related messages from *Our Lady* at, and to the recipients from, **Medjugorje, Bosnia-Herzegovina**, as well as all other private revelations, rests with the **Holy See of Rome**, to whose judgment we willingly submit. We vow total allegiance to our **One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church**, its **Magisterium (Cardinals, Bishops and Priests)** together with the **Holy Father, Pope John Paul II.**

the covering which veils the Body of our Saviour; the womb of His Virgin Mother.

Divine love has reduced the Incarnate Word to be a threefold prisoner in the Sacred Host. He is, as it were, a criminal, although Innocence itself, having become the victim of sinners that He may satisfy the justice of His Father, and restore them to grace. He is a prisoner for debt; having taken them upon Him our sins, He was obliged to discharge their penalty, which He did from the first moment of His life, and continues to do in every Mass. He is a prisoner of war. Love has vanquished and reduced Him to this state.

Why does He choose to remain in this state of abasement and captivity? **It is to offer to His Father for our sins all the acts of adoration, of love and of prayer which He made in the womb of His Mother, which served as His oratory for nine months:** to present anew to the Divine Majesty, in our behalf, all the sufferings and pains which, during that time, He had endured to free us from Hell. he is made a victim of our sins, in order that forgiveness through His merits might of right belong to us.

Yes, says Jesus Christ to every one of us from the altar after Consecration, take Me, offer Me for thyself to the Eternal Father, and so shalt thou escape death and be in safety. Behold Me, descended from Heaven, in all the amiability and with all the merits of My Infancy, behold Me, made your own on the altar.

If we desire a cure for our wounded soul, He is our physician at Mass; if we are weak and infirm, and would be healed, behold, Jesus Christ heals us by His Blood. If we are troubled with the impure flames of worldly affections, behold the fountain to refresh us with His consolations. Do we fear the death of sin? He is our life. Do we wish for Heaven. He is the way and the Good Shepherd. Let us then often be with Him at Mass in this world, and He will be with us forever in the next.

MASS: THE RENEWAL OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

If the mere sight of the place where Jesus was born is capable of inflaming faithful souls with divine love; if the meditation on all that our Infant Saviour suffered in the stable of **Bethlehem** can make hearts overflow with a torrent of holy joy, what should be the delight of our souls at the consideration of the far more wondrous prodigies that take place in the Holy Sacrifice of the mass! There our Saviour is born every day in the hand of the priest, by the worlds of Consecration. The Church is His birthplace, the altar is his crib. No place on the earth is dearer to devout Christians than a church were the Sacrifice of the Mass is daily celebrated. In the mere remembrance of the divine mystery, they find and assistance in the he great combat of life.

At that solemn moment (the Consecration), the angels descend form Heaven to tell us: **"Behold we bring**

you good tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people"; for this day -at this very moment of Consecration- is born anew your Saviour. **"Come to me, all you that labour and are burdened, and I will refresh you." (Matt. 11:28).** Obey this loving invitation of Our Lord, go to Mass, bow down and adore your Saviour, the heavenly King - the King of eternal glory, and according to your faith will He have mercy on you. Are you tempted with unholy thoughts? You will be freed form them. Are you a child of sorrow, wounded by the stern strokes of a calamitous life? You will be comforted. Are you discouraged at the difficulties of your position-do you hunger and thirst after justice? you will be strengthened and refreshes. Mark and obey the prophetic invitation: **"All ye that thirst, come to the waters, make haste, buy and eat." (Is. 45:1).**

MASS: RENEWAL OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST

"Blessed are they who have not seen Me, but have most firmly believed in Me." The Real Presence of Our Lord in the holy Eucharist is far more advantageous to us than His sensible Presence was to the Jews. The Jews possessed Our Lord only by means of the senses. But we possess Him in the Mass in a manner much more intimate, which is above sense! By Communion we are united immediately to the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, and by means of His Body and Blood to His soul and His divinity. His Body becomes blended with our body, His Blood with our blood, His soul is joined to our soul; whence there results in us an accidental change, which makes us like unto Our Lord, our body participating in the divine qualities of His Body and our soul in the graces of his soul according as He is pleased to communicate Himself to us, and according to the disposition in which we receive Him. Thus, His imagination stays and regulates our imagination, His understanding enlightens our understanding, His will invigorates our will, His appetite moderates our appetite and extinguishes therein the fire on concupiscence; His senses purify our senses. He roots up our evil dispositions, He destroys the seeds of sin; He mortifies our humors, and disposes everything in such a manner that the practice of virtue becomes easy to us.

The Apostles and disciples of Our Lord themselves did not enjoy so great a privilege. How does it happen that we are so little affected by this admirable Sacrifice of the Holy Mass? We are destitute of devotion; tepid and dull in regard to Our Lord. We suffer incalculable losses from failing to recognize the treasures we possess in Holy Mass and in Holy Communion. We attach our hearts to trifles, we place our happiness in them, we fill our mind with them. A wretched little attachment will deprive us of the marvelous effects which Holy Communion and the devout hearing of Mass would operate in us were we well disposed. This disposition consists chiefly in purity of heart, peace and tranquility of soul, in noting and repressing the

rebellion and resistance of our mind and will against grace, in discovering our illusions, our errors, our blindness, the depth of our malice, and in correcting all those disorders. When we have done this, **we shall experience a hunger and thirst for Holy mass and Communion, we shall taste its sweetness, and it will produce in us from day to day a fresh increase of spiritual life.**

In old days, it was a favorite devotion with Christians to visit the sacred spots in the Holy Land where Our Lord lived, and moved in the flesh, working out our salvation. If the crib wherein He was lain, the garden where He prayed, the thorns with which He was crowned, the wood to which He was nailed, the rock in which He was buried, the mount where He ascended into Heaven, are objects of such great veneration among Christians because of the relation they once bore with Our Lord, **what ardor ought we not now to go to church, to hear Mass, to find there what is far more admirable - Our Lord Himself in person.**

MASS: THE RENEWAL OF GOD'S WONDROUS WORKS

From the beginning of the world, God has never ceased to perform miracles for the benefit of men, miracles so great that they will be the admiration of all nations to the end of time. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is indeed an unfathomable abyss of the most astounding prodigies. The first of these prodigies is that as soon as the priest has pronounced the words of Consecration over the host and the wine in the chalice, the Real Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ are present upon the altar. His Body is present under the appearance of bread, and His Blood under the appearance of wine.

The second miracle is that after the words of Consecration, there remains neither bread nor wine, though the contrary appears to our senses.

