

Jesus Our Savior/Redemption and the Mass

Assumption RCIA, October 29, 2019

Part 1: Who is Jesus Christ-Purpose of the Incarnation---Redemption

Who is Jesus Christ and why did He come to earth/become man?

- The *ultimate* and *absolute* purpose of the Incarnation is the **glory of God**.
- The *mediate* purpose is the exaltation and **glory of Christ**, the redeemer of man.
- The *immediate* purpose is the **redemption of mankind**.
- Mt 1:21- "and you shall call his name Jesus, **for he will save his people from their sins.**"
- John 1:29- "Behold, the Lamb of God, **who takes away the sin of the world!**

From Video: Why did God choose to become man/suffer? ---This must also be a personal question

Pius X Catechism: Adam and Eve lost the grace of God and the right they had to Heaven; they were driven out of the earthly Paradise, subjected to many miseries of soul and body, and condemned to death.

We could not save/redeem ourselves—therefore "The mercy shown by God to the human race was that of immediately promising Adam a divine Redeemer or Messiah, and of sending this Messiah in His own good time to free men from the slavery of sin and of the devil. " Genesis 3:15

Catechism of the Catholic Church 599: Jesus' violent death was **not the result of chance in an unfortunate coincidence of circumstances**, but is part of the mystery of God's plan, as St. Peter explains to the Jews of Jerusalem in his first sermon on Pentecost: "This Jesus [was] delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God."

Fulton Sheen (Life of Christ): "Impatience" of the Word for Redemption

The Word was impatient in heaven to be the "Lamb slain from the beginning of the world."

He was impatient in prophetic types and symbols, as His dying face was reflected in a hundred mirrors stretching through all Old Testament history.

*He was impatient to be the **real Isaac carrying the wood of His sacrifice in obedience to the commands of His heavenly Abraham.***

He was impatient to fulfill the mystic symbol of the Lamb of the Jewish Pasch, who was slain without a single bone of its body being broken.

He was impatient to be the new Abel, slain by his jealous brethren of the race of Cain, that His Blood might cry to Heaven for forgiveness.

He was impatient in His mother's womb, as He saluted His precursor John.

He was impatient in the Circumcision, as He anticipated His bloodshedding and received the name of "Savior."

He was impatient at the age of twelve, as He reminded His Mother that He had to be about His Father's business.

He was impatient in His public life, as He said He had a baptism wherewith He was to be baptized and He was "straightened until it be accomplished."

He was impatient in the Garden, as He turned His back to the consoling twelve legions of angels to crimson olive roots with His redemptive Blood.

He was impatient at His Last Supper as He anticipated the separation of His Body and Blood under the appearance of bread and wine.

And then, impatience closed as the hour of darkness drew near at the end of that Last Supper-He sang. It was the only time He ever sang, the moment He went to His death.

Life of Christ -Fulton Sheen: "Every other person who ever came into this world came into it to live. He came into it to die" (18)

Calvary and the Mass: "It is finished"

*What is finished? The Redemption of man is finished. Love had completed its mission, for Love had done all that it could. There are two things Love can do. **Love by its very nature tends to an Incarnation, and every Incarnation tends to a Crucifixion.***

Does not all true love tend toward an Incarnation? In the order of human love, does not the affection of husband for wife create from their mutual loves the incarnation of their confluent love in the form of a child? Once they have begotten their child, do not they make sacrifices for it, even to the point of death? And thus their love tends to a crucifixion.

*But this is **just a reflection** of the divine order, where the love of God for man was so deep and intense that it ended in an Incarnation, which found God in the form and habit of man, whom He loved. But our Lord's love for man did not stop with the Incarnation. Unlike everyone else who was ever born, our Lord came into this world to redeem it. **Death was the supreme goal He was seeking.** Death interrupted the careers of great men, but it was no interruption to our Lord; it was His crowning glory; it was the unique goal He was seeking. **His Incarnation thus tended to the Crucifixion,** for "greater love than this no man has, that he lay down his life for his friends."*

