

WHY GO TO MASS?

The Catholic Church instructs us to go to mass once a week, but many Catholics don't know why, and some ask why we have to go anyway.

Maybe the answer is because the Church is copying what Jesus Christ said when asked about his mission on earth. In simple terms, he said in various ways that he'd '**come to save sinners**'.

The original disciples knew this, and their mission and that of their successors (bishops and priests) must be the same, but what could they do to achieve it?

In simple terms, sinning is people offending God, which means not loving him and our neighbours as ourselves. Saving sinners is all about making sure that the souls of people have no stain of mortal sin on them, making sure that their souls go to heaven for all eternity when they die. Many miss the wonder of this simple statement. It means:

BEING WITH GOD FOREVER IN HEAVEN.

Do we ever stop to think that this is the most significant promise ever made to us, but one we must earn by not sinning? This supreme eternal reward for having a soul free from mortal sins when we die is what the church is trying to attain for us, and one of the main things it uses is the mass, but why? We can answer this by looking at what the mass is.

In simple terms, the mass is organised into the following:

THE INTRODUCTORY RITE WITH ITS PENITENTIAL ACT: THE LITURGY OF THE WORD THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

If sinners are to be saved, we need to know what it all means.

The Introductory Rite, with its Penitential Act, is a way of making friends with God before starting the mass. It has wonderful prayers asking God to forgive our sins, followed by all saying The Gloria, glorifying God. Whoever wrote and organised these wonderful prayers must have been cloaked in the Holy Spirit because they are so meaningful. It's the same throughout the whole mass.

The Liturgy of the WORD consists of stories being read from the bible. These are important as they explain how God told us what he wanted from us through the prophets. It also tells us about Jesus, what he said and did and how he died to save sinners. For many Catholics, going to mass is the only time they ever have access to the Bible. This

Liturgy of the Word usually has a theme to help us refrain from sinning daily.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist is all about changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which we receive in Holy Communion.

If we want to go to Holy Communion, our souls should be free from mortal sins. We can pray sincerely to God to forgive us our sins, and he probably will, but the only sure way of knowing our sins have been forgiven is to take part earnestly in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

If we go to this sacrament and then to mass and Holy Communion, we will be reminded of the word of God and be in his favour to receive Holy Communion. **We are saved sinners.** This is why it is so important that we go to mass and regularly.

**Have you ever asked yourself?
“Where you would like to go
for all eternity when you die?”**

It's only when people follow the mass by taking part in what's being said and what's being done that they realise it's a great way of listening to what God wants from us and what his Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ told us to do, such as going to Holy Communion.

Going to mass once a week only takes about one hour out of the 168 each week. It's such a short time, but where our souls are concerned, it could mean the difference between eternity in heaven or hell when we die.

When you go to mass, don't waste your time looking at who's there and letting your mind wander; take part in it seriously. It's a truly educational, spiritual, beneficial and joyous event.