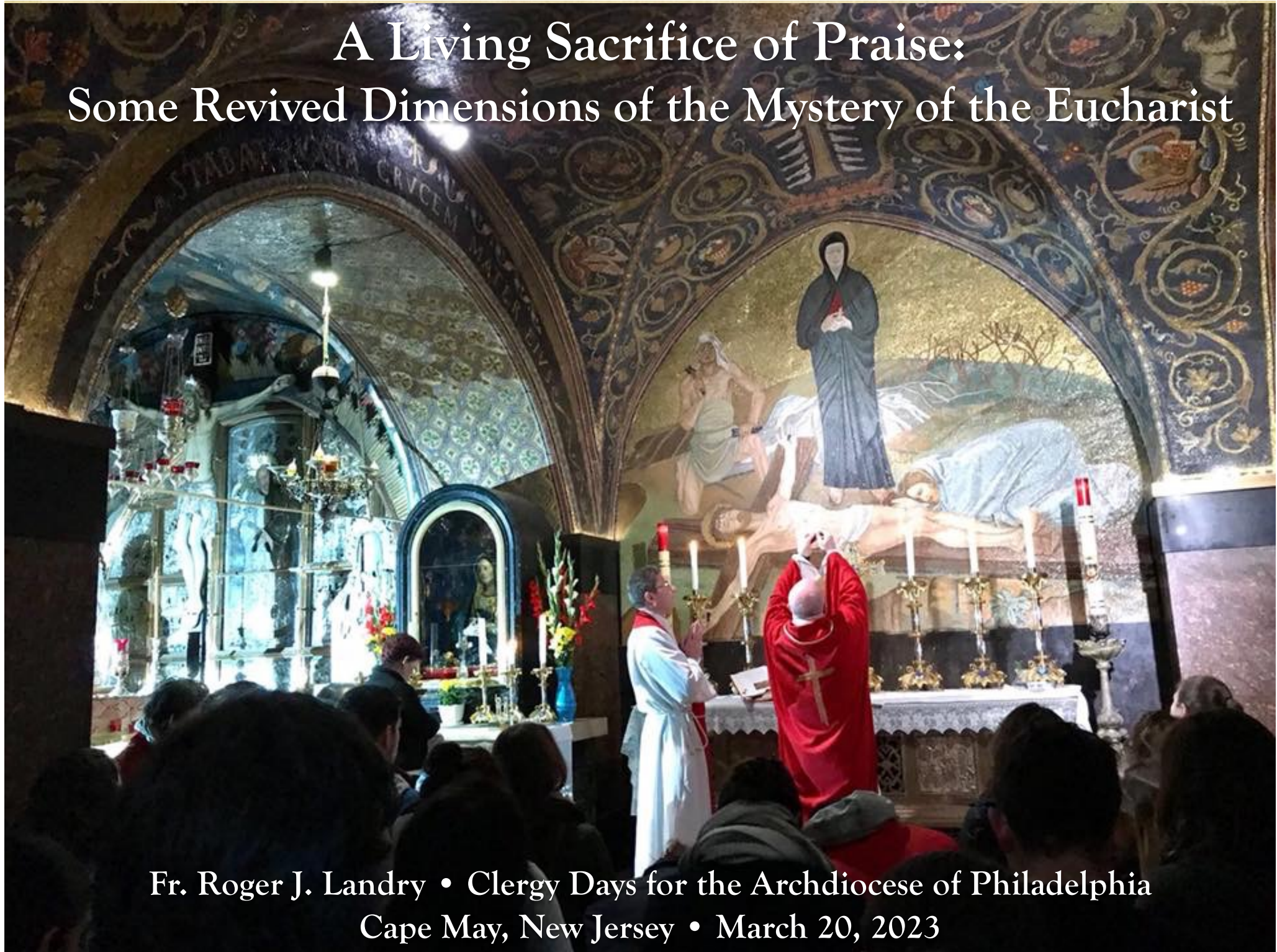


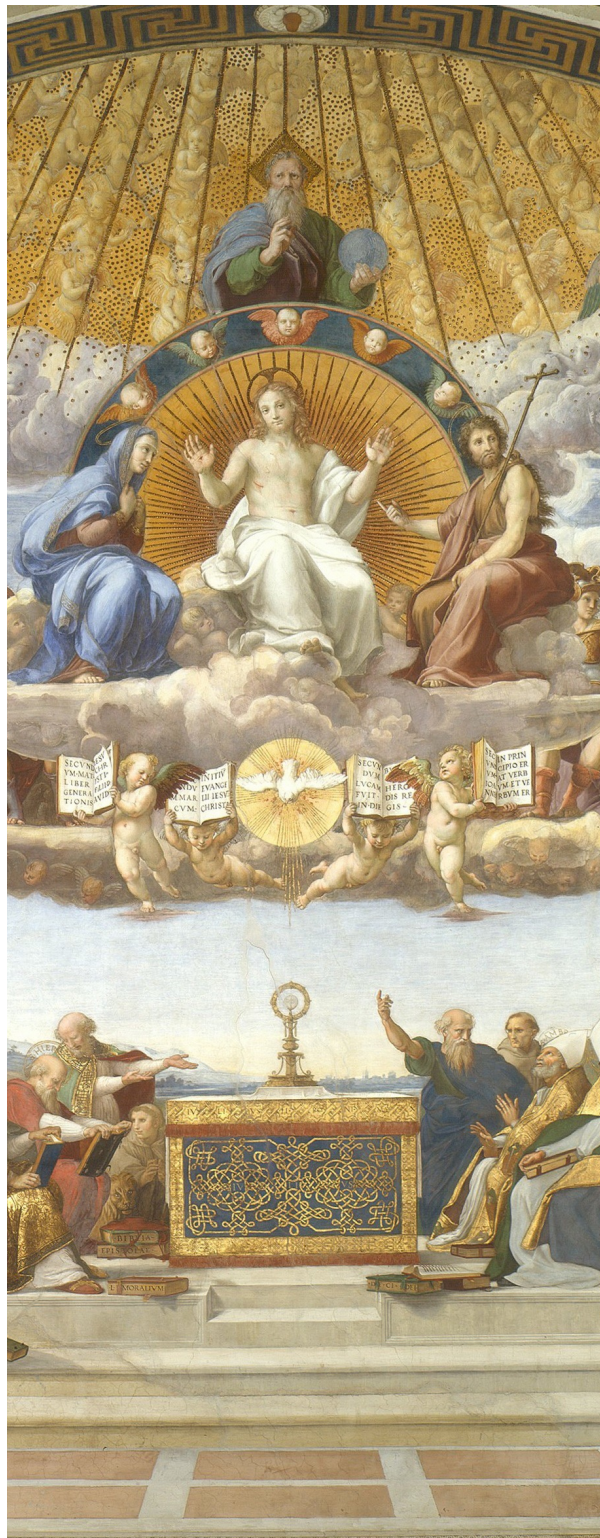
A Living Sacrifice of Praise: Some Revived Dimensions of the Mystery of the Eucharist



Fr. Roger J. Landry • Clergy Days for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia
Cape May, New Jersey • March 20, 2023

The Eucharistic Revival

- One of the most significant initiatives the U.S. bishops have ever initiated.
- It's a response to a crisis in Eucharistic knowledge, faith, amazement, love and life.
- This crisis is seen, among other places, in:
 - Sunday Mass attendance
 - Eucharistic illiteracy
 - Spiritual "Long COVID"
 - Eucharistic scandals
 - Ordinary scandal of many not behaving as if we really believe what we profess.
 - Inadequate and often erroneous understanding of what the Mass is.



Understanding the Mass

- St. John Paul II, writing in 2004 about the shadows regarding the Eucharist since the Council, wrote in *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, “At times one encounters an extremely reductive understanding of the Eucharistic mystery. Stripped of its sacrificial meaning, it is celebrated as if it were simply a fraternal banquet” (10).
- The Catechism (1328-32) describes several names for the Mass: Eucharist, Lord’s Supper, Breaking of Bread, Synaxis, Memorial, Holy Sacrifice, Holy and Divine Liturgy, Holy Communion, and Holy Mass.
- Bishop Barron has said that since Vatican II, there has been excessive emphasis on Mass as a meal or banquet, trying to remedy what many thought was an excessive emphasis on the Mass as sacrifice.



