

THE  
CHILD  
AT  
MASS

Dennerle, George M.  
- The child at Mass  
ADN 2841 (child)

783303

15



by

REV. GEORGE M. DENNERLE



# THE CHILD AT MASS

*By*

REV. GEORGE M. DENNERLE

THE PAULIST PRESS

401 West 59th Street

New York 19, N. Y.



*Nihil Obstat:*

ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.,  
*Censor Librorum*

*Imprimatur:*

✠ PATRICK CARDINAL HAYES,  
*Archbishop of New York*

*New York, June 14, 1938.*

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED IN THE U. S. A.  
BY THE PAULIST PRESS, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

**Deacidified**

# THE CHILD AT MASS

---

## Offering Gifts to God

**A**BEL and Cain were brothers. They lived long ago before cities were built. Abel was a shepherd and had many sheep. Cain was a farmer and grew many products on his land. Abel was good, but Cain was not.

One day the two boys went out into the field and each built an altar. They wanted to offer gifts to God on their altars. Abel offered the best of his lambs, while Cain offered things he grew on his farm. They burned their gifts on the altar as a sign that they were offering them to God.

God was pleased with the gift of Abel, but not with that of Cain. Do you know why? God saw into their hearts. Cain was not giving his love with his gift, he was not anxious to please God. Abel was most anxious to please his Maker. He knew that all things belong to God and he wished to show this by offering his gifts. He also wanted to show God that he was sorry for his sins.

This way of offering gifts to God is called sacrifice.

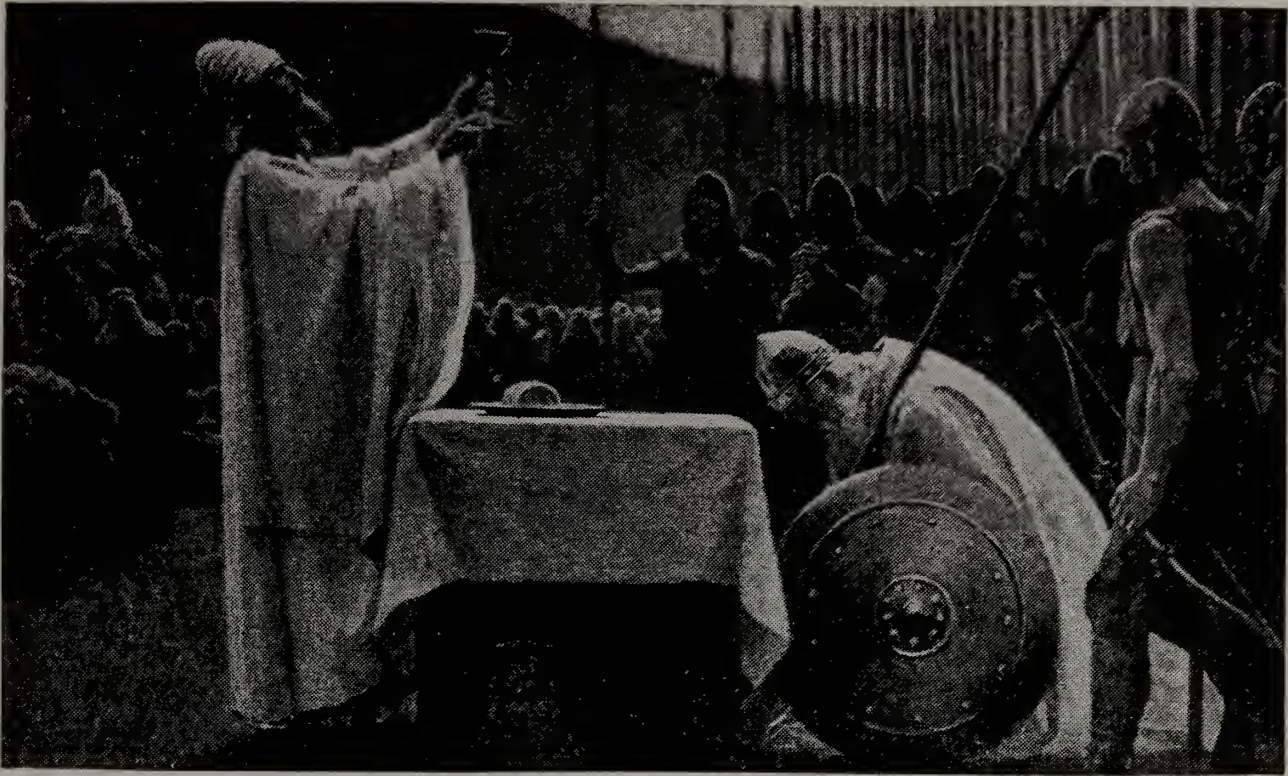
For a sacrifice you need an altar, a gift, and a person to offer the gift. The person who offers the sacrifice is called a priest. At first the father or oldest boy was the priest of the family. Later the priests were men chosen by God to take the place of all the people in offering sacrifice.

