

## Lenten Pastoral March Newsletter

A basic Lenten devotion is surely that of the Passion of Christ, which in turn takes us to Mass, the Crucifixion and death of Our Lord Jesus Christ made present upon our altars. He dies, He dies there, He dies for me. No one may be indifferent. It is indeed the Mass that matters.

The Novus Ordo has made the Mass into an invalid mess, at best a wordy, trendy worship service, Protestant style. But it always betrays its heart, centered as it is on man, not God, determinately secular, not sacred. God, in fact, is gone. There's only bread and sometimes it's just a circus. Often it resembles a poorly produced high school graduation. You do well to flee it. It is not the worship of the Catholic Church.

But we must not imagine that the Novus Ordo are the only ones who err about the Mass. Sunday Mass for some of ours has degenerated into a once or twice a month affair, even those for whom great distance or availability are not the issue. Something else is. "No sense overdoing it." Maybe "camp" calls, as they say in the South, or maybe Sunday sports. Gee, I wonder who thought up that one? After all, it *is* the weekend, **my** weekend. Time to get away, to kick back, chill, catch up on the *zzzz*.

Wake up call. God gave us a commandment, the Third; and a Precept of the Church, the First. He gave us our week, God did, and He demands a few hours on its first day for man's first duty, worship, mankind's corporate act of submission to the Father by means of the Sacrifice of His Son. Upon this our eternity depends.

Our parents and grandparents, horrified at the new religion and the loss of the True Mass, began our movements and missions, our chapels and churches. They wept for joy to find a real Mass again, and went, Mass after Mass, the extra mile and more for the sheer love of God and our Faith. They gave their all, and were only too happy to do so. Would you do the same? If your Faith is sliding, Lent is the time to strengthen it. If you do not love your Mass, you will lose it.

The Mass is not a popularity contest for the priest, nor a referendum on the pastor's decisions. Why do you think the celebrant of Mass wears sacred vestments, and his every word and gesture is submitted to the rubrics of the missal? He is not Fr. Smith, but Jesus Christ at the altar, truly an *Alter Christus*. We do not respect and obey our clergy because they are perfect in our own eyes. One recent writer phrased it thus. "The priest is honored because he is a priest. The office empties the man. At Mass I am on Mt. Thabor with Christ Transfigured. With the apostles, I must see no one, but only Jesus."

No, the Mass is not about the man, the priest, any more than it is about Man collectively. That's Socialist thinking. The Mass is about the God Man Jesus Christ, giving perfect worship to His Father, and we with and in Him, at Calvary. Be there. Don't miss it for this world.

With my blessing this Lent, and every prayer for your best Lent ever, lived in union with Jesus Crucified, and Mary of Sorrows at His side. Love your Mass.

*Most Reverend Daniel L. Dolan*