

SIC Parish feast day 2016

THIS year, our Parish Feast Day Triduum will be held from Thursday 28 July to Saturday 30 July with the theme "To be a "Worshipping, Welcoming & Caring Community".

As in previous years, the 3rd day, Saturday 30 July, would be a combined bilingual Mass at 6pm.

The Mass times for Thursday & Friday would be at 8pm.



Speaker:

Fr. Michael Raymond
OFM, Cap from the Order
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Finding fulfilment in Catholic daily prayers

CAN Catholic daily prayers change your life? Absolutely! You can develop a fuller relationship with God and live a better life through prayer. You have a better chance at finding fulfilment (to say nothing of salvation!) from daily prayers than from the many distractions bombarding us these days.

Developing a good prayer life can really change you for the better. Praying can become a most satisfying routine in many ways. It might not be an easy habit to start at first, but it's definitely one you won't want to break. Catholic daily prayers can give you a sense of peace and purpose.

Prayer has often been called "the raising up of the mind and heart to God". We engage in a literally divine conversation with Him. You get a wonderful opportunity from prayer to strengthen and deepen your relationship with our Creator and with your fellow human beings by praying for their needs as well as your own.



WHAT WE PRAY

There are many great Catholic daily prayers. Here are some suggestions in case you're wondering, or need a quick reminder, as to which are good to say regularly: The Lord's Prayer (also known as the Our Father), the Hail Mary and the Glory Be are excellent. The Rosary is an essential prayer that combines these three, along with the Apostles' Creed, in a wonderfully meditative way.

Other good prayers include: the Act of Spiritual Communion; prayers known as the Acts of Faith, Hope, Love, and Contrition; the Angelus; the Anima Christi; the Divine Mercy Chaplet; evening prayers; the Guardian Angel prayer; mealtime prayers; the Memorare; novenas; morning prayers; prayers to the Holy Spirit; a Three O'Clock Prayer; prayers of reparation such as the Golden Arrow, and other wonderful chaplets and litanies to our Lord, His Blessed Mother as well as prayers to the saints.

The Rosary, one of the most important prayers in many ways, only takes about 15-20 minutes each day. Pray what you can when you can. Feel free also to talk to our Lord in your own spontaneous prayers and other thoughts (good or bad!) about what's going on in your day. Just remember to keep God front and centre in your life.

HOW WE PRAY

The two main types of prayer are vocal and mental. In vocal prayer we use prayers, such as the ones mentioned above, from books. Or perhaps those we've written down ourselves. In mental prayer we reflect on God's word. (Mental prayer can also include meditation on various prayers and readings).

Note that as the renowned Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen once stressed, "In prayer [we] do not do all the talking... we must also listen. God talks to us, more in meditation than in vocal prayer." The two forms can also be combined and often are, such as in the Rosary. Vocal prayer can help with mental prayer.

Reading can definitely help your mental prayer life as well. Try to read scripture or other devout material whenever possible, even if it's just for 15 minutes or so (at least a couple of times each week).

A good reading list includes:

- The Bible (especially the Gospels and St Paul's letters in the New Testament, and the Psalms in the Old Testament).
- Writings by various religious, theologians or well-known lay people.
- Books by and about the saints.
- A book or magazine, such as "Shalom" that contains the daily Mass readings.

Be careful not to make all your daily prayers requests for favours. Don't let them sound more like "Gimmie, Gimmie, Gimmie" rather than "Holy, Holy, Holy". God wants us to ask for what you need, in accordance with His will. Still, we need to love Him as we love each other, just for Himself.

We should pray with confidence, humility, sincerity (from your heart), attentiveness and perseverance. Note that humility and confidence are not mutually exclusive here. We approach our Creator knowing we don't always have all the answers as to what's best for us. He does! With faith we have confidence that He will provide for our needs, thinking always of what's best for our souls. As we say in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done!" On being attentive, if your mind wanders, let God know in your own words that you're sorry if you can't concentrate but you'd like to pray anyway. If you find your prayers are on "auto-pilot," slow down and try to focus on the words of each prayer and what they mean to you.

WHY WE PRAY

Archbishop Sheen also once answered the question of why we pray: "because we are orchestras and we always need a tune-up". He understood the importance of prayer in recharging our spiritual batteries, as it were. Catholic daily prayers give us vital spiritual strength.

Here's a good way to remember why we pray to God: The Christian who lives well **ACTS** well. We pray:

- In **A**doration of Him.
- With **C**ontrition (sorrow) for our sins.
- In **T**hanksgiving for His blessings (especially the little things we take for granted).
- In **S**upplication (in other words, in "petition"; in our requests for ourselves and others). (These have also been listed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church as adoration, petition, intercession, thanksgiving and praise.)

