

SHORT INSTRUCTION ON HOLY MASS

Holy Mass is the most solemn act of the worship of God. It is now more than eighteen hundred years since our Lord Jesus Christ hung for three long hours on the Cross on Mount Calvary, and then died on it for our salvation—that is, to save us from sin and hell.

Mass is the same sacrifice as that of Calvary; the manner only in which it is offered is different: so that when you assist at it, you may think you are standing with our Blessed Lady and St. John at the foot of the cross.

The bread and wine are changed by the Priest in the middle of the Mass, at the Consecration, into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, who then offers Himself again to his Eternal Father for the salvation of mankind. The graces obtained for us by the shedding of our Lord's Blood on Calvary are given in an especial manner to those who hear Holy Mass devoutly.

You know that our Lord died once only, on Good Friday. But in the Mass His death on the Cross is commemorated by the separate Consecration of the Bread and Wine. He cannot *really* die again. His Body and Blood cannot really be separated, *sc.* His glorious risen Body cannot suffer any more—it is immortal. But in the Mass the Bread is *first* changed into our Lord's Body, and *then* the Wine is changed into His Blood. Thus it looks as though the Body and Blood were separated, and this recalls the real separation, the real shedding of our Lord's Blood on Mount Calvary. *Then* He really died for us. In the Mass His death is represented, or "shown forth," as St. Paul says. Both on Mount Calvary and in the Mass the victim (that which is offered) is the same—the Body and Blood of Christ; and the Priest is the same—Christ our Lord, who offered Himself on Calvary through the executioners who put Him to death, and who offers Himself in the Mass on the altar through His priests, who say the words of Consecration. So the sacrifice of Calvary and the Mass are the same sacrifice, only the manner in which they are offered is different. On Calvary our Lord's Blood was really shed, and He really died; in the Mass His Blood appears to be shed, and His death is represented. Thus our Lord offers Himself for us every time Mass is said.

To pray well during Mass is the best way to worship God and to obtain His blessing, for Jesus Christ Himself then prays *with us* and *for us* and His sacrifice is offered for us.