St. Vincent de Paul Parish

The Mass
The Mass: What It Isn't

The Mass or Liturgy of the Eucharist is NOT the remembrance of something ancient, which time has relegated to a past left behind forever.
The Mass: What It Isn't

The Mass is NOT just a collection of esthetically pleasing rites, but without life and incapable of communicating salvation.
The Mass: What It Isn't

The Mass is NOT a mere assembly of people who share a belief and form a community.
The Mass: What It Is

† The Eucharistic Liturgy is the mystery of our salvation made present in a sacramental way.
† In the Liturgy we enter into a true relationship with the mystery of our salvation, with Christ the Lord, the Savior, Who communicates His very own life to us – His grace.
The Mass: What It Is

† In the Liturgy the past is rendered present, and manifests the beauty of the Living God and His love for us

† It is the means by which an encounter with the Lord takes place in the “today” of our life and history
The Mass as Eucharist

† Eucharist has its roots in the ancient Greek word εὐχαριστία (eukharistía), meaning gratitude or thanksgiving

† We should indeed be thankful since the Eucharist is Jesus’ continual gift of Himself to His Church, the People of God

Jesus promised:
† “I will not leave you orphans...” [See Jn 14: 18-20]
† “I am the living bread...” [See Jn 6: 51,54-58]
† “I am with you always...” [See Mt 28: 19-20]
We Catholics, then, are truly a Eucharistic People.

† Not only are we the Body of Christ, but we also share in and receive the Body of Christ in the Celebration of the Eucharist and the reception of Holy Communion

† What a marvelous gift the Lord has given us!
A Eucharistic People

Not surprisingly, the fathers of the Second Vatican Council declared the Eucharist to be the “source and summit of the Christian life”
The Mass: Scriptural Roots

The Mass has deep Scriptural roots: its institution is described in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, and in Paul’s 1st Letter to the Corinthians

† Mt 26: 26-28
† Lk 22:14-20
† Mk 14:22-24
† 1 Cor 11:23-26
The Mass: Scriptural Roots

† The Church has always taught that Jesus instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper with His Apostles: the first Mass

† Jesus commanded His Apostles to “do this in memory of me”

† Jesus was clear about what was happening: “This is my Body” and “This is the chalice of my Blood.” (See 1 Cor 11:23-29)
The doctrine of Christ’s “Real Presence” in the Eucharist has always been taught by the Church.

Jesus Christ is truly present in the Eucharist -- Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity -- under the appearances of bread and wine.

St. Paul reminds us of this when he writes:

“Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the Body and Blood of the Lord” [1 Cor 11:27].
Real Presence: Bread of Life

✝ In John’s Gospel, Jesus’ confirms His Real Presence [See Jn 6:25-71]

✝ In His “Bread of Life Discourse” Jesus pulls no punches and repeatedly calls for us to “eat my flesh” and “drink my blood”

“Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you” [Jn 6:53].
Scriptural Roots

In the first two centuries of Christianity the Mass contained the same two-part formula we use today.
Scriptural Roots

The Readings (the Word of God in Scripture) were followed by the Eucharist (the Word of God Incarnate). Justin Martyr shows us this in 155 AD.
Scriptural Roots

Early in Acts, the Mass is described:
“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers” [Acts 2:42].

Later Luke describes a Mass with teachings and readings until midnight, followed by the breaking of the bread [Acts 20:7-12].
The Mass: Two Major Parts

1. Liturgy of the Word.

Four Bible readings: from the Old & New Testaments, Psalms, and Gospels; and a homily on those readings. Participating at Mass every day, we get a lot of Scripture.

2. Liturgy of the Eucharist.

Scripture, prayer, praise & worship; then the Lord Himself appears and we come forward to meet Him and accept Him. Talk about a "Personal Relationship" with Jesus!
The Mass: Four Actions

Consider these 4 actions:

**Come (Introductory Rites).** We come together as one Body, gathering before our Lord.

**Listen (Liturgy of the Word).** We listen to Scripture, the Word of our Lord and a Homily applying what we heard; profess our faith.

