"The same Christ who offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross, is present and offered in an unbloody manner [in the Mass]."
                                                            – The Council of Trent, Session 22

Thursday, August 22, 2019
Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Dear Josef,

Please accept as our gift to you the enclosed leaflet that allows you to follow the Mass, step by step, as our mystical participation in the *re-presentation* of Our Lord's Passion and Crucifixion. This reminds us that the Mass is the same offering that was made by Christ on the Cross at Calvary.

This is the essence of the Mass, as the Church has SOLEMNLY defined it (as stated in the quote above). But few Catholics are being taught this. In many parishes, sad to say, the sacrificial character of the Mass is obscured in favor of the protestant favored notion of a "communal meal."

The Mass is *primarily* a sacrifice, not a meal. It is Our Lord offering His Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity to God the Father in reparation for the sins of the world.

Many Catholics, especially younger Catholics, need to know this. So, we are striving to distribute this leaflet to as many people in as many places as our resources allow. We need your help to do this. We must do our best to prevent the Mass from being misunderstood and dishonored.

There are several good ways to follow the Mass prayerfully. This leaflet is one among them, but its emphasis is very much needed in our time, when so few Catholics are being taught about the profound realities and divine mysteries present at the Mass.

Archbishop Fulton Sheen once said that while all men come into the world to live, only one man came into the world to die: that man was Jesus Christ. From His childhood, Calvary was ever before Him. Every step Our Lord took brought Him closer to the Cross.

We would shrink back from such a fate, but Our Lord appeared impatient for its arrival. His Father sent Him into the world so that He might offer His life for us and redeem our sins, and the Son was always

eager to do the Will of His Father.

It is the fashion these days to regard Christ primarily as a teacher of morals. But this is to demean and completely misunderstand the mission of Our Lord. He taught, of course, but He came first and foremost to be a sacrificial victim.

His teaching, no matter how elevated and sublime, did not take away the sins of the world. That was accomplished only by His death. When the last drops of His Blood fell to the ground, our world was changed forever.

Christ entered history and, in a sense, history entered Him. All the sins men committed and would ever commit He took upon Himself. All the guilt and sorrow He assumed was transformed through His sacrifice. It rains down upon us as grace, if we will only open our hearts to receive it.

And this great sacrifice did not only happen once, on Calvary. *It happens every day!* Only the Mass fulfills the prophecy "From the rising of the sun even to the going down, in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean obligation" (cf. Malachi 1:11). Every hour of every day a Mass is being said somewhere in the world. Christ is forever offering Himself to the Father to atone for our sins.

Our founder, Father Nicholas Gruner, would have been very pleased with this leaflet. The Mass was the center of his life. No matter how exhausted, how beset by countless claims upon his time, nothing came before the Mass.

The Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary this month (August 22) marks the 43rd anniversary of Father Gruner's ordination to the priesthood. Helping us to print and distribute this leaflet is a wonderful way to honor Father's memory and to help bring others to a greater love and appreciation of the Mass.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the greatest gift Our Lord has given us, for through the Mass we are saved. Through the Mass we are raised up, lifted above the sins of the world, and drawn nearer to Heaven. Help us keep the love for the Mass alive in Catholic hearts and minds.

In Jesus, Mary and Joseph,

Andrew M. Cesanek

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