Post-Conciliar Tension

- Since Vatican II and its subsequent liturgical reforms, there has been a tension between the Mass as Holy Sacrifice and the Mass as Sacred Banquet. Many of the liturgical debates have flowed downstream from this debate: about Church architecture, the nature and orientation of the altar, the identity of the priest, how to receive Holy Communion, etc.
- St. John Paul II wrote in *Mane Nobiscum Domine*, that while the “most evident dimension” of the Eucharist is that it is a meal, “it must not be forgotten that the Eucharistic meal also has a profoundly and primarily *sacrificial* meaning. In the Eucharist, Christ makes present to us anew the sacrifice offered once for all on Golgotha. Present in the Eucharist as the Risen Lord, he nonetheless bears the marks of his passion, of which every Mass is a ‘memorial,’ as the Liturgy reminds us in the acclamation following the consecration” (15).



A Living Sacrifice of Praise

- One of the key theological understandings that need to be recovered for a Eucharistic Revival is a sense of the Mass as our participation in the sacred Sacrifice of Christ.
- I've been asked to speak about the sacrificial dimension of the Mass. I'd like to do so in three parts:
 - A quick review of the theology of Mass as sacrifice in the recent Magisterium.
 - A focus on our participation as priests in that sacrifice
 - Some thoughts on how we help the people we serve grasp more profoundly the sacrificial dimension of the Mass and enter into it.