WHERE WE PRAY

You can pray in church (someplace quiet is best) or anywhere else that seems appropriate, either alone or whenever possible with others. (You might have heard the saying "The family that prays together stays together").

As Catholics, our most important form of "group prayer" is the Mass, mentioned earlier. The Rosary is often said in groups as well. You might want to join a prayer group in your parish for the fellowship and opportunity of sharing a truly divine experience. - Source: ourcatholicprayers.com



To be a
**worshipping,
welcoming & caring** community

成为一个敬拜、欢融与关怀的团体

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St Ignatius Church, PJ

JULY 2016

Listen to God speaking

This issue features excerpts from the final four of 10 talks by Bible scholar JEFF CAVINS. The first six talks were published in the June 2016 issue.

THE first major movement of the Mass is the Liturgy of the Word. In the Liturgy of the Word, the focus of the Mass becomes the lectern. The lectern is the place that God will speak to us in His Word. As Catholics, we believe that the Bible is different from any other book in the world. We believe it is the inspired Word of God. That word "inspired" (theoneustos = God-breathed) means God is the author. The Holy Spirit is the author of what we are about to hear. In the Liturgy of the Word, the whole congregation begins to focus on the lectern. This is where God's Word will be proclaimed. We all need to hear a word from God, don't we? We are so busy with newscasts and social media, Facebook and Twitter and all kinds of stimulus. And it really doesn't do us a lot of good and neither does a lot that we watch on television.

What we really need is to hear from the Lord. So all of our focus now is on hearing what He has to say to us. Isn't it a beautiful thought to think God has a word for you? So how is that word going to come to you? It is going to come on Sunday in three readings - an Old Testament reading, a New Testament reading and the Gospel reading. There is also going to be a Psalm thrown in there too as a bridge between the Old Testament and the New Testament readings. But who is going to deliver this word from God? It is going to be proclaimed in an audible way. Someone in the congregation is going to say yes to God: Lord, use me, use my voice to proclaim Your work. Lord, use my voice to speak to these people. I will read. I will be the one. That person who comes up to the lectern is called a lector. And that lector lends his/her voice to God so that God can speak to the people. What an incredible privilege to be a lector!

The lector comes up and reads the Old Testament reading and concludes with: The Word of the Lord and the people respond with: Thanks be to God. Thanks is a part of the Mass over and over; for example, Eucharist means thanksgiving. Then there's going to be a response to that first reading and that response is called the Responsorial Psalm. Many people don't realise that it's one of the 150 Psalms. So we respond to God speaking to us by responding in a song. So the Psalms become a way of responding. It's the proper way to respond to God after He has spoken to us.

After the Responsorial Psalm, which sometimes is sung, we move into a New Testament reading. Then we all rise to sing alleluia and the priest comes and reads the Gospel. If there's a deacon present, the deacon reads the Gospel. Even if the bishop is there, the deacon reads the Gospel. The role of the deacon is to proclaim God's Word. As we all stand for the Gospel, the priest/deacon will read the Gospel and that is a highlight. How do we actively participate when the Gospel is read? We take the first reading in the Old Testament and we take the Gospel reading and there's a connection there. The church has put those readings together for a reason.

Your job? Find out. Think about it. What's the connection there? What is the connection between the first and second readings? All of this is a moot point if you're not paying attention and do not remember any of the readings. That's where you miss out. You got to be focused. Think about those two readings, and then after that the priest will give a brief homily. He will connect them for you and hopefully give you something practical to put into your life. This is the place that God speaks to us. He is present with us. We need to be present with Him and hear from Him, and then take that reading into our week. That's the Liturgy of the Word.



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I entrust myself to God in the Creed

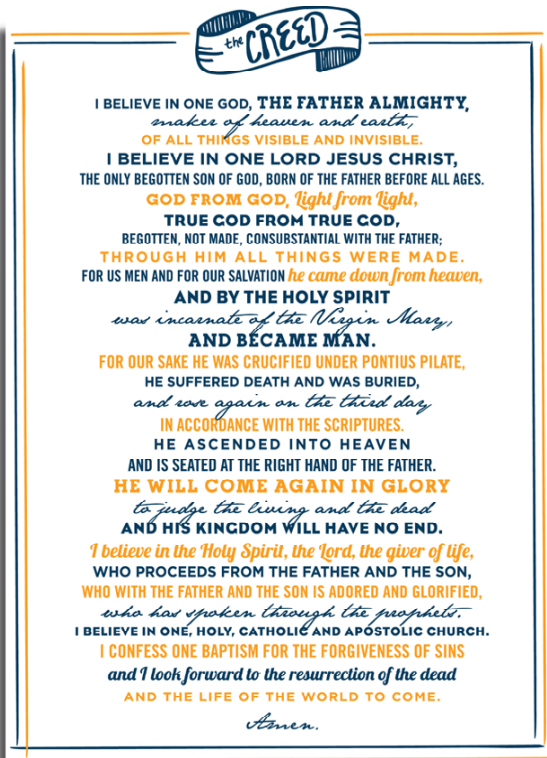
AFTER the homily, we stand up as a congregation to do something quite incredible. We recite together what we believe — this is called the Creed, the Nicene Creed. There's been some changes to it recently that some of us are still getting used to. But it's a point where we confess: This is what we believe. We are not the only ones who do that. In the Old Testament, there was a creed for the nation of Israel. That creed was from Deuteronomy 6:4 and is called the Shema: *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.* That was a statement of belief. Our statement of belief, known as the Nicene Creed, is certainly longer.