The third prodigy that happens in this change is not brought about as in natural things, wherein, when one thing is changed into another, there always remains something of the thing that is changed; there is no change beyond one of form. The Church calls this entire change Transubstantiation - i.e., the changing of one substance into another.

The fourth miracle that takes place in the Blessed Sacrament is that the Sacramental Species or appearance remains without subject or substance. It is the property of such accidents to be inseparably attached to their substance.

The fifth prodigy is that not only the Body of Jesus Christ is under the appearance of bread and wine, but that Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is entire there, such as He is in Heaven.

The sixth prodigy wrought in the Blessed Sacrament is that Jesus Christ is not only whole and entire in each host and

chalice, but He is also whole and entire in each particle of the host as He is whole and entire in the least species of wine.

Finally, it is a great miracle that when the priest breaks the host or divides the chalice, it is not Christ who is broken or divided, He always remaining, as He does, whole and entire to each part how little so ever it may be; it is the species or appearance of bread and wine which is broken or divided.

Who can conceive the power manifested in the august Sacrament in such a variety of ways! Thousands of places holding the Sacred Body at the same time; God in one host the same as in a million; God in a million of hearts each moment; God consoling and inspiring, and gently leading all these millions of hearts by various ways, all equally wonderful, and all at the same time. On thousands of altars, day and night, all over the universe, offered up each instant and still in the glory of Heaven! Hearing millions upon millions of prayers, and granting millions upon millions of petitions at the same time. Doing what He pleases with His Body, putting it as He does in this sacramental state and concealing it under the species of bread and wine miraculously detached from their subject, but also at the same time sustained by a continued miracle! This power, this majesty, this all-comprehending mystery, tells us in the midst of life's storms to **"Fear not!"** (and) in the midst of temptations, **"I am here!"** In the midst of doubts, difficulties, hesitations and depressions which surround His children, this memorial of power points to the altar saying, **"I am with thee all days, even to the consummation of the world."**

MASS: THE RENEWAL OF CHRIST'S PASSION

The frightful scenes of suffering through which our Saviour, the Lamb of God and the Victim of the Divine Vengeance, had to pass from the moment when He went forth with His Apostles to the Garden of Olives, until He expired upon the Cross. This cannot fail to leave a most wholesome impression on the heart, and enable us to better understand the value and dignity of the Mass, which is principally the commemoration of the Passion and death of our dear Saviour.

Our dear Lord wished that this last act of His life should stand out forever before our minds in the most vivid manner. **"Do this in remembrance of Me."** Such is the last will of our dear Saviour; He asks but one thing, that **having suffered and died for us, we should fondly cherish the memory of the ineffable benefit, especially by the means of the Holy Mass.**

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the same as that which was offered upon the Cross; it is the **same victim** for He who offered Himself then, is the same who daily offers Himself by the hands of the priest; it is only the manner of offering which is different. What the Sacrifice of Calvary did for

the whole human race, one Mass can do for the one who assists at it with the requisite dispositions, who approaches the altar with humility, contrition and sincere renunciation of sin. The Blood which flowed on the Cross to ransom the world, will flow on the soul of such a one to wash away its defilements, to heal its wounds, to enhance its beauty and strengthen its weakness. The Sacrifice of the Mass, being but the application and repetition of the Sacrifice of the Cross, is as efficacious as the Sacrifice of Calvary for the good and salvation of men.

The Holy Mass may also be called a commemoration of the Passion and death of Our Lord because **He constantly receives insults similar to those which He had to undergo in the course of His Passion.** Jesus, the Eternal Son of God, is mocked not only by the dregs of the people, in the house of **Caiaphas**, and by the vile soldiery at the tribunal of Pilate; but also by **Herod** in his palace, by the scribes and priest upon **Mount Calvary**. They blindfolded Him and gave Him blows, and yet He was silent; they beat Him with rods, and they tore out His hair, and He was silent; they spat in His face and insulted Him in a thousand other ways, and He was silent; He is treated as a mock king and as a fool; He is chained like a ferocious beast and He is silent. Oh, prodigy of humility and patience!

Similar insults have been offered to our dear Saviour in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He has been insulted by bad, unworthy priests, who have treated Him more shamefully than Judas did; He has been insulted by thousands of unworthy communicants, who have forced Him to enter their hearts, which were the abode of the devil; He has been insulted thousands of times by Jew and heretics, who have taken the Sacred Hosts and thrown them into the foulest places or have treated them in the most shocking manner; and our dear Lord is silent and bears all these insults with the greatest patience. Although His sacred Body in its glorified state is no longer capable of suffering, yet His Heart is not less sensitive to the injuries and ignominies it receives.

By every mortal sin, Jesus is crucified anew in the heart of the sinner. He feels again the scourges, the crown of thorns, the insults and the Cross. The Jews and Jewish executioners were indeed cruel, hard-hearted, but yet they were not aware that He whom they crucified was the ever-blessed Son of God; but the sinning Christian knows well that Jesus is the Son of God. The executioners crucified Jesus but once; but we crucify Him as often as we sin.

Whenever we are tempted hereafter to commit sin, let us call to mind all that Jesus has done and suffered. Behold Him nailed to the Cross, see the streams of Blood that flow from His hands and His feet and His blessed side. Behold His sacred head crowned with thorns. Gaze on His Godlike face, all livid with blows and defiled with spittle. Behold His virginal Body, all mangled and bleeding. Look upon

our good Lord loaded with contempt, while His blessed soul is weighed down with sadness. Consider all the sufferings that God has endured to atone for our sins, and then, if we have the heart, let us commit another mortal sin.

If we often consider that Mass is the solemn commemoration and renewal of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross, we shall if possible, be present every day at this Holy Sacrifice. We shall see at Mass nothing but Heaven; our virtue will take deep root; and the odor of a holy life will diffuse itself over our being like that of flowers in spring. All weak though we be, the corruption of sin shall not touch us, who have been penetrated by the strength and the sweetness of the incorruptible Blood of Jesus Christ at Mass.

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PART II

NOTE from Publisher: See page 1 for commentary from
Toni about how she came to write this review.

MASS: THE RENEWAL OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

In the time of His Passion, our divine Saviour had lost the four principal privileges that man may possess. His executioners deprived Him of His clothes, leaving Him in extreme poverty; they deprived Him of all honor by loading Him with the most outrageous contempt; they deprived Him of His health by inflicting upon Him most frightful torments; they deprived Him of His most precious life by inflicting on Him a most cruel death. But in arising from

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the tomb, He regained all these privileges, added to and multiplied beyond measure. He who before was poor and indigent became the Lord of the Universe.