SECOND EDITION

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH



REVISED IN ACCORDANCE WITH
THE OFFICIAL LATIN TEXT
PROMULGATED BY POPE JOHN PAUL II

The Catechism on the Sacrifice of the Mass

- Mass is called “the Holy Sacrifice, because it makes present the one sacrifice of Christ the Savior and includes the Church's offering. The terms ‘holy sacrifice of the Mass, ‘sacrifice of praise,’ ‘spiritual sacrifice,’ ‘pure and holy sacrifice’ are also used, since it completes and surpasses all the sacrifices of the Old Covenant.” (1330).
- “In the institution narrative, the power of the words and the action of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit, make sacramentally present under the species of bread and wine Christ's body and blood, his sacrifice offered on the cross once for all” (1353)
- “The sacrificial character of the Eucharist is manifested in the very words of institution.... In the Eucharist Christ gives us the very body which he gave up for us on the cross, the very blood which he “poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (1365)

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- “The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it re-presents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its memorial and because it applies its fruit” (1366)
- “The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice: ‘The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different’” (1367).
- “The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. ... In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body. ... Christ's sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering” (1368).

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- “The Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord's body and blood. The celebration of the Eucharistic sacrifice is wholly directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ through communion. To receive communion is to receive Christ himself who has offered himself for us” (1382).
- “The altar, around which the Church is gathered in the celebration of the Eucharist, represents the two aspects of the same mystery: the altar of the sacrifice and the table of the Lord” (1383).

St. John Paul II on the Mass as Sacrifice

- The Mass “is the sacrifice of the Cross perpetuated down the ages” (EE 11).
- Jesus “did not merely say: ‘This is my body,’ ‘this is my blood,’ but went on to add: ‘which is given for you,’ ‘which is poured out for you’ (Lk 22:19-20). Jesus did not simply state that what he was giving them to eat and drink was his body and his blood; he also expressed *its sacrificial meaning* and made sacramentally present his sacrifice which would soon be offered on the Cross for the salvation of all” (EE 12).
- “The Church constantly draws her life from the redeeming sacrifice; she approaches it not only through faith-filled remembrance, but also through a real contact, since *this sacrifice is made present ever anew*, sacramentally perpetuated, in every community which offers it at the hands of the consecrated minister. ... The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are *one single sacrifice*.’ ... The sacrificial nature of the Eucharistic mystery cannot therefore be understood as something separate, independent of the Cross or only indirectly referring to the sacrifice of Calvary” (EE 12).



St. John Paul II on the Mass as Sacrifice

- “By virtue of its close relationship to the sacrifice of Golgotha, the Eucharist is *a sacrifice in the strict sense*, and not only in a general way, as if it were simply a matter of Christ's offering himself to the faithful as their spiritual food. The gift of his love and obedience to the point of giving his life (cf. *Jn 10:17-18*) is in the first place a gift to his Father. Certainly it is a gift given for our sake, and indeed that of all humanity, yet it is *first and foremost a gift to the Father*. ... In giving his sacrifice to the Church, Christ has also made his own the spiritual sacrifice of the Church, which is called to offer herself in union with the sacrifice of Christ. This is the teaching of the Second Vatican Council concerning all the faithful: “Taking part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is the source and summit of the whole Christian life, they offer the divine victim to God, and offer themselves along with it” (EE 13).
- “The Eucharistic Sacrifice makes present not only the mystery of the Saviour's passion and death, but also the mystery of the resurrection which crowned his sacrifice” (EE 14)



St. John Paul II on the Mass as Sacrifice

- “The saving efficacy of the sacrifice is fully realized when the Lord's body and blood are received in communion.... *The Eucharist is a true banquet*, in which Christ offers himself as our nourishment” (EE 16).
- “Though the idea of a ‘banquet’ naturally suggests familiarity, the Church has never yielded to the temptation to trivialize this ‘intimacy’ with her Spouse by forgetting that he is also her Lord and that the ‘banquet’ always remains a sacrificial banquet marked by the blood shed on Golgotha” (EE 48).
- “The mystery of the Eucharist – sacrifice, presence, banquet – *does not allow for reduction or exploitation*; it must be experienced and lived in its integrity” (EE 61).



Pope Benedict XVI on the Mass as Sacrifice



- “Jesus is the *true* paschal lamb who freely gave himself in sacrifice for us, and thus brought about the new and eternal covenant” (SC 9).
- “In instituting the sacrament of the Eucharist, Jesus anticipates and makes present the sacrifice of the Cross and the victory of the resurrection. At the same time, he reveals that he himself is the *true* sacrificial lamb, destined in the Father's plan from the foundation of the world” (SC 10).
- “By his command to ‘do this in remembrance of me,’ he asks us to respond to his gift and to make it sacramentally present. ... In this way, Jesus left us the task of entering into his ‘hour.’ The Eucharist draws us into Jesus' act of self-oblation. More than just statically receiving the incarnate *Logos*, we enter into the very dynamic of his self-giving” (SC 11).

