



# How can I make the most of Mass?

September 2019 'Faithful Questions' Seminar  
Deacon Ken Crawford



# YES!

(...you can make the most  
of Mass.)

# Session overview

- Purpose of Mass
- Exercise: What if the Pope was presiding?
- Attitude matters
- Overview of parts of Mass
  - Introductory Rites
  - Liturgy of the Word
  - Liturgy of the Eucharist
  - Concluding Rites
- Practical advice/ideas



# Purpose of Mass

- To worship God
- To receive grace from God
- To do the above as a community
- It is not (at least primarily):
  - To be entertained
  - To be taught

**Note: Mass isn't the only Catholic activity**



# What if the Pope was presiding?

- Go to confession
- Buy some religious item and bring it to be blessed
- Read the readings ahead of time
- Check if anything special is planned
- Fast more thoroughly than usual (more than 1 hour)
- Spend some time in prayer ahead of time
- Do an examination of conscience
- Wear your best Mass clothes
- Talk to the kids about behaving well
- Pack anything that might be helpful for the kids to be well behaved
- Show up early
- Sit up front
- Bookmark all the songs in the Hymnal
- Be extra careful about any distractions
  - Phone is not just on silent, but off
  - Leave the 'big purse' at home
- Sing extra loud





# Attitude matters

- Remember: The Eucharist is more precious than the Pope
- It's hard to talk ourselves into that week after week
- What we can do is train ourselves
- Implementing many of the 'Pope Mass' items will train us to remember how special Mass is
- Also can train ourselves to take seriously each part of Mass



# Introductory Rites

- Procession
- Greeting
- Penitential Rite
  - Treat it like a mini-confession
  - Helps a lot to do Examination of Conscience before Mass
- Gloria
  - Not an accident it is after Penitential Rite
  - We know God forgives sins and that is something to rejoice about
  - Think about the words you're singing!
- Collect (Opening Prayer)



# Liturgy of the Word – Part 1

- First reading
  - Old Testament
  - Acts during Easter season
  - Chosen to match with the Gospel reading
  - Jumps around a lot
- Responsorial Psalm
  - Remember this is scripture
  - Specifically chosen for the readings of the day
  - Response to the Word of God in 1<sup>st</sup> reading
- Second Reading / Epistle
  - Usually independent of other readings
  - Often sequential (with gaps) from week to week





# Liturgy of the Word – Part 2

- Gospel Acclamation
  - Again, remember this is scripture
  - Also a response to the Word of God
- Gospel
  - Heart of the readings for the day
  - Focuses on 1 gospel each year
  - During ordinary time, often sequential (with gaps)
- Homily
  - Not a sermon... supposed to be reflection on the readings
- Profession of faith
  - Response to Word of God
  - Think about the words you are saying!
- Intercessions
  - Also a response to the Word of God



# Liturgy of the Eucharist – Part 1

- Collection
  - The gifts we provide, were given us by God and we return them for Him to bless
- Preparation of the Altar
  - Our words: “May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church”



# Liturgy of the Eucharist – Part 2

- Eucharistic prayer
  - Focus on our responses
  - Preface
  - Priest: **Lift up your hearts**
  - All: **We lift them up to the Lord**
  - Priest: **Let us give thanks to Lord our God**
  - All: **It is right and just**
  - Hosanna
  - Memorial Acclamation
  - When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again.**



# Liturgy of the Eucharist – Part 3

- Eucharistic prayer
  - Focus on our responses
  - Preface
  - Priest: **Lift up your hearts**
  - All: **We life them up to the Lord**
  - Priest: **Let us give thanks to Lord our God**
  - All: **It is right and just**
  - Hosanna
  - Main Eucharistic prayer - part 1
    - Listen to the words!
  - Memorial Acclamation
    - When we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim your death, O Lord, until you come again.**
  - Main Eucharistic prayer - part 2
  - Great Amen



# Liturgy of the Eucharist – Part 4

- Communion Rite
  - Lord's Prayer
    - Think about the words you are saying!
  - Sign of Peace
    - Not intended for a time of greeting
    - Time to make peace with your fellow believers
  - **Behold the Lamb of God. ... Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb.**
  - **Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.**
  - Receive communion
    - NEVER let this be too common in your mind!
  - Communion prayer

Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

– Matt. 5:23-24





# Concluding Rites

- Blessing
- Dismissal
  - “Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord”
  - “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.”
- Recessional



# Practical advice

- Get serious about 'Pope Mass' ideas
- Focus on 1 to 2 new parts of Mass each week
  - Think about where you are most likely to wander
  - Can be done cyclically
- Prayer notebook
- Sign up for a liturgical ministry
  - For some, this can be a detriment
- Daily Mass
- Mass without the kids on occasion



# Next time

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday – October 8th
- 7:00 PM in the Morris Hall
  - Standard time for 2019-2020 year
- Topic
  - Why is the Church against the Death Penalty?
- Future Plans
  - Snacks and Refreshments?
  - Child Care?
  - Always looking for suggestions for topics
    - Any alternates you'd prefer to the current planned ones?
    - Let me know via e-mail your preferences



# Future topics

- Current plan for 2019-2020
  - Is there a conflict between Faith and Science? (repeat from 2018)
  - How can I improve my marriage?
  - How can I have a good Lent?
  - Why do we have the Liturgical year?
  - Why do we confess to a priest?
  - How can I keep my kids Catholic?
  - What does the Church teach about homosexuality?
- Alternates I'm considering:
  - Is the Eucharist really the Body and Blood of Christ?
  - What does 'baptized 'Priest, Prophet and King' mean?
  - How does someone become a Saint?
  - Why does a loving God let bad things happen?
  - How should we balance accepting everyone with teachings that condemn certain behaviors?
  - Are the Jews responsible for the death of Jesus? (repeat)
  - Can my non-Catholic friend go to heaven? (repeat)
  - Why does God seem so angry in the Old Testament? (re-phrased repeat)



# Materials

- <http://deaconken.org>
- Slides available on blog
- Check <http://deaconken.org/blog>
- Audio/Video may be available at a later date.