He who was before **"a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity, in whom there was no sound part, from the crown of His head to the sole of His foot,"** recovered His vigor, becoming victorious over Hell and sin. He changes His weakness into power and strength, and the ignominy of His Passion into honor and glory. **In His resurrection Jesus Christ restores to us with advantage the gift of the Holy Sacrifice of Mass.** His resurrection is a re-establishment of this adorable mystery in its fullness and perfection. Previous to the Passion He gave His sacred Body mortal and passable; after His resurrection He gives It immortal and impassible, such as He is now, seated in Heaven at the right hand of His Father. Not content with having employed His mortal life in laboring for our salvation, He would also in the excess of His charity employ therein His glorified life, and join eternity to time for the work of our sanctification. For this reason Mass is also the commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

When we considered Mass as the commemoration of the Passion and death of Our Lord, our attention was fixed on the real immolation of the Lamb; we looked upon the altar as a new **Calvary**, and our devotion was centered upon the divine Victim slain for our ransom. But when we come to consider Mass as the commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, the divine Lamb presents Himself to us in another aspect; He is living, He is resplendent with glory, He is the Conqueror, although He still deigns to be immolated. Wherefore the priest commemorating the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, together with His Passion, on breaking the Host puts one part into the chalice, denoting thereby the reunion of the Body and Blood of Christ on the day of His rising from the tomb. For although the Sacrifice of the Mass is in effect the same as that of the Cross, and Jesus Christ is on the altar in a state of mystic death; yet we commemorate therein the mystery of the Resurrection, because His sacred Body is there also gloriously resuscitated.

The Holy Mass considered as the commemoration of the Resurrection of Our Lord, reminds us in a special manner of a Victim who is gloriously risen from the dead, and yet is still immolated in a real though unbloody manner; it brings to our minds a joyous banquet - the banquet of the Pasch, to which the Lamb of God invites us in order to give us to eat of His glorified Body. Each church becomes a cenacle where Jesus celebrates the Pasch with His disciples. The holy table is no longer the feast of a chosen few. He has invited us to His Pasch, and there makes Himself our Host and our food. At this table is likewise fulfilled the prophetic symbol of the ancient Paschal Lamb. The True Lamb is the Lamb whom the Holy Mass produces in all the efficacy of His Sacrifice, and in all the magnificence of His

glory. We should, therefore, be present at this great act of the Christian religion, especially in the Paschal time, with extreme joy of soul; for it is here that we have in all its reality the same Jesus who so gloriously rose again from the dead to die no more.

After His Resurrection, Our Lord appeared to His disciples not only to confirm them in their faith, but also in order to inspire them with an unbounded confidence in His goodness and divine protection. He still continues to do the same in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Jesus Christ alone in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass can satisfy our desire. He alone is necessary to our soul, that it may be enlightened with His knowledge; to our will, that it may be inflamed with His love; to our faculties, that they may be governed by His justice; to our passions, that they may be subdued by His power; to our senses, that they may be purified and subjected to the spirit.

MASS: THE VIRTUES OF CHRIST

The Institution of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass may be regarded as the crowning act of mercy and love in the life of our dear Saviour. Here He is Himself the present and ever-active teacher, and only those who open all the faculties of their souls to His voice, can know what a Master He is.

Jesus, in the Holy Eucharist teaches us lessons of sublime virtue - lessons of poverty, of humility, of obedience, the love of God and of our neighbor. Jesus Christ remains among us in the state of poverty in the Holy Eucharist. It is voluntary poverty, chosen out of love - absolute poverty, depriving Himself of everything, even the appearance of existence. He give all that He has in giving Himself.

We see the poverty of Jesus; But oh! How slow are we to imitate it! Our affections are fixed on fine dwellings, good fare, soft garments, splendid retinue. We dislike to feel the want of anything, or to suffer the slightest inconvenience, just as though the Son of God had said, "Blessed are the rich, but not the poor; blessed are those that laugh, but not those that weep."

The example of Our Lord's humility, in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, is as conspicuous as His poverty. The God of Heaven and earth remains silent in His lowliness,, often times the subject of mockery and outrage, often times neglected and made to serve as a kind of witness against Himself, when hypocrisy kneels before Him to gain the name of devotion; yet men are dissatisfied at a correction, a small slight, a trivial injury, or a shade of misrepresentation.

When Our Lord lived upon earth He was **"obedient unto dearth, even to the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8)**. In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, He becomes **obedient unto the consummation of the world**. He renders immediate, universal obedience to every priest who pronounces the words of Consecration.

Jesus Christ has solemnly pledged Himself to continue this great subjection of Himself, to console our exile by filling up the void that separates earth from Heaven. Out of love for us He prefers His obedience upon the altar to the exercise of His sovereign power.

The Body of Our Lord is no longer capable of suffering; yet the love of suffering is in no wise diminished. His Divine Person is still sensible to every insult that is offered to Him. Think of the crimes, the sins of irreverence that are committed in his churches, in His own divine Presence. Think of all the bad and sacrilegious Communion that are made! What admirable lessons of patience does Jesus teach us in this divine Sacrifice!

Most admirable also, is the example of mortification which our dear Lord sets us upon the altar. He mortifies His judgment by suffering Himself to be disposed of according to the good pleasure of His priests. He mortifies His will in bearing the numberless indignities that are offered to His divine perfections. He mortifies His senses by remaining present in the Sacred Host as if He were dead. He mortifies His tongue by preserving ever a profound silence. He mortifies His whole Body by keeping it concealed under the lifeless appearances of bread and wine, by remaining days and nights upon our altars as in a prison of love.

In the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus teaches us also how we ought to love God. If we love God truly, we will do His will in all things, we will keep His commandments. We will suffer much for Him and sacrifice ourselves to His honor. All men should offer themselves to God, in order to acknowledge their dependence upon Him, to thank Him for His numberless benefits, to ask new blessings from Him, and to atone for their sins. Jesus Christ has taken upon Himself this obligation, and daily offers Himself to pay homage to God for all men, to give thanks to God for all the graces they have received from Him, to make satisfaction to His justice, so often offended by their grievous crimes, and to obtain for them all the graces necessary for soul and body.