Pope Benedict XVI on the Mass as Sacrifice



- “The Synod Fathers also drew attention to the presentation of the gifts. ... This humble and simple gesture is actually very significant: in the bread and wine that we bring to the altar, all creation is taken up by Christ the Redeemer to be transformed and presented to the Father. In this way we also bring to the altar all the pain and suffering of the world, in the certainty that everything has value in God's eyes. ... God invites man to participate in bringing to fulfilment his handiwork, and in so doing, gives human labor its authentic meaning, since, through the celebration of the Eucharist, it is united to the redemptive sacrifice of Christ” (SC 47).
- ”It is not the eucharistic food that is changed into us, but rather we who are mysteriously transformed by it. Christ nourishes us by uniting us to himself. ... Here the eucharistic celebration appears in all its power as the source and summit of the Church's life, since it expresses at once both the origin and the fulfilment of the new and definitive worship of God, the *logiké latreía*” (SC 70).

Sacrifice in the 1970 Roman Missal

- Sometimes there's criticism that the sacrificial dimension of the Mass has been stripped down in the Missal of St. Paul VI, but the sacrificial dimension is quite clear:
- Offertory and Preface
 - Offering of fruit of the earth/vine and the work of human hands
 - “With humble spirit and contrite heart may we be accepted by you, O Lord, and may our sacrifice in your sight this day be pleasing to you, Lord God.”
 - “Pray, brothers and sisters, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.”
 - “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”
 - “Lift up your hearts”





Sacrifice in the 1970 Roman Missal

- Eucharistic Prayer I:
 - Accept and bless these gifts, these offerings, these holy and unblemished sacrifices, which we offer you firstly for your holy catholic Church....
 - For them, we offer you this sacrifice of praise or they offer it for themselves and all who are dear to them.
 - Be pleased to look upon these offerings with a serene and kindly countenance, and to accept them, as once you were pleased to accept the gifts of your servant Abel the just, the sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith, and the offering of your high priest Melchizedek, a holy sacrifice, a spotless victim.



Sacrifice in the 1970 Roman Missal

- Eucharistic Prayer II:
 - Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of his Death and Resurrection, we offer you, Lord, the Bread of life and the Chalice of salvation ...

- Eucharistic Prayer III:
 - You never cease to gather a people to yourself, so that from the rising of the sun to its setting a pure sacrifice may be offered to your name.
 - As we celebrate the memorial of the saving Passion of your Son, his wondrous Resurrection and Ascension into heaven, and as we look forward to his second coming, we offer you in thanksgiving this holy and living sacrifice.
 - Look, we pray, upon the oblation of your Church and, recognizing the sacrificial Victim by whose death you willed to reconcile us to yourself, grant that we ... may become one body, one spirit in Christ.
 - May he make of us an eternal offering to you...
 - May this Sacrifice of our reconciliation... advance the peace and salvation of all the world.



Sacrifice in the 1970 Roman Missal

- Eucharistic Prayer IV:
 - Therefore, O Lord, as we now celebrate the memorial of our redemption, ... and, as we await his coming in glory, we offer you his Body and Blood, the sacrifice acceptable to you which brings salvation to the whole world.
 - Look, O Lord, upon the Sacrifice which you yourself have provided for your Church, ...
 - ... That, gathered into one body by the Holy Spirit, they may truly become a living sacrifice in Christ to the praise of your glory.
 - Therefore, Lord, remember now all for whom we offer this sacrifice:

