

# Understanding the Mass

## Part 1 in a series

*“Christ is always present in his Church, especially in her liturgical celebrations. He is present in the Sacrifice of the Mass not only in the person of his minister...but especially in the Eucharistic species. He is present in his word since it is he himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. Lastly, he is present when the Church prays and sings, for he has promised ‘where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them.’ [The Mass] is an action of Christ the Priest and of his Body, which is the Church.” “The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows.” (Vatican II, The Constitution On The Sacred Liturgy, 7, 10)*

I wanted to start this series of articles with a definitive statement as to how the Church views the Mass. For us to have a more complete understanding of the Mass it is important to know that it is a time when Christ is truly and fully present! This is why the Church calls us to **full and active** participation in the Mass.

If we do not completely understand why and what we are doing or saying during the Mass we may find ourselves merely going through the motions that we have learned over the years instead of actively participating. If so, we could be depriving ourselves of the blessings and joy that come from full participation in the Mass.

So, over the weeks to come we will spend time taking a close look at all aspects of the Mass and hopefully find ourselves coming closer to Christ in this most holy celebration of the Eucharist.

**Next week: “Let’s start with the basics”**