One of the objects of the Incarnation was to reunite men in the bonds of charity while being saved from sin. Jesus Christ made charity an express commandment. It was especially by His example that He taught us this divine virtue through the course of His whole life. There are two marks by which love is known. First, to **LABOR**; second, to **SUFFER** for the beloved object. Jesus labored for our souls as no one ever DID or WILL; and He suffered as only a God-man can suffer in order to win our love. He continues to give in a most striking manner in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, which is but the perpetuation of that wonderful charity that culminated in the Sacrifice of the Cross. It was to preserve that charity that He left us His Body and His Blood under the appearance of bread and wine, in order that partaking of one bread, we also may be one body and one soul. And the more to ensure the practice

of charity among men, He has made our natural desire for happiness the motive for loving one another.

These are the silent lessons that our Saviour teaches us in the Holy Eucharist.

MASS: A SACRIFICE OF ADORATION AND INFINITE PRAISE

Amongst all creatures, man is under special obligations to glorify and honor Almighty God. Man is the resplendent image of the three divine Persons. In Baptism he is consecrated to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost by an inviolable character impressed on his soul.

We cannot honor God better than by sacrifice; for sacrifice is that part of religious worship whose special object is the honor of God. It is in this, particularly, that it differs from other religious and virtuous acts. It is true, we honor God by every act of devotion and virtue, by every good work that we do to please Him. Yet the honor which we render God by acts of devotion and good works does not proceed from the nature of such acts and works, but rather from the intention with which we perform them. But the peculiar virtue of sacrifice consists in its having for the principal object the honor of God. In all other religious exercise, we strive for the most part to benefit ourselves rather than render honor to God. If we pray, it is to obtain the grace of God; if we repent of our sins and confess them, it is in order to become reconciled to God; if we go to receive Communion, it is to unite ourselves more intimately with God; if we perform other good works, it is to increase our merits and receive a grater reward in Heaven. But **our chief intention in assisting at a sacrifice must be to render due homage to Almighty God.**

How shall we be able to render to God the honor He deserves? It is plain that we, finite creatures, have nothing of ourselves great enough to offer Him; even the sacrifice of our lives would be an inadequate homage. Any homage coming from a finite creature necessarily partakes of the imperfection of its origin; it is essentially limited. God, to be really and adequately glorified, can be glorified by no other than Himself. A God can be truly glorified only by a God.

This glorification has literally come to pass. Almighty God has given us a Man-God to supply our deficiency in adoring and honoring the Blessed Trinity. This enables us to discharge to the fullest a debt which would otherwise have remained eternally unpaid.

Jesus Christ came into this world to repair the fault of our first parents. He came to render infinitely more honor to His Father than that of which the sins of all men had deprived Him. This honor He paid His Father by every action of His life, but particularly by His Passion and by His obedience unto the death of the Cross. After Judas had left the Supper Room to betray Our Lord, Jesus said, **"Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is**

glorified in him." (John 13:31). "Father, the hour is come, that thy Son may glorify thee." (John 17:1). This same infinite honor, praise and glory Jesus Christ gives and offers still to His Father in every Mass.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is of infinite dignity and value. In it we offer to the Eternal Father all the honor which Jesus Christ gave Him during his whole life on earth thereby atoning for our natural poverty. The blessed Mother of God, and all the saints and angels of Heaven prostrate themselves before God in the deepest humility and reverence; and on the other hand, if the humble priest on earth were to offer up one Mass, the offering of the priest would give more honor to God than the united adorations of all the angels and saints. Hence it is that *Saint Ignatius* calls the **Holy Sacrifice of the Mass "the glory of God"**; and the priest prays in Mass, when holding the Sacred Host over the chalice, and elevating both of them together: **"Through Him, with Him, in Him, to God the Father Almighty, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory."**

MASS: THE SACRIFICE OF PROPITIATION

The Sacrifice of Propitiation is offered up daily, nay, hourly, all over the world. The whole world was once destroyed by a deluge because of sin. Seventy thousand men fell victims to a pestilence sent by God to punish the vanity of **King David**. Fifty thousand **Bethsamites** were punished with death for the irreverent curiosity with which they gazed upon the **Ark of the Covenant**.

The Mass is the act on which is based the salvation of the world. It is to the Mass that the entire world owes its preservation: without it, the sins of man would have annihilated it long ago. The property of this Sacrifice, then, is to appease God; **"He hath delivered himself to God for us to be a victim of an agreeable sweetness." (Eph. 5:2).** As men are accustomed to forgive an injury in consideration of a service or gift, so God feels appeased and looks upon us with merciful eyes in consideration of the present of the sacrifice we offer to His divine majesty. Had we been at the foot of the Cross when our Saviour died, what consolation would we not have felt in our soul, and what hope of salvation should we not have conceived, had some drops of His most precious Blood fallen upon us!

In this Sacrifice of Propitiation the eagerness of God to save sinners is truly manifest. It is this eagerness for the salvation of sinners that makes Him come down from Heaven in every Mass and say to them: **"Return, ye transgressors, to the heart."** Sinners, enter once more into your own hearts; think on the benefits you have received from Me, on the love I have borne you, and offend Me no more. Turn ye to Me, and I will turn to you; I will

receive you in My embraces. My children, why will you destroy yourselves, and of your own free will condemn yourselves to everlasting death? Return to Me and you shall live.

Have you forgotten that I am that Good Shepherd who goes about seeking the lost sheep, and on finding it makes a festival, saying: **"Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost"?** (Luke 15:6)

The Lamb of God, the Saviour of the world, speaks at Mass to every poor sinner. And in every deed, all the sins ever committed are but a grain of sand beside a huge mountain when compared with the mercy of God. Let us, then, not be afraid of Jesus Christ, but of our won obstinacy, if, after offending Him, we will not listen to His voice, inviting us to be reconciled. **If we persist in our obstinacy, Jesus Christ will be constrained to condemn us; but if we repent of the evil we have done, what fear need we have of Jesus Christ?**

Go then, O sinner, go to Mass, give thanks to this your Redeemer, who there comes down from Heaven to call you to Himself and to save you. Go quickly, then, obtain your pardon, and forget not the excessive love which Jesus Christ has borne you.

MASS: THE SACRIFICE OF THANKSGIVING

Men are grateful to their fellowmen, grateful even to animals. But to be thankful toward God, their greatest benefactor, seems unaccountably to have fallen out of most men's practical religion altogether.