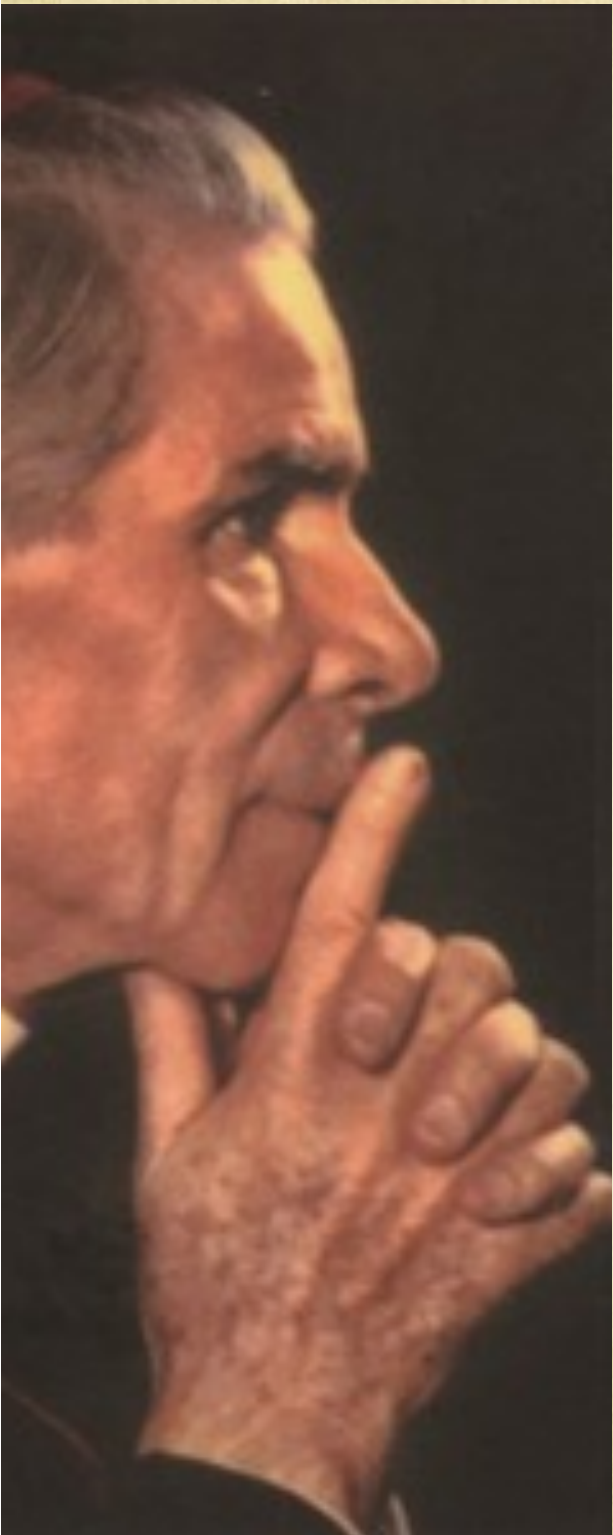


Sacrifice in the 1970 Roman Missal

- Eucharistic Prayer For Various Needs:
 - Look with favor on the oblation of your Church, in which we show forth the paschal Sacrifice of Christ that has been handed on to us.

- Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation I
 - Therefore, as we celebrate the memorial of your Son Jesus Christ, ... we offer you, who are our faithful and merciful God, this sacrificial Victim who reconciles to you the human race.
 - Look kindly, most compassionate Father, on those you unite to yourself by the Sacrifice of your Son, ...

- Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II
 - Celebrating, therefore, the memorial of the Death and Resurrection of your Son, ... we offer you what you have bestowed on us, the Sacrifice of perfect reconciliation.



Priestly Participation in the Mass

- As soon as we were ordained priests, we were told, “Receive the oblation of the holy people to be offered to God. Understand what you will do, imitate what you will celebrate and conform your life to the mystery of the Lord’s cross.”
- Priestly life is meant to become a commentary on the words of consecration, to find its source, summit, root and center in Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.
- We’re called to imitate Christ’s oblation to God the Father and conform our life to Calvary.
- St. Augustine and Archbishop Sheen: *Sacerdos et Victima*



Priestly Participation in the Mass

- The importance of prayerful preparation for Mass, to focus on what we're really doing.
- Preparatory prayers as we vest, to yoke ourselves to Christ.
- Statement of intention.
- *Ars celebrandi – mens concordet voci*
- Preaching as part of the oblation.
- Communion
- Thanksgiving



St. Manuel Gonzalez Garcia

- “Every altar is a Calvary where Jesus is immolated and offered up in the sacrifice of redemption. If the first Mass had the power to transform the world, the rest of the Masses celebrated have the power to preserve and deepen that transformation. If only we would live our Masses! To live the Mass is to know the Mass thoroughly, to reverence the Mass highly for its value, to take as our norm of behavior what Jesus does in the Mass, and to delight in the Mass. Our utmost happiness on earth should be these words (if I am a priest): ‘I celebrate Mass’ or (if I am a member of the faithful), ‘I participate in the Mass.’ This knowledge, reverence, imitation and delight in the Mass should be so deeply rooted in me that during every hour of every day, it could be said of me, ‘He is living his Mass.’”

Saint Josemaria Escriva



- St. Josemaria lived from one Mass to the next, in thanksgiving and preparation. He strove to make his whole day a continual Mass, making each day “totally Eucharistic.”
- He wrote in 1945: “In this way, closely united to Jesus in the Eucharist, we will attain a continual presence of God, in the midst of the ordinary occupations proper to each one’s situation on this earthly pilgrimage of ours, seeking our Lord at all times and in all things. ... Only thus will we be contemplative souls in the midst of the world, as our vocation demands, and we will become truly priestly souls, converting every aspect of our being into a continual praise of God.”
- Saint Josemaría taught in a practical way how to make the Mass the center of our daily life. He divided the 24 hours of the day into two parts: Until noon he lived the presence of God by concentrating on thanksgiving for the Mass that he had celebrated that morning, and after the Angelus he began to prepare himself for the next day’s Mass.

