

June 19, 2022
Corpus Cristi Sunday
Gen 14:18-20
Ps 110:1, 2, 3, 4
1 Cor 11:23-26
Lk 9:11b-17

WHY COME TO MASS ON SUNDAY?

One Sunday morning, a mother knocks on her son's bedroom door and tells him it's time to get up and go to Church. **"I'm not going to Church this morning,"** the son says. **"You have to get up and go to Church,"** says the mother. **"No, I'm not,"** says the son. **"Yes, you are!"** says the mother.

"No, I'm not. They don't like me, and I don't like them," says the son. **"Give me two good reasons why I have to go."** he added. So the mother patiently replies, **"First, you are 55 years old. Second, you are the pastor!"**

Joking aside, **why do you come to Mass on Sundays? What are your reasons for coming even on weekdays? Do you communicate to your loved ones who have been away from the Church your reasons for coming to Mass?**

There are so many reasons to come to Mass and let me give you at least (8) eight reasons:

- 1.** When we come to Mass, especially on Sundays, we are acknowledging the importance of the **Lord's Day** in our lives. We love him and so we try to follow his 3rd Commandment which is **'Keeping the Lord's Day holy.'**
- 2.** When we come to Mass, we connect our life to the life of the praying community. We are conveying a message that we are not apart from the community of faith. Rather, we are showing that we value the prayer and community life of the Church. We are also conveying that private worship is not enough. We have to come together for communal prayer.
- 3.** When we come to Mass, we are expressing our faith in the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead. Just as he rose from the dead, our gathering articulates our hope that we too will rise with him in the end. Hence, we, the community, reveal to others that we are people of hope, not of despair.
- 4.** When we come to Mass, we are conveying to God our gratitude for the many blessings bestowed on us. At the same time, we are asking him to help and guide us in all the things that are about to happen in our lives.

5. When we come to Mass, we are opening ourselves to be challenged by God, through his Word and Sacrament, to see the world around us the way he sees it. He challenges us also to love the way he loves.
6. When we come to Mass, we are calling God to nourish our souls as we receive him in Holy Communion. We are appealing to him to continue working on us to become more and more like him in works and words.
7. When we come to Mass, we are telling others of our desire to encounter the 'real presence' of Lord Jesus in the celebration. We don't see and talk to him in human form, but we encounter him in the Scripture, in the community gathered, in the Breaking of the Bread, and in the presider.
8. When we come to Mass, we are honoring the dying wish of our friend and Lord, Jesus Christ. **Remember what he did before his passion and death?** Gathering his disciples during the Last Supper, he said to them at table: **"Do this in remembrance/memory of me."** (Lk 22:19)

Do you have other reasons for coming to Mass? Please let me know and I will give you time in the celebration to share your reflection to our parish community. It is important that we learn from each other's faith-life journey so we can appreciate more what we are celebrating here every day.

Today the Universal Church celebrates the **Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ**. Our celebration is also called **Corpus Christi Sunday**. When we talk about the **Body and Blood of Christ**, we talk about the **Sacrifice of the Mass** instituted by our Lord Jesus at the Last Supper. At the time of the institution of this Sacrament, our Lord Jesus used bread and wine and said: **"This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me. And likewise, the cup, after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you."** (Lk 22:19-20) This truth about the Mass/Holy Eucharist was also shared by St. Paul to the Corinthians in the proclamation of the 2nd reading we have heard. The bread and wine that our Lord Jesus offers at Mass is truly his Body and Blood that nourishes our souls and gives strength for our journey. We will only see the change in substance (transubstantiation), if and only if, we use the eyes of our faith.

Also, today the secular world observes **Father's Day**. I would like to share with you something about my father and the Mass/Eucharist. My father was a member of the '**ChrisTer's Club**' of our parish. He came to celebrate the Mass with the parish community during Christmas and Easter only. Outside of that schedule, he was nowhere to be found. Whenever I invited him to join me for the Mass he would reason out, **"Just go. Anyway, I am praying here at home."** In 1989, when I entered the seminary to study for the priesthood, things changed as regards the spiritual life of my father. In

his own volition he started to come to Mass every day. Rain or shine, he was there in Church 15 minutes before the Mass starts. Our house was a mile away from the Church and so he would walk when the weather permits. If not, he took the public transportation. He stopped coming to Mass when he got sick and died on June 19, 1998. His devotion to the Holy Eucharist/Mass, I do believe, helped me persevere on my vocation to be a religious-missionary-priest. I know that he is always with me in spirit and so I would like to tell him, **"Tatay, thank you for praying for me and my siblings in the celebration of the Mass. I will continue to pray for you, and Nanay in all the Masses I will preside. Happy Father's Day!"**

To all the fathers here present, please continue to journey with your kids particularly as regards their spiritual life. Bring them closer to Jesus! **Happy Father's Day to you!**

God bless and stay safe!