But you can see from the example of Cain that our gift to God must come from a good heart. For God wants our love more than our gift, though He wants the gift too.

Many years after Abel and Cain had died, there lived a holy man, who loved God, though the people everywhere round him were very bad. The man's name was Noe. The people of Noe's time were so wicked that God said He would destroy them all except Noe and his family with a mighty flood. God saved Noe in the ark.

After the flood waters had gone, Noe came out of the ark. The first thing he did was to build an altar. He offered to God some of the animals he had taken into the ark by burning them on the altar. He wanted to show God how thankful he was that he had been spared. That was the way he said "Thank You" to God. And that was the way he asked God for further gifts.

God was very pleased with Noe's sacrifice.



A king who offered gifts of bread and wine

He promised never again to destroy all the people with a flood. The rainbow was to be a sign of God's promise.

After Noe's time good people always offered gifts to God to show that they loved Him. They also offered their gifts to ask God for favors, to thank Him, and to tell Him they were sorry for their sins.

The gifts they offered were usually animals and other things that people eat. Naturally these gifts were not good enough for God. But they were the best that people had. At last, God gave them a gift that was per-

fect. It was His only Son Whom He sent into the world.

## Jesus Offers Himself to God

Jesus offered Himself to His Father all during His life, but in a special way on the cross of Calvary. Look at Jesus crucified! His body is covered with wounds. See the wounds of the scourging and those on His shoulder from carrying the heavy cross. See those in His hands and feet made by the nails which fastened Him to the cross, and those of His sacred head caused by the crown of thorns.

Jesus hangs on the cross, fastened with nails, and suffers the greatest of pains for three long hours. Then He dies. Does Jesus have to suffer and die? No, He offers Himself of His own free will.

