

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS

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Last week I introduced the ongoing explanation of the Latin Mass, what it is sometimes referred to as, some distinctions within the Latin Mass, and what to expect when attending the Mass for the first time. I would like to pick up where I left off, but change gears a little and examine more foundationally why we attend Mass in the first place. This foundation is key, because the reason one attends the Latin Mass ought to be in principle, the same reason one attends the ordinary form of the Mass.

In the Beginning

- As Catholics we believe that God is three Persons in one God. The communion of persons in God make Him who He IS, the pure act of Love; and He is perfectly content in His goodness, lacking in nothing, and delighting in His existence. However, love is diffusive, by its nature it flows out from itself. This is how we begin to understand the reason and cause of creation; God as Love desired to communicate His goodness and communicate to the degree that some of His creation (human beings) could actually share in Himself.
- The created world is intended to glorify God and we as rational human beings have the ability *and* obligation to do so in a supreme manner. Out of justice for His goodness and creating us out of love, we owe God worship, giving Him praise and thanksgiving. This was possible before the fall of Adam and Eve because they were created in a state of grace, friendship with God. That relationship allowed them to communicate with Him, to communicate love and praise back to Him.

After the Fall of Adam and Eve

- After sin was committed and entered the world, there existed a great chasm between God and man. The lack of friendship with God now made it impossible for human beings to respond to God's goodness in a sufficient manner. Our ability to worship Him was frustrated, preventing man from fulfilling his purpose and opportunity for fulfillment.

God Intervened

- Through the Incarnation of the Son of God, He entered our fallen human condition and by Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection from the dead he saved us from our sins and bridged the gap between humanity and God. Union with Christ sets us back in right relationship with God, enjoying a friendship that was once lost. We now have the means to return to God, to respond to His goodness by offering fitting worship...Jesus' loving sacrifice on our behalf is the **only** way this all possible.

The Mass: The re-presentation of the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross offered by a priest in an unbloody manner (under the appearance of bread and wine) for the forgiveness of sins

- Our attendance and participation at Holy Mass is the mysterious participation in Christ's sacrifice on Calvary. His sacrifice then, and it made present today at each Mass, is how loving worship is returned to God for His goodness. This is only possible for us when we unite ourselves to Christ's sacrifice and this can only happen at Holy Mass