Saint Josemaria Escriva



- He urged everyone to live in accord with the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of the Church, channeling one's whole existence through the Eucharistic sacrifice each day: "Keep struggling, so that the Holy Sacrifice of the Altar really becomes the center and the root of your interior life, and so your whole day will turn into an act of worship – an extension of the Mass you have attended and a preparation for the next. This will then overflow in aspirations, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and the offering up of your professional work and your family life."
- "A man who fails to love the Mass, fails to love Christ. We must make an effort to 'live' the Mass with calm and serenity, with devotion and affection. And this is why I have always suspected that those who want the Mass to be over with quickly show, with this insensitive attitude, that they have not yet realized what the sacrifice of the altar means."



Venerable Francis Xavier Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan

- Bishop of Hue, Archbishop of Saigon, imprisoned for 13 years (1975-88) by the Communists in Vietnam, 9 in isolation.
- Eventually released and became VP, then President of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.
- “Please send me a little wine as medicine for my stomachache.”
- Each day during isolation, as close as he could to what he thought was 3 pm, he would celebrate Mass from memory with three drops of wine, one drop of water and a few breadcrumbs on his hand.
- “Those were the most beautiful Masses of my life.”

Venerable Francis Xavier Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan

- In a reeducation camp with 50 other crowded prisoners, he would celebrate at 9:30 pm over his bed with Catholics watching guard.
- Under a mosquito net, he would distribute tiny pieces of hosts to Catholics.
- Then he would wrap tiny fragments of the Eucharist in the aluminum wrappers of cigarette packs, keep one in his shirt pocket and distribute others to faithful Catholic prisoners.



Venerable Francis Xavier Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan

- *Road to Hope: A Gospel from Prison*, his “five loaves and two fish.”
- “The whole of the Lord’s life was directed toward Calvary. The whole of our life should be oriented toward the Eucharistic celebration.”
- “If you appreciate the value of the Eucharistic Celebration, you will participate in it no matter how far away or difficult it is. The greater the sacrifice involved, the more evident is your love for God.”
- “If you are all alone in some remote place or in the darkness of a prison, turn your mind toward the altars of the world where our Lord Jesus Christ is offering his sacrifice. Unite yourself to the Eucharistic sacrifice. Then your heart will be filled to overflowing with consolation and courage.”



Venerable Francis Xavier Cardinal Nguyen Van Thuan

- “If you have lost everything but still have the Blessed Sacrament, you actually still have everything, because you have the Lord of heaven present here on earth.”
- “The Eucharist shapes Christians.”
- “As the drop of water put into the chalice mingles with the wine, so your life should become one with Christ’s.”
- “Holy people are those who continue to live the Eucharistic celebration throughout the day.”





St. Isaac Jogues

- St. Isaac Jogues (1607-1646) born in France, desired to be a Jesuit, priest, and missionary, in order not just to bring the Gospel of Jesus to the New World but Jesus himself in the Blessed Sacrament.
- He was accustomed in seminary not only to attending Mass every day but to spending long vigils in prayer before the tabernacle. He well knew that as a missionary, traveling by canoe for days, with limited supplies of unleavened bread and wine, there would likely be times when he would not have access to the altar or tabernacle, but he longed to be able to found new chapels, altars, and tabernacles so that many others who did not know yet the ongoing reality of Christ's incarnation might come to realize that God is with them, too.



St. Isaac Jogues

- After six years as a missionary, he was captured by the Mohawks close to Three Rivers in Quebec. He was brought down to Ossernenon, modern Auriesville, on the northern lip of the Mohawk River. Among the tortures St. Isaac needed to endure was to have his thumbs and index fingers severely mutilated, which meant that even if he had the liberty to celebrate Mass, he would no longer be able to, because according to the rubrics at the time, the priest had to hold the consecrated host exclusively with those severed digits.
- This man of the Eucharist ended up going 17 months without even being able to receive the Eucharist, until, with the help of the Dutch, he was able to escape through modern day Albany, Manhattan, and England to arrive in France on Christmas Day 1643. He longed to Receive



St. Isaac Jogues

- As soon as he disembarked and had asked directions to the closest Church, he went to confession, attended Mass and received Holy Communion. “It was then,” he said, “that I began to live again and tasted the sweetness of my deliverance.” He had longed for so long to receive!
- Through the help of the Jesuit Provincial and the Queen of France, he petitioned Pope Urban VIII for a dispensation. The Pope replied, “*Indignum esset Christi martyrem Christi non bibere sanguinem.*” “It would be unworthy that a martyr of Christ not drink Christ’s blood.” Finally, in March 1644, after 20 months, he was able to go up to the altar of God, hold Christ in his mangled hands, and receive Christ’s Precious Body and Blood.
- He was martyred ultimately because of the Mass kit he had left in Auriesville in preparation for Mass.