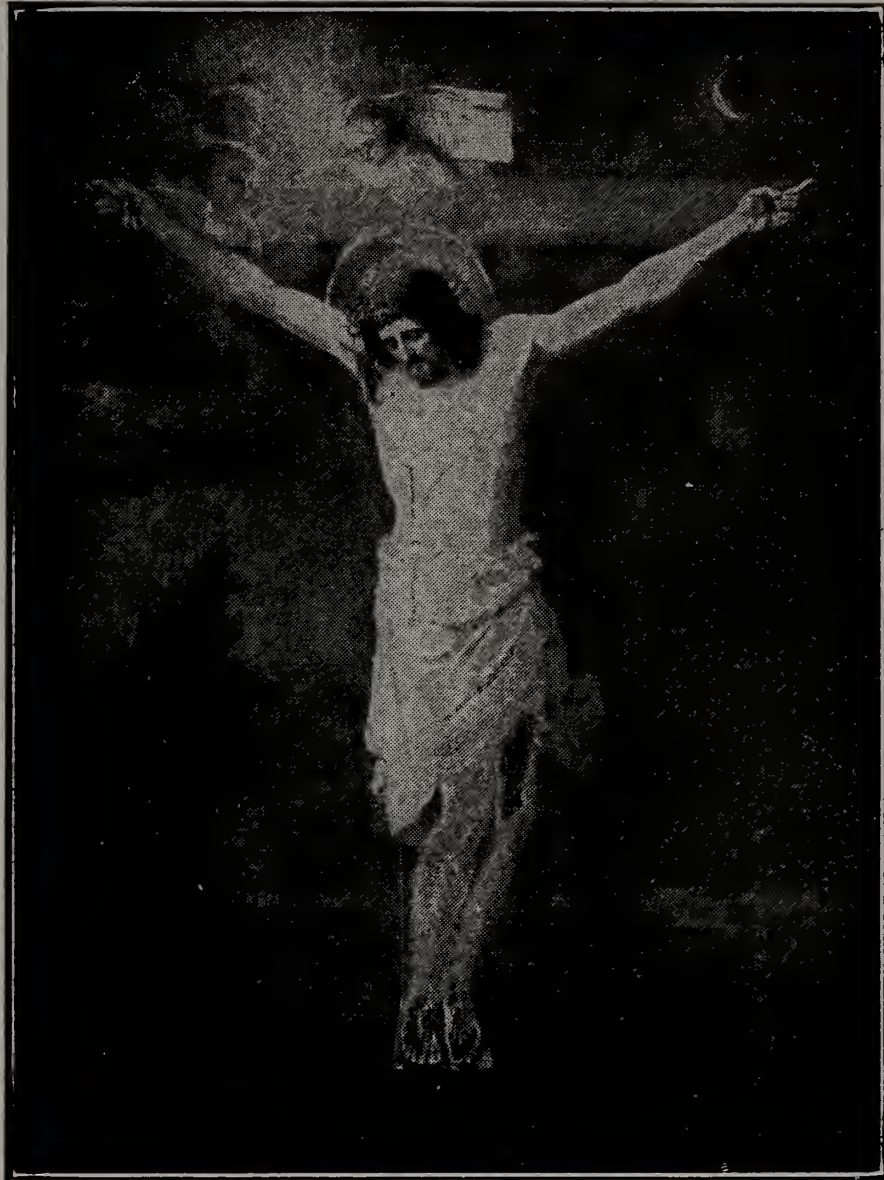
He offers His body. His head is bowed, His eyes are closed, His mouth is open—He is dead.

He offers His blood. Drop by drop it falls to the ground. The last drop comes from the side that was pierced by the soldier's lance.

He offers His power. He could have helped Himself. He helped others, the sick, the dead. But now He does not want to use



this power for Himself. He allows His enemies to make fun of Him. He offers all to His Father.



The Sacrifice of the Cross

He offers His liberty. He is fastened to the cross as a prisoner. He moves neither hand nor foot, though He could have come down from the cross if He had wished.

Jesus offers Himself entirely on Calvary. This is called the sacrifice of the cross. There

we see the three things needed for the sacrifice —the altar (the cross), the gift (Jesus), the priest (Jesus).

## Jesus Offers Himself at the Last Supper

The Jews had a great feast called the Passover. At this feast they used to offer a lamb to God. Jesus also celebrated this feast with His Apostles. He celebrated it with them for the last time the day before His death. This is called the Last Supper.