**Do (Liturgy of the Eucharist).** We pray in thanksgiving and participate in the Eucharist, becoming One with Him.

**Go (Concluding Rites).** We are sent out to take Jesus Christ and the Good News to all the world.
Liturgical Seasons

The parts of the Mass – the Scriptural readings and many of the prayers – vary based on the liturgical year, which is divided up into different “seasons.”
# The Mass: Liturgical Year

## Seasons of the Liturgical Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advent</td>
<td>4th Sunday before Christmas to Christmas Eve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>to the Baptism of the Lord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary Time</td>
<td>to Ash Wednesday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lent</td>
<td>to Mass on Holy Thursday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triduum</td>
<td>Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>to Pentecost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinary Time</td>
<td>to 1st Sunday of Advent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Mass begins with the procession to the altar
The people stand while they join with the choir and sing an entrance hymn
The preparation has begun
The Mass: Introductory Rites

† Deacon places the Book of the Gospel on the altar. Priest and deacon then bow to the altar

† Priest and deacon then reverence the altar with a kiss, acknowledging Christ’s presence in this holy place
The Mass: Introductory Rites

† The presider begins, and the people join him, by making the Sign of the Cross, asking God to be in their minds, hearts and actions

† Ancient practice from the earliest days of Christianity

---

The Sign of the Cross

† In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
The Mass: Introductory Rites

† The priest then greets the congregation, announcing the presence of the Lord to the assembled community.

† The Penitential Rite. After the Greeting, all are asked to prepare themselves by calling to mind their sins and asking for God's forgiveness, mercy, and strength. This is an act of confession (Didache).

† The priest then offers an absolution, in which he asks for forgiveness of the sins of all present.
On Sundays (outside Advent & Lent) and on Feasts and Solemnities we sing the Gloria, an ancient hymn of praise, glorifying God. The text originates from the Christmas narrative in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 2:14).

The people are then called to pray, and after a moment's silence the celebrant prays the Collect which varies throughout the liturgical year.
The Liturgy of the Word

After the Collect, the people sit and prepare to listen to the Word of God. Scripture belongs and lives in the Mass, for “Faith comes from what is heard…” [Rom 10:17].
The Liturgy of the Word

* The First Reading from Old Testament or Acts at Eastertide

* It is followed by the singing of a Psalm or Canticle, usually led by a cantor

* The Second Reading is from the letters of the New Testament
The Liturgy of the Word

- The Lectionary is the book of readings, and contains selections from the Bible according to the Liturgical Year.

- The Sunday selections cover a three-year cycle with the first reading related to the day’s Gospel passage.

- There is a two-year cycle for the weekday readings.
The Liturgy of the Word

† All stand while the Gospel Acclamation (alleluia) is sung

† The deacon (or if no deacon, the priest) proclaims the Gospel

† After reading the Gospel he kisses the Book of the Gospels and proclaims, “The Gospel of the Lord”

† The community responds, “Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ”
The Sunday Gospels follow a three year cycle: (A) Matthew, (B) Mark, and (C) Luke

Excerpts from the Gospel of John are also read, especially during Lent, Holy Week, and the Easter Season
The Liturgy of the Word

After the Gospel is proclaimed, the congregation sits for the homily, preached by a bishop, priest or deacon.

What exactly is the Homily? The Homily is part of the Liturgy and should be an exposition of some aspect of the readings from Sacred Scripture or of another text from the Mass of the day. It should take into account both the mystery being celebrated and the particular needs of the listeners.
The Liturgy of the Word

† All then stand and together make a Profession of Faith by reciting the ancient Nicene Creed (325 A.D.) or the Apostles’ Creed. Here we affirm our common beliefs as Catholic Christians calling to mind and reciting the mysteries of the faith.

† The Creed is professed by priest and people on Sundays and solemnities.

Note: at the words “and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man” all make a profound bow (genuflect at Christmas & Annunciation).
The Liturgy of the Word

- The Creed is followed by the Prayer of the Faithful (or Universal Prayer), during which we offer prayers for the church, the world, the local community, the sick, the deceased, and other needs.

- The people respond to each intention by asking God to hear and grant their requests.
The Liturgy of the Eucharist

† The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins with the Presentation of the Gifts (what was once called the Offertory)

† The congregation sits and sings a hymn while the gifts of bread and wine are carried in procession to the altar, usually by one or more of the faithful

† The celebrant then offers the bread and wine and thanks God for them

With these gifts we also offer our lives. As God transforms bread and wine into his Body and Blood, so will He transform us.
The Liturgy of the Eucharist

† After blessing the bread and wine, the celebrant washes his hands.

† Inviting the people to pray, he prays over the gifts asking that they be made holy and acceptable in the eyes of God.

The “washing of Hands” or lavabo is an expression of the desire for inward purification. The priest washes his hands in symbolic cleansing to prepare himself just as the gifts have been prepared as an offering to the Lord.
Then...the Eucharistic Prayer, a prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification, the center and high point of the Celebration of the Eucharist.

