



Boston Catholic Journal

www.boston-catholic-journal.com
editor@boston-catholic-journal.com

THE MOST HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS:

A Primer for Clueless Catholics

Part IV

The Road to Golgotha

We had just said that,

"With us, that new world of unspeakable life and beauty will be revealed ... 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!"

How so?

Once you begin to understand *where* you are – *really and truly* – a change, a profound change, will begin to occur within you. You will be unable to prevent it. Initially – even necessarily – it will come to you through your understanding, and as you enter more deeply into the realization of *where* you are, your understanding itself will begin to be eclipsed by something deeper still, by something more vital.

Understanding will "tell" you where you are – but *faith* will take you beyond the appearances, to the realities beneath them. The change that will come will occur within **you** – not in the appearances of things about you.

You will have changed.

But as we had also said, before any of this occurs, you must first *understand* what is happening before you – *and it is this, and nothing less than this in any way:*

Jesus Christ is being crucified before you. He is on the Cross! And you are witnessing it. You are even taking part in it!

It is not *another* Sacrifice, but the **same** Sacrifice that He enacted 2000 years ago. It is not a "re-enactment" much as great battles are re-enacted for theatrical effect. It is an "*enactment*", the

"same" enactment, **re**-presented to us (not represented to us, but "**re**-presented" to us ... enacted again while not being a second or another sacrifice. It is the same Sacrifice, with one exception: it is unbloody ... just as it was unbloody when He gathered His Apostles around Him at *the very first Mass* on the night He was betrayed and before He was crucified:

"The day before He suffered he took bread in His sacred hands and looking up to heaven, to you, His almighty Father, He gave you thanks and praise. He broke the bread, gave it to His disciples and said: Take this, all of you and eat it: **this is My body** which will be given up for you. When supper was ended, He took the cup. Again He gave you thanks and praise, gave the cup to his disciples, and said: Take this, all of you, and drink from it: **this is the cup of My blood**, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant." (Eucharistic Prayer I).

But now *you* witness it before you, take part in it ... see the unspeakable value of your life ... and the consequences of your choices ... before you!

Time, we told you, had been left in the vestibule as we entered the Church. It no longer divides us from that day.

We have entered into something sacred, and everything sacred is invested with the eternal, for it pertains to God Who **is** eternal. Whose Son is eternal. The Son of God, now here before us on that Cross of agony hewn from our sins.

How then will you enter?

Everything that leads up to the Canon of the Mass (that most sacred part of the Mass in which the *Consecration* occurs, when the bread becomes Jesus' Body, the wine His Blood) is a prologue to that epic moment when He will be sacrificed before you.

When you passed the doors leading into the Church and to the Sanctuary, you began to wend your way through the road that leads to Golgotha, the Place of the Skull – the Mount of Crucifixion, the Altar of Sacrifice.

Not unlike 2000 years ago, the people that line the way, the voices, the talking, the laughing, together with all the other things that compete for your attention as you walk that road to your pew – one and all, they will call you aside, distract you as though to call you away from a false prophet on a road well worn and ultimately tiresome ...

Something has changed, however. This day is unlike other days. You begin to understand ...

How, then, will you enter?

What we have learned today:

The Mass is the enactment, *really and truly present before you*, of Jesus' Sacrifice on Calvary.

Part 5: Uncommon Courtesy

copyright © 2004 - 2007 Boston Catholic Journal