At the Last Supper Jesus did something very wonderful. He took bread into His hands, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to His Apostles with the words:

***TAKE AND EAT; THIS IS MY BODY***

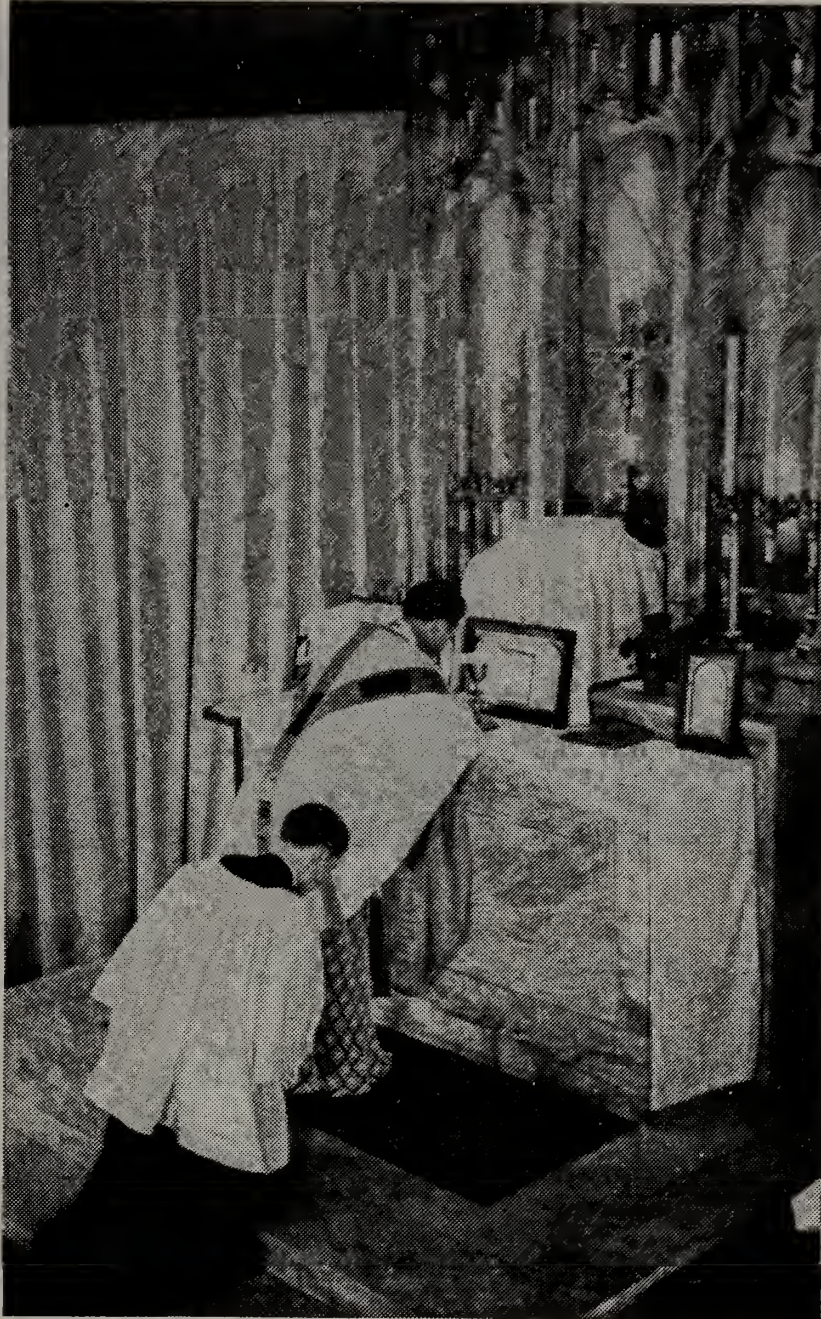
Then He took the cup of wine, blessed it and gave it to His Apostles, saying:

***DRINK OF THIS; THIS IS MY BLOOD***

And He added these words:

***DO THIS FOR A COMMEMORATION OF ME***

By the words “This is My body” Jesus changed the bread into His own body. Jesus was present there under the form of bread.



By the words "This is My blood" He changed the wine in the cup into His own blood. Jesus was present there under the form of wine.

By the words "Do this for a commemoration of Me" Jesus commanded His Apostles to do what He had done. He told them to change bread and wine into His body and blood. He wanted them to do this so they would remember Him.



