

The Year of Faith

Catechesis on the Mass

The Liturgy of the Word

This week in our catechesis on the Mass, we cover the Liturgy of the Word. Catholicism, unlike other religions, is not a religion of the book but rather a religion of the WORD. We believe the Word is God incarnate, Jesus Christ. Sacred Scripture is therefore most effective when proclaimed with the spoken word, which makes the Liturgy of the Word a true experience of the presence of Jesus Christ.

The readings for Holy Mass are selected based on a three year cycle for Sunday (Years A, B, and C) and a two year cycle for weekdays (Years 1 and 2). On Sunday, the First Reading is selected from the Old Testament or (during Easter Time) the Acts of the Apostles. We then respond to the reading with a Psalm Response. The Second Reading is always from a New Testament Epistle of the Book of Revelation. Another sung response follows: The Gospel Acclamation. The Gospel is then proclaimed solemnly, as that only a deacon, priest, or bishop may proclaim the Good News, which we stand for.

During special seasons and feasts, the readings are selected based on the mystery being celebrated. During Ordinary Time, they are chosen to maximize the amount of Scripture that we hear. On Sundays in Ordinary time, we have a semi-continuous reading of one of the Gospels through the year (Year A is Matthew. Year B is Mark with some of John. Year C is Luke.) The first reading is then chosen to match up with the Gospel somehow. The second reading gives a semi-continuous reading of one the epistles.

Next week, we cover the Creed...

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