(Life of Christ) Death was a stumbling block to Socrates—it interrupted his teaching. But to Christ, **death was the goal and fulfillment of His life, the gold that He was seeking.** Few of His words or actions are intelligible without reference to His Cross. He presented Himself as a **Savior rather than merely as a Teacher.** It meant nothing to teach men to be good unless He also **gave them the power to be good, after rescuing them from the frustration of guilt.** (18)

the reason of His coming manifested by His name "Jesus" or "Savior" to the fulfillment of His coming, namely, His death on the Cross. (19)

Why did Jesus come? He was explicit about the purpose of His coming:

1. After Peter's affirmation of His Divinity and the conferring of the power of keys.

(166-172) THE FIRST QUARRELING: CAESAREA PHILIPPI

- **What do men say of the Son of Man? Who do they think He is? MATTHEW 16:13** The inability of men to agree among themselves concerning His Divinity was revealed in their answer:
 - **Some say John the Baptist, They told Him, Others Elias, others again Jeremy Or one of the prophets. MATTHEW 16:14** Human opinion can give only conflicting, contrary, and contradictory answers. The four popular opinions show that Our Blessed Lord enjoyed a high reputation among His fellow men, but that none of them had recognized Him for what He was
 - **And what of you? Who do you say that I am? MATTHEW 16:15** The appeal here was to all of them who had heard His teachings, had seen His miracles, and had been blessed even with the power of working miracles on others.
 - Peter stepped forward and gave the right and final answer: **Thou art the Christ, The Son of the living God. MATTHEW 16:16**

Peter confessed Christ was the true Messiah, commissioned by God to reveal His will to men and fulfilling all prophecies and the Law; He was the Son of God, begotten from all Eternity, but also the Son of Man begotten in time—**true God and true man.**

After promising that the gates of hell, or error, or evil would never conquer His Church, **Our Lord made the first of the most open confessions of His coming death.**

But now that the man whom He had chosen as the chief of His apostolic body had confessed His Divinity, **He openly showed them that the way to glory both for Him and for them led to suffering and death.**

- **From that time onwards, Jesus began to make it known to His disciples That he must go up to Jerusalem, And there, with much ill-usage From the chief priests and elders and scribes, Must be put to death, And rise again on the third day. MATTHEW 16:21**

Our Lord said nothing openly of His death while His Apostles believed Him only to be man; but once He was acknowledged to be God, He spoke openly of His death. This was in order that His death might be viewed in its proper light as a **sacrifice for sins.**

The Cross was the reason of His coming; now He made it the earmark of His followers. He did not make Christianity easy; for He implied not only must there be a voluntary renouncement of everything that hindered likeness with Him, but also there must be the **suffering, shame, and death of the Cross.** They did not have to blaze a trail of sacrifice themselves, but merely to follow His tracks zealously as the Man of Sorrow. No disciple is called to the task that is untried. He had taken the Cross first. **Only those who were willing to be crucified with Him could be saved by the merits of His death and only those who bore a Cross could ever really understand Him.**

Part 2: Calvary and the Mass

What is the Mass?

(Council of Trent. Sess. 22).He offered the Victim to be immolated; we offer it as immolated of old. We offer the eternal Victim of the Cross, once made and forever enduring.... The Mass is a sacrifice because it is our oblation of the Victim once immolated, even as the Supper was the oblation of the Victim to be immolated." *ibid.* p. 239-240. The Mass is not only a commemoration; it is a living representation of the sacrifice of the cross. "In this Divine Sacrifice which takes place at the Mass is contained and immolated, in an unbloody manner, the same Christ that was offered once for all in blood upon the Cross . . . It is one and the same Victim, one and the same High Priest, who made the offering through the ministry of His priests today, after having offered Himself upon the cross yesterday; only the manner of the oblation is different"

Calvary and the Mass: The memorial was instituted the night before He died, at what has since been called "The Last Supper." Taking bread into His Hands, He said: "This is my body, which shall be delivered for you," i.e., delivered unto death. Then over the chalice of wine, He said, "This is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins."