## At the Last Supper, Jesus

1. blessed bread and wine  
and offered them to His  
heavenly Father

—OFFERTORY

2. changed bread and wine  
into His own body and blood  
and offered Himself to His  
heavenly Father

—CONSECRATION

3. gave His body and blood  
to His Apostles  
to be united with them

—COMMUNION

## Jesus Offers Himself at Mass

Jesus said the first Mass at the Last Supper. He told His Apostles to say Mass just as He had done. The Apostles did as Jesus told them to do, and before they died they gave this same power of saying Mass to others. Bishops and priests have this same power today. They say Mass just as Jesus did at the Last Supper. They

1. bless bread and wine  
and offer them to God

### —OFFERTORY

2. change bread and wine  
into Jesus' body and blood  
and offer Jesus to God

### —CONSECRATION

3. receive Jesus in Holy  
Communion and give Him  
to others

### —COMMUNION

When we are at Mass, it is the same as if we were at the Last Supper and the same as if we were beneath the cross of Jesus on Calvary. It is the same Jesus Who offers Himself. The priest we see at the altar is taking Jesus' place. He is offering Jesus' body and blood to God.

The priest at the altar is also taking our place. He is offering bread and wine to God for us; he is offering Jesus' body and blood to God for us. We join our minds and hearts with the priest at the altar and offer our gifts to God.

We can say: "Dear God, I offer bread and wine to You!" And later when the bread and wine have been changed into Jesus' body and blood we can say: "Dear God, I offer Jesus to You!" How wonderful to think that we may offer Jesus to God the Father! This is the best possible gift we could offer to God. How pleased God must be!

And here are some little gifts of our own that we may offer too:

Come on time to Mass  
Keep our eyes on the altar  
Keep our thoughts on prayer  
Make our hearts ready to receive Holy  
Communion as often as possible.



## What We See at Mass

Every sacrifice needs an altar. Abel and Noe offered their gifts to God on altars which they had made of large stones out in the open. When Jesus offered Himself to His Father at the Last Supper, He had an altar—a table.

When He offered Himself on Calvary the next day, He had an altar—the cross.

So the priest today offers the Mass to God on an altar. When you are present at Mass, always keep your eyes on the altar. You will notice that the altar usually has steps leading up to it. It is raised up to remind us of Calvary where Jesus offered His body and blood. There is always a crucifix in the center to tell us that the Mass continues Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. To the right and left you will see candles. At least two must be lit whenever Mass is said. Did you ever notice how the candles burn? Shorter and shorter they become. They burn for Jesus. If they could talk, they would say: We are offering ourselves to God. Sometimes you see flowers on the altar. Their beautiful colors, their sweet perfume are their gifts to God.

Do we act like the candles and the flowers at Mass? We have gifts to make to God. What are they? Just little things, like being well-behaved in church, obeying our parents and teachers at home and in school, being kind to our brothers and sisters, getting along with other children at play and at work. Perhaps you can think of many more things.

Mass is to begin. Perhaps you heard the bell announcing the priest's entry into the





sanctuary. Maybe you saw the people standing up as the priest appeared.

The priest does not look the same as when you see him on the street or in school. He is dressed differently. He wears special garments which we call the Mass vestments. They are worn only at Mass and they are quite costly, because at Mass the priest does something very special, something very holy.

The priest is carrying something in his hands. It is the chalice or golden cup, covered with the veil. If you were close to the altar you would see that the priest unfolds a square linen cloth called the corporal, and places the chalice on this cloth. He moves to the right and opens the Mass book. The Mass book is written in Latin, because Latin is the language of the Church. All over the world most priests say Mass in Latin.

The Mass book contains the prayers that the priest says at Mass. It also tells him what to do—the bows to make, the genuflections, the signs of the cross. The things to do are printed in red ink. The prayers and readings are in black ink. Many of the prayers and readings are taken from the Bible. The Bible is the word of God. So the Mass book is a holy book. Notice that the priest kisses the book at the end of the Gospel.

