

WHY GO TO MASS ON SUNDAY?

Memorial

1. Another name for Jesus is Emmanuel which means "God with us". Immediately before ascending into heaven Jesus said, "I will be with you until the end of time." (Matt 28:20) How can He be with us if He is now at the right hand of God in heaven? Through the Eucharist that He invented especially for this purpose of continuing His presence with us on earth.
2. Jesus himself celebrated the first Mass at the Last Supper and He asked that we repeat it, "Do this in memory of me." The Mass is not only a memorial, but the actual representation of Jesus' sacrifice on Calvary. We are not just spectators like at a sporting event or movie, but we are really present under the Cross, along with Mary, John and the women. The Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary is like the sun that emanates many rays of light. The Mass that we celebrate at the Savior Pastoral Center is one ray, the Mass at Holy Spirit in Kansas City is another ray, the Mass at Holy Family in Seattle is another ray of the one and same sacrifice of Christ. The sun remains the same while its light reaches many places at the same time, so the sacrifice of Christ is one and the same although it is able to reach many places and times.
3. The story of the Cardinal of Paris: to not go to Mass is to say "I see what you have done for me and I really just don't care." The cardinal gave a homily saying: There were two boys playing and joking outside the church and one of them bet the other to do some impossible feat. The boy that lost the bet had to go to confession. So he went, with absolutely no intention of actually confessing his sins, in order to uphold his end of the bet. When the priest saw that he was not repentant and actually had no awareness of his sins, "as a penance" he told the boy to leave the confessional and go to the church where he would find a large crucifix. Kneeling in front of the crucifix, the boy was to say ten times: "I see what you have done for me and I really just don't care." The boy started out well, but by the time he reached the fourth repetition, he broke down in tears at the realization of the meaning of his words. The Cardinal concluded his homily saying that that boy was himself.
4. Troy's example: You receive a fancy envelope with your name inscribed in gold letters. Inside is an invitation to be present at the birth, life, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus and be able to receive all of the fruits of it. In just an hour. Would you accept?

Real Presence

1. Jesus is most especially present in the Eucharist (body, blood, soul and divinity). One thing is to call your wife on the telephone; another is to physically embrace her. It is much greater to be present at Mass and receive Jesus in the Eucharist than it is to talk to God in your room at home.
2. In John 6, Jesus says "I am the bread of life. Whoever eats my flesh will not die, but will live forever." Many people go away after this saying "This teaching is too hard." Jesus challenges his disciples as well saying, "Do you too want to go?" Jesus maintained that the teaching on His true presence in the Eucharist was so essential that He was ready to lose his disciples in order to uphold it.

Sacrifice

Jesus offers His humanity, life and sufferings as a sacrifice in the Mass so that they can be transformed into the resurrected life. During the offertory, we can unite our own life and sufferings (i.e. headache, difficulties in relationships, person to forgive) to those of Jesus in order to receive his divine life in us.

Effects

Consequences of receiving the Eucharist:

- spousal union of the person with God that is a foretaste of heaven
- We are empowered to love as Jesus loves, unconditionally and self-giving.
- Eternal life: St. Ignatius of Antioch calls the Eucharist, "medicine of immortality, antidote for death."