Helping Our People Learn How to Enter the Sacrifice of the Mass

- Proper Catechesis on:
 - Sacrificial dimension of the Mass, Christ's, the Church's and ours.
 - The Common Priesthood of the Faithful – a kingdom of priests.
 - Source and Summit, root and center.
- Helping them to learn how to pray the Mass
 - Eucharistic adoration outside of Mass
 - Preparation for Mass
 - Their own ars celebrandi
 - Actuosa participatio



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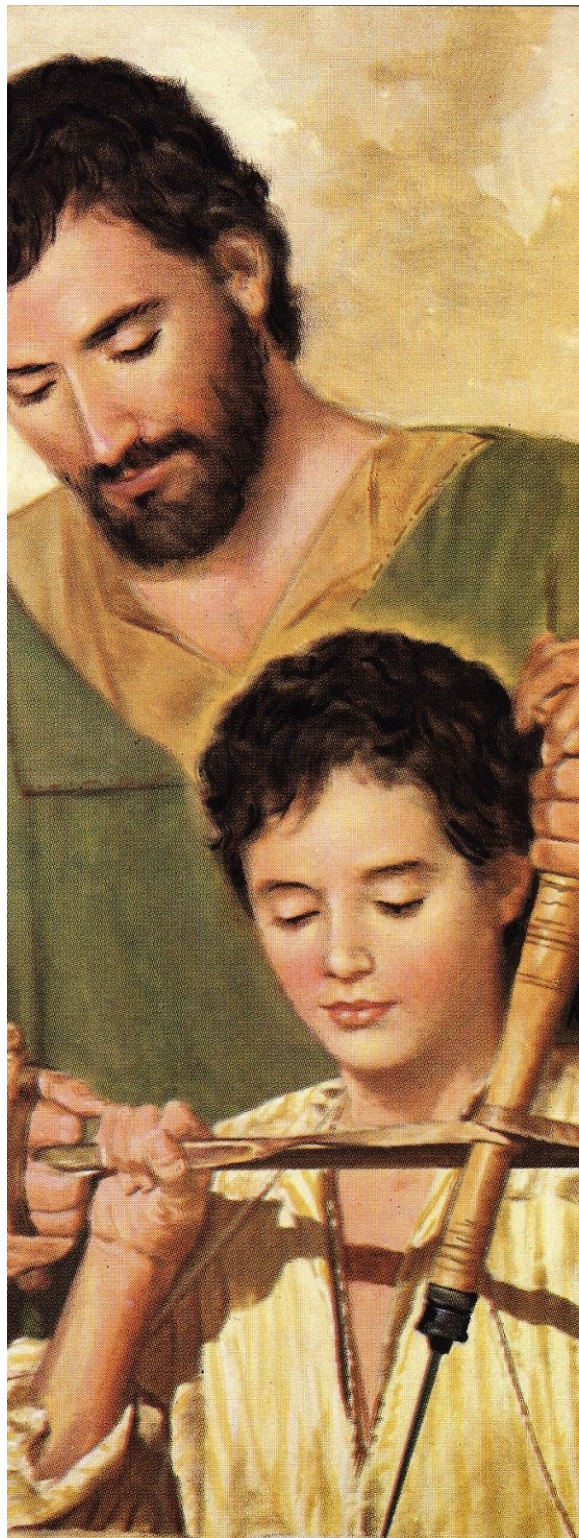
- *Actuosa Participatio*:
 - SC 52: The Second Vatican Council rightly emphasized the active, full and fruitful participation of the entire People of God in the eucharistic celebration. ... Some misunderstanding has occasionally arisen concerning the precise meaning of this participation. The word ‘participation’ does not refer to mere external activity during the celebration, ... [but rather] greater awareness of the mystery being celebrated and its relationship to daily life. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* encouraged the faithful to take part not as “strangers or silent spectators” but as participants in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, actively and devoutly.”
 - SC 55: *Actuosa participatio* involves “constant conversion,” “recollection and silence,” “fasting,” “when necessary, sacramental confession,” and an “effort to participate actively in the life of the Church.”