This sin of ingratitude is an enemy of the soul that entertains it in every way, depriving it of the good it has acquired, and preventing the acquisition of more. We do not thank God enough for His benefits. There are few who thank Him as they ought to for His favors. The ungrateful man is a vessel of ignominy into which God pours the gall of His anger; while the grateful man is a vessel of election and honor, into which He continually pours the precious waters of His grace, making him a great instrument of His glory.

God has bestowed great blessings upon us, and given Himself entirely to us when He gave the principal blessings which His almighty arm has created; namely, corporeal things for our use; the angels to guard us; grace to merit Heaven; Jesus Christ for our master; His life for our example, His Body for our ransom, His soul for our price; His sacred Flesh for our food; His Blood for our drink; in fine, when He lavished upon us all the riches of His love in the Eucharist, so that He who knows everything knows of nothing better and has nothing greater to give.

What enhances all the gifts and blessings of God in greatness and value is the affection with which He bestows them. The love and affection with which He bestows His

gifts is an eternal love, a gratuitous love, without any merit on our part, or advantage to Himself.

His eternal knowledge of the future could see in us only sin and nothingness, calculated to rouse His anger rather than gain His love; nevertheless this God, who has need of no one has enriched man with His benefits without any merit on his part, without any profit to Himself, even though he foresaw the many great faults than man would commit.

Finally, God has heaped upon us all His gifts and favors with an infinite love, with the same love, in its nature, with which He loves Himself, with which He loves Jesus Christ and His saints.

The spirit of thanksgiving has been in all ages the characteristic of the Saints. Thanksgiving has always been their favorite prayer. They learned this spirit from Our Lord Jesus Christ, who always thanked His Father in the beginning of His prayers, and when about to operate any miracle.

The ancient Christians saluted each other with these words: "Thanks be to God." Those very words were always in the mouth and heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary. *Saint Boniface*, in the midst of horrible torments, exclaimed: **"Jesus Christ, Son of God, I thank Thee."** There is nothing more holy than a tongue which thanks God in adversity. **To say but once. "thanks be to God" in adversity or illness is better than to say it several thousand times in prosperity.**

What can we do to repay God for all that He has done for us? What shall we offer to God in thanksgiving for all His gifts?

It is God Himself who, in His mercy, has given the devout soul a means of paying off this immense debt of gratitude. This means is the Holy Mass. The Mass is a EUCHARISTIC Sacrifice, that is to say, a sacrifice of thanksgiving. Jesus Christ has left us Himself to be offered in the Mass, by way of thanksgiving, to His heavenly Father. When the priest offers to God the sublimest act of homage possible, holding the Body and Blood of the Redeemer above the altar, suspended between Heaven and earth, he presents the great thanksgiving as the source and object of all honor and glory, saying: **"To Thee, O God, the Father Omnipotent, together with the Holy Ghost, through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ, is all honor and glory"** (Cannon of Mass), in which words the Church declares that she is incapable of offering up her thanks to God in any other way than by giving Him back who became the Victim for the world.

Can we ever sufficiently bless God for having given us so easy a means of thanking Him worthily?

Gratitude must animate our hearts; they should be apparent from the devotion and reverence with which we hear Mass, as well as from the eagerness with which we run to hear it, not only on days of obligation, but also on every other day,

if possible.

Happy he who faithfully discharges his duty of thanksgiving by hearing Mass every day, or, if lawfully prevented, offers up to God, as far as he can, all the Masses of the day, thus to thank the Lord for the innumerable graces he has received from Him. This spirit of gratitude is the key to the choicest gifts of the Almighty. Speak to God in thanksgiving, and you will receive grace more abundantly.

Let us endeavor by meditation and prayer to understand the value of the treasure we possess in the Holy Mass. We will feel that no preparation could equal that involved in the loss of a Mass, and think little indeed of any sacrifice by which we can purchase the happiness of assisting at one.

THE HOLY MASS - THE GREATEST OF PRAYERS

A Book Review of *"The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass"* by
Father Michael Müller, C.S.S.R. by Toni Blackman.

PART III

NOTE from Publisher: See page 1 for commentary from
Toni about how she came to write this review.

We hope that you have taken the time to read Part I and Part II printed in *October* and *November 1993*. This last part continues the beautiful inspired writings of **Father Müller**. We hope that you have touched on the magnificence of the Holy Mass in a new way and will not hesitate to order this book from the **PFMC** or your local Christian religious goods store. Use it constantly for reference and to evangelize your FAITH to your family and friends.

MASS: THE SACRIFICE OF IMPETRATION

Whoever wishes to go to Heaven must follow the path that leads to Heaven. What is the path that leads to Heaven? -- the path of PENANCE. This path is beset by three powerful enemies: the world, the flesh and the devil, who are actively employed every instant of our life in laying snares for the destruction of the soul.

Saint Peter says that **"the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."** (1 Peter 5:8) The devil tempts all men, especially the just, and endeavors to make them lose the grace of God. He tempts numberless souls to indifference toward God and their own salvation; he deceives many by representing to them in glowing colors the false, degrading pleasures of this world; he tempts many even to conceal their sins in Confession, and to receive Holy Communion unworthily; in a word, the devil leaves nothing untried which may cause the just to fall into sin. He finds the weak point of every

man, and knows that this weak point is for many a strong inclination to the vice of impurity. There are more souls condemned to Hell on account of this sin alone, than on account of any other which men commit.

The just must not only wage war against the devil, they must also fight against the seductive examples of the world. One unsound apple is sufficient to infect all the others near it. In like manner, one corrupt person can ruin all those with whom he associates.

There is still another truth to be considered here. Saint Paul the Apostle says: **"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." (2 Timothy 3:12).** All those who endeavor to serve Our Lord Jesus Christ faithfully, and to persevere in His service, will have to suffer, in some way or other, from their fellowmen. Sometimes it will be from bad comrades, whose company they have given up; they are blamed, rashly judged and condemned; and what is the most painful of all, God, to try their patience and charity, often permits them to suffer most from those very persons from whom they should naturally expect sympathy and consolation. Very small, indeed, is the number of those who, under such severe trials, remain faithful to God.

The just must fight not only against the devil and the world, but also against their own corrupt nature.

Ever since the fall of our first parents, we are all naturally inclined to evil. Everyone has from his childhood experienced this evil inclination. We naturally feel more inclined to anger than to meekness, to disobedience than to submission; we are more prone to hatred than to love; more inclined to gratify the evil desires of our heart than to practice the holy virtue of purity; we prefer our own ease to visiting Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, or receiving Him in Holy Communion. We are naturally indifferent toward God and His holy religion.