There are several Eucharistic Prayers, selected based on the solemnity of the occasion. For example, at daily Mass the priest might select Eucharistic Prayer #2, while on a major solemnity he might select #1. There are also special Eucharistic Prayers for funeral Masses, children’s Masses and other occasions.
The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Eucharistic Prayer begins with the Preface, a prayer of thanksgiving for the whole work of salvation.

The Preface varies with the liturgical season and occasion.

The Preface concludes with an acclamation sung by the people, recalling the praise of the heavenly host:

“Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of Hosts...” [Is 6:2–3; Rev 4:8]
The Liturgy of the Eucharist

The main body of the Eucharistic Prayer:

† **Epiclesis.** The Church implores the power of the Holy Spirit that the gifts be consecrated and the Communion be for the salvation of those who partake of it

† **Consecration.** The prayer and blessing during which the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ

† **Anamnesis.** The Church, fulfilling the command of Jesus through the Apostles, keep the memorial of Christ, recalling His Passion, Resurrection and Ascension

† **Memorial Acclamation.** Priest declares the mystery of faith; the congregation responds
The Liturgy of the Eucharist

† "Take this, all of you, and eat of it, for this is my Body, which will be given up for you."

† "Take this, all of you, and drink from it, for this is the chalice of my Blood, the Blood of the new and eternal covenant, which will be poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in memory of me."
The Liturgy of the Eucharist

**Offering.** Church offers in the Holy Spirit the spotless Victim to the Father, with the intention that the faithful also offer themselves, so that God may be all in all.

**Intercessions.** A series of prayers expressing that the Eucharist is celebrated in communion with the entire Church, of heaven and earth, living and dead, the entire Body of Christ.

**Final Doxology.** Here the glorification of God is expressed and then confirmed and concluded by the people’s acclamation: Amen. By this Great Amen the people express their agreement with all that has been said and done in the Eucharistic prayer.
The Liturgy of the Eucharist

† The Communion Rite begins after the Eucharistic Prayer

† All stand in preparation for communion, which begins with the entire congregation praying the Our Father, followed by the Sign of Peace. Here we make peace with each other before approaching the altar.

The deacon invites the congregation to offer each other a sign of peace.
The Liturgy of the Eucharist

† The celebrant and people then pray the Lamb of God (Agnus Dei), in which we ask for mercy and peace.

† Then the celebrant genuflects, raises the Host and Chalice, and says: “Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.”

† All reply: “Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word, and my soul shall be healed.”
In the reception of Holy Communion we believe we are receiving the Lord Himself, present with us in the bread and wine which has become His Body and Blood.

We enter a deep and intimate "Communion" with Him, who gave his life for us, and with each other.

In answering "Amen" we are also saying our "Yes" to God and His real presence in the Eucharist.
The Mass: Concluding Rite

† After communion, and a period of reflection, all rise for the Prayer After Communion and Final Blessing by the celebrant.

† On solemn occasions, during certain seasons, or when a Bishop celebrates, a longer “Solemn Blessing” is given.
The Mass: Concluding Rite

† Following the blessing is the dismissal

† Note that the word "Mass" (Missa) comes from the Latin for dismissal (Missio), and stresses the importance of being sent out to live in communion with God and all people

† We are sent out to love and to serve the Lord and to live what we have celebrated

If a deacon is present, he will give the dismissal: "Go in peace..."
Nave: the central part of the church that accommodates most of the congregation.
Sacred Spaces

Sanctuary: the sacred space in which the altar is located. The chairs of the priest and deacon(s) are also in the sanctuary.
Altar: the table in the sanctuary where the Liturgy of the Eucharist takes place. Note white altar cloth and two candles, always lit during liturgies.
Sacred Furnishings

Tabernacle: Repository for the Blessed Sacrament. It is a locked cabinet in which the consecrated hosts are kept, usually in one or more ciboria. It also holds the luna and host for the monstrance used during adoration and benediction. Precious Blood is never kept but always consumed immediately after Communion.
Sacred Furnishings

Ambo: the podium in the sanctuary from which the Word of God is read and preached.
Sacred Furnishings

Credence Tables: Tables in the sanctuary on which liturgical items are kept for use during Mass.
Sacred Furnishings

Gift Table: A table in the nave from which the gifts (bread and wine) are taken to the sanctuary by parishioners at the presentation of the gifts.
Sacred Furnishings

Sanctuary Lamp: the lamp (red) is lit when the Blessed Sacrament is present in the Tabernacle.

