

THE BEAUTY OF THE MASS Part 2

The Mass has had a few different names throughout history. In the New Testament, the Mass first was referred to as “*The Breaking of the Bread.*” This title recalled the action Jesus did at the Last Supper when he instituted the Eucharist and the action by which the disciples on the road to Emmaus recognized the Risen Jesus (Luke 24: 13-35).

In those early days, the Mass also was called “*Eucharist,*” a Greek word that means “*thanksgiving*” or “*to give thanks.*” During the Mass, we gather to give praise and thanks to God for the holy sacrifice of His beloved Son on Calvary that won salvation for us.

Later, the Mass was and is called the “*Holy Sacrifice.*” As Catholic Christians, we believe that the one and same Sacrifice of Christ on Calvary is made present or is re-presented in an un-bloody manner on the altar. We can close our eyes and know that the moment of salvation is here. The Sacrifice on Calvary is made accessible to us. That moment was and is so divine that it transcends all time and space and is made present to us believers so that we can enter into that paschal mystery.

And even later, our greatest prayer and act of worship was called the “*Mass,*” a word that derives from the old, final dismissal of the Eucharist. In Latin, the dismissal was “*Ite, missa est,*” which means “*Go, you are sent!*” We are sent forth to live what we just celebrated.