Who will be able to conquer these three enemies of our salvation? It is only by the constant efficacious grace and assistance of God that we can overcome them to the end of our life. But how are we to obtain this assistance? By prayer. Happily for us, our dear Saviour came, and by His tears, His labors and sufferings, by His Blood and death upon the Cross, but especially by His prayers, He obtained for us from His heavenly Father the right to every grace and gift of the Lord.

Prayer was His chief occupation from the moment of His Incarnation until that of His death. Thirty years of His life were consecrated to this holy exercise, and three years and a half only to the instruction of the people, and even of this short period of three years He spent the greater part in prayer. **"and it came to pass that he went out into a mountain to pray and he passed the whole night in the prayer of God." (Luke 6:12)** We may say that prayer was His life, and His life a continual prayer. He had no sooner become man that He

prayed, and He died with prayer on His lips. He perfectly accomplished that which He inculcates to His disciples, that we must always pray, to overcome our enemies and to sanctify our lives.

And for whom did He pray? He prayed for all men in general; but He prayed especially for those who would believe in Him, and follow Him faithfully. **"I pray for them (His disciples); I pray not for the world, but for them whom thou hast given me; that they may be one, as we also are one." (John 17:9).**

What does He demand for them? The same riches, pleasures and glory that He has chosen for Himself. His glory is to be the Son of God: He desires that His Father should cherish them as His brethren. He is the Holy of Holies: He would have them to be holy as He is holy. He is from eternity in the bosom of God; He will have them to dwell there, tasting with Him the delights of beatitude for eternity. He is one with the Father in essence and in love: **He desires that they should be one with Him, and one among themselves.**

Jesus knew that men could not advance in this world without His powerful intercession, without His continual prayer. He knew that the prayers of men were not powerful enough to obtain salvation unless they were supported by, and united to His. So, in the excess of His love He chose to stay with us by means of the Holy Mass, to be in this Holy Sacrifice our perpetual Advocate with His Father. In Mass He renews all the prayers which He addressed to His Father in our behalf for the space of thirty-three years and a half, and offers them to Him to obtain for us the abundance of spiritual and temporal blessings. It is for this reason that Mass is also called a **SACRIFICE OF IMPETRATION.**

The Lamb of God - Our Lord Jesus Christ, comes down from Heaven to offer Himself up again for each one present. When the words of Consecration are pronounced, Jesus Christ, the King of glory, is really and truly present upon the altar as a Victim of impetration.

In the Old Law, the High Priest entered once a year into the Holy of Holies. His sacred place was separated from the rest of the temple by a veil; and while the High Priest prayed unseen behind the veil, the people prayed in silence without. Thus, too, it is in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The priest raises the Sacred Host on high; we see the white appearance of bread; **that is the white veil which hides from our gaze the God of all holiness.** Behind that veil Our Lord Jesus Christ intercedes with His Eternal Father in our behalf. It is a most solemn moment. Let no sound be heard to break its stillness. Even the priest dares not raise his voice; he prays in silence. The Lord is present. He prays for us. It is a moment rich in untold blessings.

In order to understand well how powerful a means Mass is of obtaining from God every blessing possible, one need only consider the qualities which accompany the prayer of

Jesus at Mass. Holy Scripture tells us that prayer to be pleasing to the Almighty must be humble. **"The prayer of the humble and the meek hath always pleased thee." (Jdth. 9:16).**

When our dear Saviour is lying upon our altars as our Victim He offers to His Father in Heaven all the humiliation He went through during His lifetime on earth, together with those He has been submitting to in the Blessed Sacrament.

The Mass contains a spectacle that gives delight to angels; **it is here that they behold the elevation of the innocent Lamb of God, praying to His Father with such deep humility as to obtain all.**

A prayer which is also infallibly heard by The Almighty is that which is accompanied with forgiveness of injuries, and great charity for our enemies.

To pray for those who wish us evil is an extremely difficult act, and one full of the most heroic charity. **"It is an act free from self-love and self-interest, which is not only counseled but even commanded by the Lord. (Matt. 5:44).** The insults, calumnies and persecutions of our enemies relate directly to our own person; wherefore, if we forgive, nay, even beg of God also to forgive, them, we give up our claim to our right and honor, thus raising ourselves to the great dignity of true children of God, nay, even to an unspeakable sublime resemblance to His divinity, according to what Jesus says: If you pray for those who hate you, calumniate, and persecute you, **"you will be children of your Father who is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise upon the good and bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust." (Matt. 5:45).** By imitating God's goodness in a point most averse to our nature, we give Him the greatest glory.

Let us be sure that the greater injuries we forgive for God's sake, the greater graces we shall receive in answer to our prayer.

Now, no saint ever forgave more and greater injuries than our Divine Saviour did; no saint ever forgave his enemies with so much charity and generosity, ever prayed for his persecutors with so much fervor as Our Lord did. **"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Mark 15:35).** Let us rest assured that Jesus Christ said this prayer not only when hanging on the Cross, but every moment of His life. He had come down from Heaven to be our Saviour, therefore it was His greatest desire that His Father should forgive us and grant us every grace and blessing.

Let us remember that at Mass Jesus still prays for us with the same intensity of fervor and charity, with the same unspeakable desire to help and assist us in all our necessities. What He is most desirous to obtain for us is a complete forgiveness of our sins, that is to say, not only the forgiveness of eternal punishment, but also the full

remission of all temporal punishments which often remain due to the divine Justice after the remission of the eternal punishment.

In order to secure not only the pardon of all our past sins, but also the graces which may be withheld in punishment of them, and particularly the graces without which we should be lost, we must pray fervently and frequently for the complete and entire remission of all our sins, and of all the penalties due to them.

Nowhere shall we obtain sooner the full remission of these temporal punishments than during the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; for it is there that our divine Saviour Himself offers up His prayer for this very great favor.

Let us imitate the Saints in their great desire to render to God a full satisfaction for their sins, and to obtain as soon as possible, a complete remission of all their temporal punishments, in order to be sure that God, in punishment for their sins, would not withhold from them those efficacious graces which were necessary for them to overcome great temptations and withstand great trials, as well as to save them from being cast into the terrible flames of Purgatory after their death. In order to accomplish these two objects, the Saints were very careful to hear Mass as frequently as possible.

We are debtors to the Divine Justice, and we have a choice between two modes of payment. We may make satisfaction here below, of our own accord, and set about obtaining a full remission of all our indebtedness to God by assisting at Mass or we may wait till God shall take satisfaction of us hereafter in Purgatory.

