



Boston Catholic Journal

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THE MOST HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS:

A Primer for Clueless Catholics

Part III

"I Don't Think We're in Kansas Anymore, Toto"

So, we have discovered that He is there.

From the beginning of time men and women have sought God. Today we seek Him still ... and we have found Him.

You have entered the Church and are about to pass beyond, as it were, the gates that lead to the vestibule of Heaven ... which is timeless.

Beyond those doors you will encounter, as much as is possible in this life, something very like Heaven where the past, the future, and the eternal are present. History, understood as something past – as events that once occurred but have receded into a frame of time no longer available to us – is, or soon will be, gathered up into the present and be enacted once again before you. It is not that the present time has left us, as that the present has penetrated the past, and the past the present, so that we can no longer speak of some things that once occurred (although they did occur at some definite point in history, in time), but only of things occurring now, here, presently, immediately before us. The past, in a very real sense, becomes present to us – not as a memory, but as a present reality.

Do you remember the sequence in the "Wizard of Oz" in which Dorothy's house is swept up in a tornado, spun relentlessly in the furious skies, and dropped suddenly, not in Kansas from which it was uprooted, but in the Land of Oz? Dorothy approaches the door warily. Up to that point in the movie, all is in black and white – and then ... as Dorothy opens the door, beyond which lies the new world, a effulgence of magnificent color is revealed to her, pours in upon her. It is a world of recognizable things, by and large, but they are suddenly invested with unspeakable life and color and beauty. Hidden from her eyes, however, at least at first, are the people who dwell there, the yet unseen. This is a metaphor for your standing before the doors that lead into Church, into the place where the Most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be enacted, celebrated.

You leave the whirlwind of the world behind you, and all the gray and lifeless things that

accompany you every day of the week except this day. Beyond the door is a new world, a world of things unseen by the eyes – but a strange inversion occurs. With eyes wide in astonishment, Dorothy opened the door and entered a new world.

With us, that new world of unspeakable life and beauty will be revealed to us ... when we close our eyes.

As the eyes of the body close, the eyes of faith open.

And what they will see, discover to us, reveal, will touch the fiber of our being ... and more than touch it, transform it!

What we have learned today:

The Mass is Timeless

Part 4: The Road to Golgotha

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