Thus in an unbloody symbol of the parting of the Blood from the Body, by the separate consecration of Bread and Wine, did Christ pledge Himself to death in the sight of God and men, and **represent His death which was to come the next afternoon at three.** He was offering Himself as a Victim **to be immolated**, and that men might never forget that "greater love than this no man hash, that a man lay down his life for his friends," He gave the divine command to the Church: **"Do this for a commemoration of me."**

Hence the Mass is to us the **crowning act of Christian worship.** A **pulpit** in which the words of our Lord are repeated does not unite us to Him; a **choir** in which sweet sentiments are sung brings us no closer to His Cross than to His

garments. And so in the Catholic Church the **altar** , and not the pulpit or the choir or the organ, **is the center of worship, for there is re-enacted the memorial of His Passion.**

Its value does not depend on him who says it, or on him who hears it; it depends on Him who is the One High Priest and Victim, Jesus Christ our Lord. With Him we are united, in spite of our nothingness; we unite our intellect and our will, our heart and our soul, our body and our blood, so intimately with Christ, that the Heavenly Father sees not so much us with our imperfection, but rather sees us in Him, the Beloved Son in whom He is well pleased.

The Mass is for that reason the greatest event in the history of mankind; the only Holy Act which keeps the wrath of God from a sinful world, because it holds the Cross between heaven and earth, **thus renewing** that decisive moment when our sad and tragic humanity journeyed suddenly forth to the fullness of supernatural life.

But how is it made visible? Where shall we find Calvary perpetuated? **We shall find Calvary renewed, re-enacted, re-presented, as we have seen, in the Mass. Calvary is one with the Mass, and the Mass is one with Calvary,** for in both there is the same Priest and Victim.

Part 3: Our Participation in the Mass

Compendium 220. In what does the **sacramental economy** consist?

The sacramental economy consists in the communication of the fruits of Christ's redemption through the celebration of the sacraments of the Church, most especially that of the Eucharist, "until he comes" (*1 Corinthians* 11:26).

St. Pius X Catechism: When asking "to be saved **is it enough that Jesus Christ died for us?**" and he responds:

It is not enough for our *salvation* that Jesus Christ has dies for us; it is also necessary that the fruit of His Passion and death be applied to each one of us, which is accomplished especially by means of the **sacraments instituted for this end by Jesus Christ Himself.**

Abbot Vonier, an English Abbot from the 1920's wrote that "The stream of sacramental grace is truly the flow of the Blood of Christ: **in one way or another every sacrament is the fire of Christ's love when He was dying on the cross.**"

John 19:34: "But one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water."

Catechism of the Catholic Church [766](#): The Church is born primarily of Christ's total self-giving for our salvation, anticipated in the institution of the Eucharist and fulfilled on the cross. "The origin and growth of the Church are symbolized by the blood and water which flowed from the open side of the crucified Jesus."¹⁷¹ "**For it was from the side of Christ as he slept the sleep of death upon the cross that there came forth the 'wondrous sacrament of the whole Church.'**"¹⁷²

Abbot Vonier writes that we must look to and appreciate the Incarnation of Jesus and His Atonement on the Cross. **“We take for granted that the Son of God through His death has redeemed mankind in general and has satisfied for sin; we know that in Christ there is plentiful redemption...but the universal truths...leave untouched the other problem of our own individual share in the treasures of redemption- how do individual men come into contact with that great Christ who is our Redemption personified? ...The urgent problem is, how am I to be linked up effectively with that great mystery of Christ’s death? When shall I know that Christ is not only the Redeemer but also my Redeemer?**”

...St. Thomas Aquinas says that “The power of Christ’s passion is linked up with us through **faith and through the sacraments**...Faith takes place through an act of the soul...the sacraments [link us to Christ’s Passion] through **the use of external things**...Faith is an instrumental power, enabling man to open the door that leads to perfect union with Christ...the sacraments are truly such another means for the attainment of that final object, **to be united with Christ in charity.**”

The sacraments complete and render more efficacious the instrumentality of faith...they do not supersede the instrumentality of faith, but they make it more real, if possible, and certainly **more infallible** in its effect. ¹

Calvary and the Mass: What happened there on the Cross that day is happening now in the Mass, with this difference: On the Cross the Savior was alone; **in the Mass He is with us.** Our Lord is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us. He therefore can never suffer again in His human nature. How then can the Mass be the re-enactment of Calvary? How can Christ renew the Cross? **He cannot suffer again in His own human nature which is in heaven enjoying beatitude, but He can suffer again in our human natures. He cannot renew Calvary in His physical body, but He can renew it in His Mystical Body - the Church.**