What are we saying when we say the Creed? *I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth...* and so on. What are we doing when we say the Creed? Some people might think they were going through a checklist. Two years later, you're still going to Mass saying the same Creed: Still believing it. But what does still believing it mean in your life? What difference does the fact that four years later we say "I still believe it" make in your life? Well, very little if all it is making is mental assent.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that the key to understanding the Creed is the word "believe". This idea of "believing" has two aspects.

1) Mental assent: *I consciously believe this, I believe what I'm stating.* 2) The idea of: *I am entrusting myself to another* — so eloquently brought out by Emeritus Pope Benedict in his writings.

So when you stand up and you say the Creed at Mass, you're not just making a checklist and saying that you are making mental assent of these things. But you are saying: *Jesus, I'm entrusting myself to You. I give myself to You in all that I state here.* That's powerful. So there's a movement of the heart. There's an act of the will in Mass when you say the Creed: *I'm all in Jesus. I just heard You speak to me in Your Word and I want to stand here and confess before all these people. I will follow You and I will entrust myself to You.* That's the Creed. That's what we confess.



I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,
maker of heaven and earth,
OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST,
THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, BORN OF THE FATHER BEFORE ALL AGES.
GOD FROM GOD, light from light,
TRUE GOD FROM TRUE GOD,
BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE, CONSUBSTANTIAL WITH THE FATHER;
THROUGH HIM ALL THINGS WERE MADE.
FOR US MEN AND FOR OUR SALVATION he came down from heaven,
AND BY THE HOLY SPIRIT
was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
AND BECAME MAN.
FOR OUR SAKE HE WAS CRUCIFIED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE,
HE SUFFERED DEATH AND WAS BURIED,
and rose again on the third day
IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES.
HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN
AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER.
HE WILL COME AGAIN IN GLORY
to judge the living and the dead
AND HIS KINGDOM WILL HAVE NO END.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
WHO PROCEEDS FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON,
WHO WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON IS ADORED AND GLORIFIED,
who has spoken through the prophets.
I BELIEVE IN ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH.
I CONFESS ONE BAPTISM FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
AND THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME.
Amen.

Go... and make disciples

IN this final article, I would like to talk about the Communion Rite and the Concluding Rite. I previously spoke about the Liturgy of the Eucharist where the great miracle takes place on the altar. We then enter into what's called the Communion Rite, which begins with the Lord's Prayer where we as a community pray together the prayer that Jesus taught us. That prayer is so beautiful because it starts with completely focusing on God and praising Him. Then we begin to focus on some of the needs in our own lives and it is a point in the Mass where you can ask the Lord for the various things that you need. After that we all go forward to receive the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

We then enter into the Concluding Rite which is very short. The one thing I want to emphasise to you are the words: *The Mass is ended. Go in peace.* We respond with: *Thanks be to God.* We are not saying thanks be to God because it's over. We are saying thanks be to God because of everything that we have received. We know that God is with us. And God is with the priest in a powerful way and with his spirit. We know that our sins have been forgiven, the mercy of God has been exercised. We have given Him glory. We've heard from the lector the wonderful Word of God spoken directly to us, a personal word to each of us. We have received His Body and Blood into our bodies, giving us the grace that we need. We have prayed together as a family of God in the Lord's Prayer.

And then we are finally sent. Do you know that the word "Mass" comes from the Latin word *missa*, meaning to go or to be sent? It's like the concluding of a gathering. So at the end of Mass, we are charged to go into all the world and make disciples. This is what Jesus said in Matthew 28:20, "teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age." So whether it's every day or once a week, we all gather together as Catholics to celebrate the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Time stands still. We participate with heaven and the heavenly liturgy that's taking place. We deal with our hearts. We hear the Word of God and the things we need to hear. We cleanse our hearts. We worship God. We receive life. At the end, we're called to go out and share it.