Baptismal Font: the font in the narthex where baptisms are celebrated.
Sacred Furnishings

Stations of the Cross: The 14 Stations (mosaics) are mounted on the left and right walls of the nave.
Statues: Among the statues in the church are those of the Blessed Mother, St. Joseph and St. Vincent de Paul.
Vesting Sacristy: room off the narthex in which vestments and liturgical books are kept. It is the room where the priest and deacon vest prior to Mass.
Working Sacristy: room immediately off the sanctuary in which sacred vessels, and most other liturgical items are kept. Maintained by the sacristans.
Roman Missal: book containing the prayers for Mass. Used by the priest throughout the Mass.

Lectionary: book containing the readings for Mass; used by the assigned reader(s).

**Chalice:** The large cup used by the priest at Mass to hold the wine that becomes the blood of Christ. Some can be very ornate.

**Cups:** Used by deacon and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion to give the Blood of Christ to the faithful.
**Liturgical Vessels & Objects**

**Ciborium**: cup- or bowl-like vessel, with a lid; holds the hosts used for communion; also used to reserve the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle.

**Pyx**: Small case, varying in size to several inches in diameter, used by ministers of Holy Communion to carry consecrated hosts to those who are sick or unable to attend Mass.
Liturgical Vessels & Objects

Water Cruet, Finger Bowl, Towel: Used to wash the priest’s hands during the preparation of the gifts.

Corporal: white linen cloth on which are placed the vessels containing the bread and wine during Mass. Also used at Adoration and Benediction.

Purificator: white cloth used to cleanse the sacred vessels.
Monstrance: This is a large, ornate vessel used to hold and expose the Blessed Sacrament for Adoration, Benediction and solemn Eucharistic processions.

Luna. A thin, circular receptacle, having a glass face that holds the Consecrated Host used for Adoration and Benediction. It usually slides into the monstrance on a track.
Liturgical Vessels & Objects

Thurible (censer) and Incense Boat. Vessel (thurible) suspended by chains, used for burning incense during certain Masses, Benediction, processions, and other liturgies. The incense boat contains the incense and a small spoon.

Holy Water Vat & Aspergillum. The metal bucket (Vat) and the perforated metal ball or tube on a handle (Aspergillum) that holds the holy water used to sprinkle the faithful or articles to be blessed.
Liturgical Vessels & Objects

Paschal Candle: Blessed at the Easter Vigil and lit during the Easter season and on special occasions such as funerals and baptisms

Candle Lighter & Extinguisher: Used by the server to light and extinguish candles.

Holy Water Dispenser: Large tank in the narthex from which the faithful may obtain holy water.
Liturgical Vessels & Objects

**Oils:** Blessed by the bishop at the Chrism Mass during Holy Week, the three oils (Oil of the Sick, Oil of the Catechumens, and Sacred Chrism) are kept in an enclosed cabinet in the narthex.
**Vestments**

"The Divine religion has one dress in the service of sacred things, another in ordinary intercourse and life" – St. Jerome (c. 400 A.D.)

**Alb:** long, white robe worn by priest, deacon, server. It can be worn by all liturgical ministers.

**Cincture:** a long cord used for fastening some albs at the waist. It holds loose fitting albs in place and is used to adjust the proper length. The cincture comes in various liturgical colors.

We see vestments in Scripture (Ex 40:13-14, Lev 8:7-9) and also in history, from the Pre-Constantine Mass documented in 303 AD.
Amice: a rectangular cloth with two long ribbons attached to the top corners. The priest or deacon puts it over his shoulders, tucking it in around his neck to cover collar or other clothing. It is tied around the waist.

Stole: long cloth, colored to the season or feast, worn by priests and deacons. A priest (R) wears it around the neck, letting it hang down in the front. A deacon (L) wears it over his left shoulder and fastened at his right side, like a sash.
Vestments

**Chasuble:** priest’s sleeveless outer vestment, slipped over the head, hanging down from the shoulders; the proper Mass vestment of the priest. Its color varies according to the feast or liturgical season.

**Dalmatic:** loose-fitting robe with open sides and wide sleeves worn by the deacon. Its color varies according to the liturgical season or feast.
Vestments

Cope: cape-like vestment worn over the shoulders. It hangs to the ankles, is open at the front, and is clasped at the neck. Priest or deacon can wear it at Benediction and in certain processions. Of any color.

Humeral Veil: long, narrow, shawl-like vestment used at Benediction and in processions when the blessed sacrament is carried.