

Sponsor/Candidate Meeting #4 - Feb/March

Part I The Liturgy

Part II The Community

The Eucharistic Liturgy is the highest form of prayer. It combines community and God in a powerful way. Through Liturgy, we experience God four different ways.

1. In the Readings of God's word
2. In the presence of Christ in those gathered together - see Matthew 18:20 "*wherever two or more are gathered in my name, I am there among them.*"
3. In the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist
4. Through the person of the priest

The Eucharistic Liturgy then is a powerful experience of God that strengthens us for our daily lives.

The focus of this discussion is to understand the Mass, learn what makes our liturgy different from other Christian denominations, and why your involvement in community is important. Remember, we all partake in the celebration of the Mass; we all "say the Mass." We are all one body, sharing in the feast together with Jesus; the priest leads us in that celebration.

Discussion Format:

- Begin with prayer; perhaps invite the candidate to lead you in prayer if he or she is ready
- Bring your bible to this discussion and be prepared to take some notes down

As Catholics, we believe the bread and wine is not just a symbol of Christ, we believe **IT IS CHRIST**. How is this different from other Christian denominations? Look at the following biblical references that speak to this:

John 6: 32-59: What key points jump out at you about our differences?

Mark 14:22-25: What key points are made here?

Luke 22:17-20 What key points are made in this passage?

Presentation of the Gifts: When the gifts of bread, water, wine and money are brought before the Altar during Mass, we as a community within the church also bring our lives before God - all we have done - the good and the bad; We bring ourselves before God.

- When the priest elevates the cup and the host as we sing "Amen" we are also offering up all of us; our lives, every thought, every word and all our actions; we ask God to purify us.
 - Take a few moments and write down all the things you did yesterday....every little thing don't generalize.... Use the space below:

Communion: The Eucharist is Christ himself, to be food for our life journey. We are strengthened by his body and his blood to be Christ to one another in our thoughts, words, and actions.

- Reflect on the list you made earlier... **circle the things you could do better through the help of God.**
- We were not meant to walk this journey alone. There will be trials along the way, and God is always with us. Because of FREE WILL, he will never impose himself on us - He will wait patiently for you to come to HIM.
- **As you prepare for bed take time to reflect on your day, and ask God for help in the areas you didn't do so well. HE will answer you - so watch the people that are placed in your life, the things you read, and the situations you encounter... nothing is coincidental.**

Mass: Mass is not meant to be entertaining. It is the "Grand" event! We go to offer ourselves up to God, to be purified and fed in order to do Christ's work in the world.

- Some ways you **can be more "present" during the liturgy**
- **Sing and say the responses.** Each time you sing and participate is an act of prayer.
 - It's okay if you aren't the best singer in the world. I'm sure if you were you'd be part of the choir, but God doesn't care how you sound, He cares that you are truly present, not just going through the motions.
- **Reading the scripture passage before Mass begins** is another way you can be more present during the liturgy; reflect on what you think God might be saying to you.... Or how it applies to your life right now.

Sponsor/Candidate Activity

- Attend Mass together one weekend. Complete the Mass sheet;
- Please note for sponsor/Candidates that have distance issues - you can plan to watch a mass on EWTN together and talk about it; or you could reflect on the Mass from each respective parish and compare how God spoke to each of you through that experience.

Try to listen closely to what God might be saying to you personally in the Readings. Even though these were written thousands of years ago, we still have the same issues and problems in our society today. God has a plan for each of us and through the readings there may be certain words or phrases that jump out to you, or remind you of something in your own life; this is GOD speaking to you. How might what he is saying help you change your ways?

Use the Mass outline to fill in and discuss.

Sponsor/Candidate Meeting #4 Part II

Your Role in the life of the community

A community is comprised of a group of people living in the same area who share in the same interests, goals, belief systems. Talk about the different types of “Communities” you each belong to: ie (family, church, school, team, social, work)

- Pick two groups you each belong to and list them below

Sponsor	Candidate
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What characteristics make these groups strong?

What characteristics makes these groups weak?

What would the group look like if people chose not to be present or rarely showed up for meetings, events, games, etc?

What would the group look like if all the members decided to care deeply about one another, suffer for one another, and to serve one another?

- What demands might be made of you?
- What Sacrifices would you need to make?
- What might get in your way...what stumbling blocks might interfere with your role?
- What rewards might there be as a result of your work?

READ ACTS 2:43-47 How did the early church care for one another?

Based upon the reading above, what are some practical things you can do to make our church community better? Ie (Youth Group-EDGE, Confirmation, Faith Formation, Choir, Teen Mass, etc)

Discuss possible changes that would occur in our church if we all made this level of commitment.....

Choose a community service project to work on together. If distance poses a problem, you could each do a similar activity and write about the effects from both perspectives. Complete the Community Service Project Sheet