Saint Margaret of Cortona, reflecting on her many grievous sins and wishing to atone for them all as far as possible, went to her confessor to ask him what was the best way for her to make satisfaction to God for all her sins. He told her to **"hear as many Masses as she could."** From that time forward she was very careful not to miss a single opportunity of hearing Mass.

With what confidence ought we not to assist at the Mass, knowing as we do that the same Jesus who prayed and wept so much for us on earth, continues to do the same at this Holy Sacrifice? **If our eyes are dry, if we cannot pray with tears, we should not feel discouraged; we have the tears and prayers of our dear Saviour to offer to our heavenly Father - prayers and tears far more powerful than the prayers and tears of all the saints united.** What grace and blessing is there that these prayers and tears will not obtain for us? What evils shall we not be delivered by the prayers and tears of Jesus at Mass, if we assist at it in the proper spirit! It would take whole volumes to relate all the favors that have been granted by means of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The great power of Mass as a sacrifice of impetration appears also from the fact that a prayer united with good

works is most powerful with the Almighty. **"Prayer is good, with fasting and alms," (Tob. 12:8) "Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harborless into thy house; when thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh." (Is. 58:7). "then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall hear; thou shalt cry, and he shall say: 'Here I am'." (Is. 58:9).**

What shall be said of the power of the intercession of Jesus Christ with His Father? The least act which He performed was of greater merit and dignity and gave greater pleasure and honor to His Father than the good works of all the saints together with those of the Blessed Mother of God herself. All the good works of Jesus are of an infinite value and dignity, and when He prays to His Father for us at Mass, it is not mere prayers that He offers in our behalf, but, in addition, all He has done for thirty-three years and a half to please Him. This is the precise reason why Mass is so powerful a sacrifice of impetration, why it can obtain for us every favor possible.

Let us always remember that in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass the Son of God not only worships His Father for us, but that He also prays for us, asks pardon and every kind of blessing for us, not in order to exempt us from worshipping, but in order to HELP us to worship God PROPERLY and to pray to Him in a perfect manner.

On the night before His death Our Blessed Redeemer went with His Apostles to the Garden of Gethsemane. He exhorted them to watch and pray, desiring that they should unite their prayers with His. He went from them about a stone's throw and began to pray with great fervor.

It is thus that Our Lord acts during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; He withdraws a short distance from us in order to make intercession for us. He prays for us on the altar, and wishes us to kneel around Him in church, there to unite with His our feeble prayers. **What we ask for in broken accents, He puts into glowing words, and as our prayers pass through His Sacred Heart, as they ascend to Heaven from His divine lips, they are transformed, they become most acceptable in the sight of God, all-powerful, all-divine.** Unite your prayers with those of Jesus at Mass and they go up to His Father as the prayers of His well-beloved Son.

In the Mass Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is ever ready to carry up our desires to the throne of His Father. Let us, therefore, in all confidence, charge Him with our petitions, and rest assured that, for His sake, they will be granted. Let our lips move in silence after Consecration. Let us pray to Jesus according to the wants of our hearts, pouring out before Him our joys and sorrow, our hopes and fears.

Catholics go to church to take part in the most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass - not to join in the prayers of a MAN, but in the prayers of Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Who

is really present on our altars. They are not bound by any set form of prayer; they can pour out their souls before God according to the various wants and desires of their hearts. There is around the altar the most complete liberty, the greatest variety, combined with the most perfect unity.

Let then the little children, let the young and innocent go to Mass; let them unite their joyous hearts with the heart of the Infant Jesus, who is born again spiritually every day upon our altars. Let also the old and the weary go; let them pour out their sorrows before the face of God, and Jesus, "who hath borne our sorrows," will comfort and console them.

Let those who are weak and sorely tempted go to Mass: Jesus will encourage and strengthen them by His heavenly grace. Let those who have sinned go to Mass, and weep, and mingle their tears with the tears which Jesus shed for them and for us all on the hard wood of the Cross. Let those who are poor and sick and heart-broken go to Mass, and lay their wants before the compassionate heart of Jesus; He who "filleth the hungry with good things" will not suffer them to go away empty-handed.

Let the rich and prosperous also go to Mass, and give thanks to God, who has blessed them with the good things of this world. Let all go: laying their fears, their joys, hopes, wishes, and tears - all at the feet of Jesus, and He will hear and sympathize with us. He will offer up our prayers and our tears in union with His own divine supplication. **Our prayers, united with the prayers of Jesus, will ascend before the throne of Heaven more powerful than the intercession of all the Saints.**

Go to Mass and go to pray. **When we come to Mass let us wrap our souls in a holy recollection of spirit.** Remember what is going on. Now pray; now praise; now ask forgiveness; now rest before God in quiet love. If ever there is a time when prayers are heard, it is during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Oh, what a gift is the Holy Mass!

MASS: HOPE OF THE DYING

The greatest gain in this life is to prepare ourselves every day for a happy death. Chief among the means which Our Lord has left us for this end is that of assisting, as often as possible, at the mystical renewal of His Death - the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. **"Offer up the sacrifice of justice and then trust in the Lord." (Ps. 4).** This sacrifice of justice is the Holy Mass; by this sacrifice the Lord is appeased, His justice is fully satisfied, and our sins and the punishments due to them are cancelled. At the hour of death, our sins may rise up before us in hideous forms to terrify and throw us into despair. But then our good works, especially all the Masses we have heard with devotion, will also present themselves in the form of beautiful virgins, to inspire us with the greatest confidence in the mercy of God. **Thus each Mass becomes a most powerful advocate in our favor. What**

consolation, what joy, what confidence will be ours at the hour of death, when we see ourselves surrounded by so many Masses as by so many faithful friends and most powerful advocates, pleading for our admission into Paradise. Blessed are those who persevere in their love and devotion for Mass until death.

Good Christians try to imitate holy priests in their devotion and love for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; they hear it as often as possible with the utmost fervor. Many have it offered up for a happy death.

Such is the joy which the Lord keeps in readiness for the hour of death of those who know how to value the gift of the Holy Mass, this inexhaustible treasure of grace. But in what does this joy which good Christians experience consist? In this: that they bear the pains of their last illness with great patience; that they experience an unlimited confidence in the mercy of God and in the merits of Jesus Christ; that they have no fear of death, but greet it joyfully as their best friend, opening for them the gates of Heaven; in a word, this joy consist in a perfect and most admirable resignation to the holy will of God, who calls them to a better life.