Learning from St. Joseph

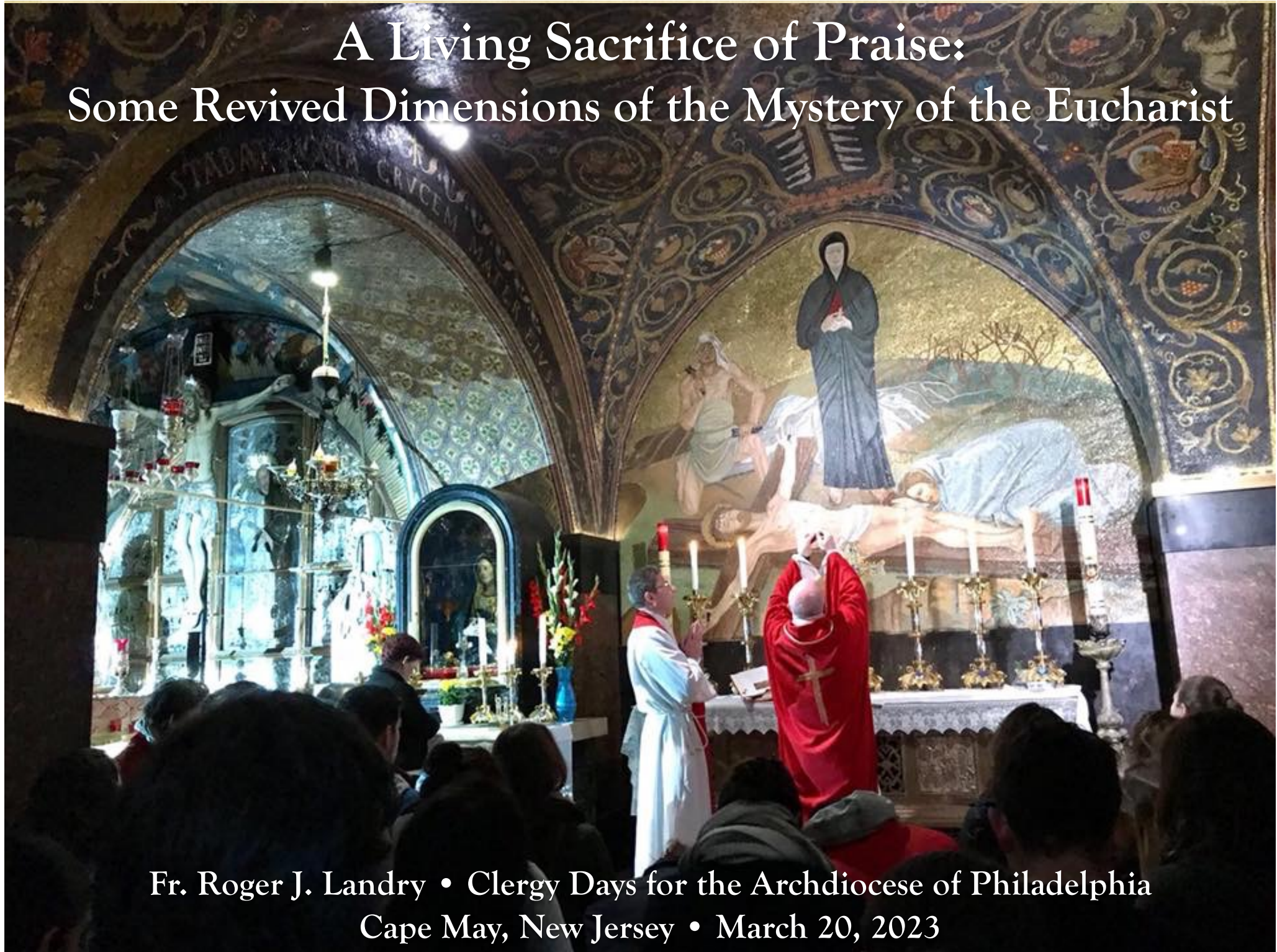
- Father Faber: “For years Joseph lived in the awe-filled sanctity of that which to the priest is but a moment. The little house at Nazareth was as the outspread square of the white corporal. All the words he spoke were almost words of consecration.”
- We could say that the cave in Bethlehem and the Holy House in Nazareth became tabernacles where he and Mary lived in the Real Presence with adoration.
- Before Jesus ever said the words of institution, St. Joseph was offering his body and blood, sweat and tears, everything, for Jesus.
- It’s fitting that Pope Francis decreed that we need to mention his name in every Eucharistic prayer.
- St. Joseph shows us how to live Eucharistic lives, focused on the incarnation as well as making our lives commentaries on the words of consecration.



Learning from St. Joseph

- St. Paul VI on March 19, 1966
 - “This is the secret of the greatness of St. Joseph...: [he] made his life a service, a sacrifice, to the mystery of the Incarnation and to the redemptive mission that is joined to it; [he gave] his total gift of himself, of his life, of his work; having converted his human vocation to domestic love into the superhuman oblation of himself, of his heart and of all his abilities, into the love placed at the service of the Messiah conceived in his home.”
- Like the Blessed Virgin Mary, he united himself totally to the Christ’s sacrificial incarnation, by which Christ said, “A body you have prepared for me. ... Behold I have come to do your will” (Heb 10:6-7).
- He assisted Jesus, and cooperated with him, as Jesus sought throughout all of his life “continually [to offer God a sacrifice of praise” (Heb 13:15).

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