Though the Mass book which the priest uses at the altar is in Latin, you can get one that has the same prayers in English. Wouldn't you like to read the same prayers the priest does when you are at Mass? When you learn more about the Mass you can do so. Ask your parents or your teacher about the English Mass book or missal as it is called.



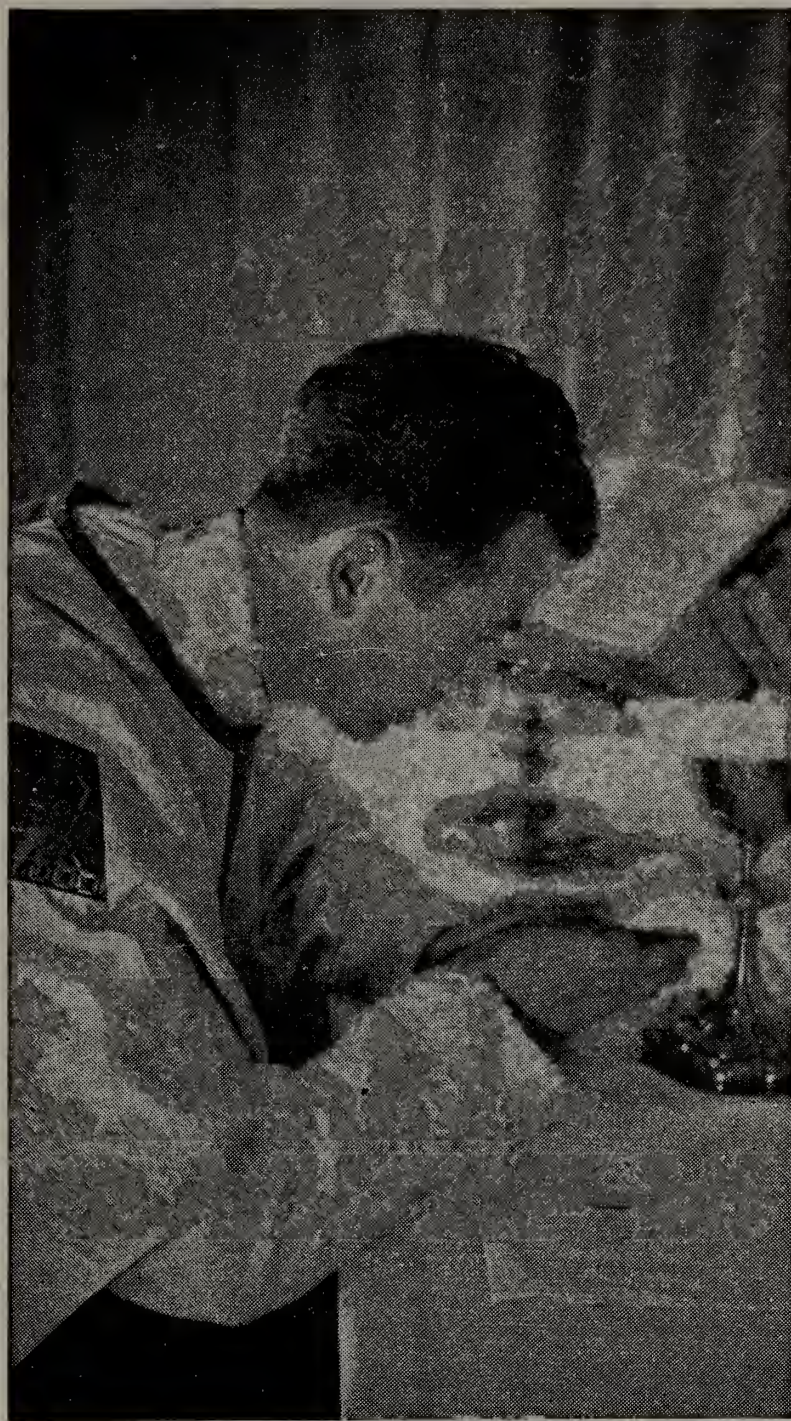
## What We Do at Mass

We go to Mass not merely to pray. We go to offer God our gifts. First we offer God bread and wine and with them ourselves, our mind, our heart, our will. But our gifts of bread and wine are made perfect at the Consecration. They become Jesus' body and blood.