So at the conclusion of this series of articles, I would encourage you to get more actively involved. Participate in the Mass because you have been given a great commission. The Lord is with you. He's with you in the Mass, He will go with you as you leave and you become a blessing to others. I hope that these articles can make the Mass come alive for you. You will change once you truly understand the Mass. You will never find the Mass boring. It's powerful.



The greatest miracle

THERE are two major movements in the Mass, firstly the Liturgy of the Word which I have spoken about previously. The second major movement of the Mass is called the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In the Liturgy of the Word, God spoke to us in a very intimate way and shared with us the keys and instructions for living — to encourage, direct and comfort us. Now the entire focus turns from the lectern to the altar. We are all familiar with altars in the Old Testament. An altar was a place where a sacrifice was made. In Catholic churches, the altar is very prominent. Typically, it's out in the middle because this is where it happens at the hands of the priest.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist starts with the preparation of the gifts. Typically, gift bearers will make their way down the middle aisle with bread and wine. Representing all of us, they will make their entrance and give to the priest the gifts — not only the bread and wine but also the financial gifts that were taken in the offering earlier. All of these will be given to God and something very special is going to happen. The priest will take those gifts of bread and wine and place them on the altar. A series of prayers will take place here which are going to change bread and wine into the body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ. Not a symbol, but it's going to literally change. It's a miracle and we can only believe this by faith.

As the priest begins a series of prayers, there are a couple of things that you will notice and you may not be sure exactly why they are done. One of them is that the priest will take a small piece of the bread and mix it in the wine. We may not even notice it but it happens. What does it mean? It is symbolic of Christ's divinity and humanity mixed. Some cardinals have said that it is also a picture of

us and our humanity literally immersed in Christ's divinity, and that the two of us would become one so that we would be "divinised". Then the priest does something very special. The priest will turn to the side where an altar boy will pour water over his hands, he will wash his hands and say a quiet prayer.

Anybody who knows about the Bible and sacrifice knows that when a priest washes his hands, it means that a sacrifice is about to take place. And then through the words of the liturgical prayers and Eucharistic prayer (there are several of them), the priest will pray: *This is My body. And then again: This is My blood, the blood of the new and eternal covenant.* When the priest says those words something happens. The bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ. It all comes to a wonderful climax as we all say *Amen!* at the end of the Eucharistic prayer. St Jerome once said that that Great Amen is a celestial thunderclap in heaven as heaven says amen to this. Once this miracle — the one and only sacrifice 2,000 years ago re-presented on altars around the world — has taken place, we're going to have an opportunity to commune with the Lamb of God who has given His life for us.

We will go forward and the priest will present to us the body and blood of Christ. The grace that we receive from the Eucharist is the most powerful thing in the world. It'll give you strength and power to live out God's will on earth. It's a marital embrace that takes place where the bridegroom Jesus gives himself to the bride (the Church). Isn't that amazing? And that happens on an altar by an ordained priest in the Catholic Church. This is so special, so intimate, so powerful! This is what we came for — to be loved. Then we go back to our seats and we contemplate the miracle that has just taken place.

The Transfiguration — the revelation of Christ's divine glory



15th-century Russian icon of the Transfiguration

THE feast of the Transfiguration of Christ celebrates the revelation of Christ's divine glory on Mount Tabor in Galilee (Matthew 17:1-6; Mark 9:1-8; Luke 9:28-36). After revealing to His disciples that He would be put to death in Jerusalem (Matthew 16:21), Christ, along with Sts Peter, James and John, went up the mountain. There, St Matthew writes, "He was transfigured before them. And His face did shine as the sun; and His garments became white as snow."

The brightness was not something added to Christ but the manifestation of His true divine nature. For Peter, James and John, it was also a glimpse of the glories of heaven and of the resurrected body promised to all Christians. As Christ was transfigured, two others appeared with Him: Moses, representing the Old Testament Law, and Elijah, representing the prophets. Thus Christ, Who stood between the two and spoke with them, appeared to the disciples as the fulfilment of both the Law and the prophets.

At Christ's baptism in the Jordan, the voice of God the Father was heard to proclaim, "This is My beloved Son" (Matthew 3:17). During the Transfiguration, God the Father pronounced the same words (Matthew 17:5).

Despite the importance of this event, the feast of the Transfiguration was not among the earliest of the Christian feasts. It was celebrated in Asia starting in the fourth or fifth century and spread throughout the Christian East in the centuries following. The Catholic Encyclopaedia notes that it wasn't commonly celebrated in the West until the 10th century. Pope Callixtus III elevated the Transfiguration to a feast of the universal Church and established August 6 as the date of its celebration.