The Sacrifice of the Cross can be re-enacted provided we give Him our body and our blood, and give it to Him so completely that as His own, He can offer Himself anew to His heavenly Father **for the redemption of His Mystical Body, the Church. So the Christ goes out into the world gathering up other human natures who are willing to be Christs.** In order that our sacrifices, our sorrows, our Golgothas, our crucifixions, may not be isolated, disjointed, and unconnected, the Church collects them, harvests them, unifies them, coalesces them, masses them, and this massing of all our sacrifices of our individual human natures is united with the Great Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross in the Mass.

The Mass is the moment when each one of you may literally fulfill My injunction: 'Take up your cross and follow Me.'"

Then as the moment of consecration arrives, the priest in obedience to the words of our Lord, "Do this for a commemoration of me," takes bread in his hands and says "This is my body"; and then over the chalice of wine says, "This is the chalice of my blood of the new and eternal testament." He does not consecrate the bread and wine together, but separately. The separate consecration of the bread and wine is a symbolic representation of the separation of body and blood, and since the Crucifixion entailed that very mystery, **Calvary is thus renewed on our altar.**

¹ KDE –Abbot Vonier (pg1-5)

But Christ, as has been said, is not alone on our altar; we are with Him. Hence the words of consecration have a double sense; the primary signification of the words is: "This is the Body of Christ; this is the Blood of Christ;" but the secondary signification is "This is my body; this is my blood." Such is the purpose of life! **To redeem ourselves in union with Christ;** to apply His merits to our souls by being like Him in all things, even to His death on the Cross. He passed through His consecration on the Cross that we might now pass through ours in the Mass. **There is nothing more tragic in all the world than wasted pain.**

Our Lord does not suffer alone on the Cross; He suffers with us.

It is this St. Paul means when he says that we should fill up those things that are wanting to the sufferings of Christ. This does not mean our Lord on the cross did not suffer all He could. It means rather that the physical, historical Christ suffered all He could in His own human nature, but that the Mystical Christ, which is Christ and us, has not suffered to **our fullness.**

We are therefore present at each and every Mass under the appearance of bread and wine, which stand as symbols of our body and blood. We **are not passive spectators** as we might be watching a spectacle in a theater, but we are **co-offering our Mass with Christ.** If any picture adequately describes our role in this drama it is this: There is a great cross before us on which is stretched the great Host, Christ. Round about the hill of Calvary are our small crosses on which we, the small hosts, are to be offered. When our Lord goes to His Cross we go to our little crosses, and offer ourselves in union with Him, as a clean oblation to the heavenly Father. At that moment we literally fulfill to the smallest detail the Savior's command: Take up your cross daily and follow Me. In doing so, He is not asking us to do anything He has not already done Himself.

Sacrosanctum Concilium: 14. Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people (1 Pet. 2:9; cf. 2:4-5), is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

Compendium of the Catholic Church 189. How do the lay faithful participate in the priestly office of Christ?

They participate in it especially in the Eucharist by offering as a spiritual sacrifice "acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5) their own lives with all of their works, their prayers, their apostolic undertakings, their family life, their daily work and hardships borne with patience and even their consolations of spirit and body. In this way, even the laity, dedicated to Christ and consecrated by the Holy Spirit, offer to God the world itself.

1. Full participation means that must be manifested both in the exterior – attitudes, gestures, prayers, songs...- as well as in the interior, with firm will of uniting oneself with Christ and with the whole mystical body. Conscious participation means that everyone knows what is going and why it is happening. A negligent, distracted attendance is not enough. Active participation means that everyone must take part: "...Christ's faithful (...) should not be there as strangers or silent spectators...;"² acclamations, responses, psalmody, antiphons, and songs, as well as by actions, gestures, and bodily

² *Ibidem*, n. 48.

attitudes must be promoted.³ The fruitful participation is the “most perfect participation,” it is the Summit of the liturgical participation; the highest and most effective, is the sacramental Communion.

Practical means to achieve this? -Readings beforehand, Prayer/preparation for the Mass

Romans 8:17--we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

³ Cf. *Ibidem*, n. 30.