If God makes us of sickness or any other cause to take away my life, and if I conform my will to His, declaring myself perfectly resigned to the manner of my death, my will, being in conformity with that same will of God to which the martyr conforms in the hour of death, must earn a merit similar to that of the martyr. As man cannot make a greater sacrifice to God than that of his life, the will being perfectly resigned to make this sacrifice in the manner God requires and manifests by sickness or any other cause, it follow that such an act of the will is an act of perfect charity for God, which cancels all sins and punishments due to them.

A day will come when a single quarter of an hour spent in hearing Mass will appear of more worth to us than all the riches of the world. Let us ever remember that we are advancing rapidly toward eternity, that the time of Mass is the best to prepare for it, and that eternity will not be too long for our regrets at the loss of one single Mass.

MASS: PROPITIATORY FOR THE DEAD

No one is more deserving of Christian charity and sympathy than the poor souls in Purgatory. They are REALLY POOR SOULS. No one is sooner forgotten than they. No sooner has the soul departed this life than it beholds God, and from this sight it receives at once so deep and vivid a knowledge of God and all His infinite perfections; it feels so violently drawn toward God that it finds it altogether impossible to wish, to seek and to love anything but God. It experiences at once an insatiable hunger and thirst after God. But at the very moment when the souls is endeavoring to unite itself to God, it is repulsed

by Him and sent to Purgatory to cleanse itself from the sins not cancelled in this life. In this banishment from the sight of God, the soul finds the bitterness of its torments. For such is the infinite beauty of God that to have seen him for a single instant, and in that same moment to be rejected from his presence, is to experience at once the torment of Hell. **It is principally for this reason that the souls in Purgatory are called "poor souls," they being, as they are, in the most dreadful state of poverty - that of the privation of the beatific vision of God.**

Another reason why these holy prisoners and debtors to the diving justice are really poor is because they are not able to assist themselves in the least. They know that by all their sufferings they can gain no new merit, no higher glory and happiness in Heaven; they know that it is through their own fault they are condemned to this state of suffering; they see clearly how many prayers, opportunities of receiving the Sacraments, and profiting by the means of grace within their reach they have neglected through mere caprice, carelessness and indolence. They see their ingratitude toward God; and the deep wounds they have made in the Sacred Heart of Jesus; their extreme grief and sorrow - that of knowing they have placed themselves willfully in this state of the most cruel banishment.

We are the only ones who have it in our power to assist them in their sufferings. We should be good angels to the poor souls in Purgatory and free them from their painful captivity. The most efficacious of all means to release them is undoubtedly the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. *Saint Jerome says that by every Mass, not one only, but several souls are delivered from Purgatory.*

There is no time better to treat or converse with Almighty God than that of the Divine Sacrifice; that the angels profit by this time as the most favorable to beg graces for men and the souls in Purgatory. So great is the efficacy of this Sacrifice to obtain relief for the souls in Purgatory, that the application of all the good works which have been performed from the beginning of the world would not afford so much assistance to one of these souls as is imparted by single Mass. It is during Mass and after Communion that we must remember these poor souls. Let some fervent prayers for their relief be part of our worship and thanksgiving. Our prayers for these souls must be fervent, as otherwise they will not benefit them very much. Although the souls of the departed are much benefited by these vigils and other prayers, nevertheless a few words said with AFFECTION and DEVOTION are of far more value to them. A single word said with fervor and devotion for the souls of the departed is of far greater efficacy than many vigils and prayers coldly offered and negligently performed. **"It is, therefore, a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins." (2 Mach. 12:46)**

MASS: THE JOY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

After God we are most indebted to the Blessed Virgin for the coming of the holy Redeemer. At the foot of the Cross, she stood to behold the eyes she had been the first to see opening to the light at birth, closing in death; to hear His last cry as she had soothed His first; to offer to the Eternal Father all His prayers, labors, sufferings, life and death of the Redemption of mankind. As the Son of God became man only at the consent of Mary, so He died only after His Mother had given her consent to His death. As then, after God, it is to the Blessed Virgin that we are indebted for our holy Redeemer, so is it to her that we owe the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, because it is her divine Son who offers Himself to His Father for our sins.

After Jesus Christ, no one ever suffered more for the salvation of mankind than did His Blessed Mother, so no one ever more ardently desired to see the fruits of His life and death applied to those who were redeemed than she. For this reason we piously believe that it was at her request the Apostles said the first Mass soon after having received the Holy Ghost. Why is it that the Mother of God is so desirous of, and delights so much in seeing the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered? It is because she desires so much to see God the Father honored and worshipped in a manner worthy of His infinite greatness; because she wishes to see men reconciled with Him; because she wishes to obtain for us all the graces necessary for our salvation and sanctification; because she wishes that fitting thanks should be offered to Him for all the blessings and favors He has in an especial manner bestowed upon her and the saints and the whole human race. She understands that it is by the unbloody Sacrifice of the Mass that all these objects are accomplished. The Blessed Virgin knows that the time of Mass, during which the Sacrifice of the Cross is renewed, is for her the **The PILGRIM**

time most favorable for obtaining every kind of blessing for men, but especially for her servants. **Let us rest assured that we can never honor and praise her better, nor give her greater joy, than by having the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered up in her honor.**

Thank you **Toni** for this wonderful work of love for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. **Father Bill McCarthy, M.Ss.A.**, of **My Father's House** in Moodus, CT so enjoyed this wonderful work that he asked for copies for distribution. He was originally given copies of what the work looked like in the **PFMC NEWS** but now is being given this work produced so that it can be viewed in WORD and on the **Internet**.

MARIAN PILGRIMAGE PRESENTATIONS

Keith and **Kathleen** are always willing to schedule presentations to prayer group, **Altar Rosary Society, Legion of Mary** or other parish group meetings. The experiences and continuation of ministry for **Our Lady** in this time of graces and manifestation of Our Lord's Mercy are shared through videotape, witness and/or slide presentations followed by a question and answer session.

There is no charge. Free will offerings are accepted especially for books, tapes and religious articles which are made available at the presentation sites just like they are at the **PFMC** which operates like a church book rack.

INTERNET

Surf for the **PFMC** presence on the Internet at either <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Woods/6240> or <http://www.PFMCkmw.org> with both sites still very much under construction.

Page 14

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PRIESTS! Please note that **HOMILY** ideas have come from priests reading articles in "The PILGRIM!"