Then we can offer Jesus Himself to our Father in heaven.

Perhaps you wonder how you do that when you are kneeling so far away from the altar. Remember the priest you see at the altar is the one who holds our gifts of bread and wine. He is the one who speaks the words of consecration and brings Jesus to the altar. He



holds Jesus in his hands. He offers Jesus to God for us.

At Mass we should watch the priest closely. We should pray with him. We should offer our gifts with him.

On the next pages you will see what the priest says and does and what you should do at Mass.

## THE PRIEST

### *Recites*

Prayers at the foot  
of the altar

Lord have mercy

Glory to God

Prayers of asking

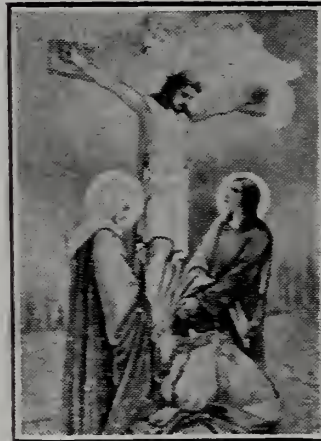
## OUR PART

### *We Pray*

telling God we are sorry  
for our sins

telling Him we love Him

asking for the graces Jesus  
earned for us



## THE PRIEST

### *Reads*

The Epistle

The Gospel

I believe

Page Twenty

## OUR PART

### *We Learn*

what Jesus has done for us  
and what we are to do for  
Him



## THE PRIEST

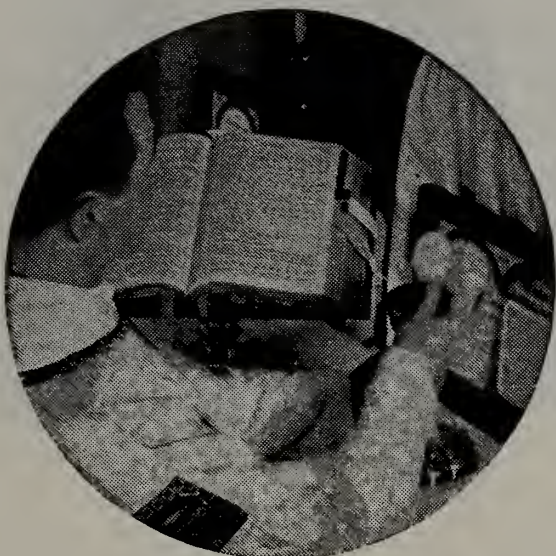
*Offers and prays*

OFFERTORY (Bread and wine)  
The priest washes his hands  
Secret prayers

## OUR PART

*We Offer*

ourselves entirely to God  
Bread and wine are our  
gifts to show this



## THE PRIEST

*Prays and offers*

Holy, Holy, Holy  
Prayer for the Living  
CONSECRATION (Jesus'  
Body and Blood)  
Prayer for the dead

## OUR PART

*We Offer*

the best possible gift, Jesus  
Himself  
Who changed bread and  
wine  
into His own body and  
blood

**THE PRIEST**

*Prays and receives*

The Our Father

Lamb of God

COMMUNION

After-Communion prayers

**OUR PART**

*We Receive*

the best gift God could

give us

Jesus in Holy Communion

We are in God and God is

in us



"Jesus comes to us"

**THE PRIEST**

The blessing

The last Gospel

**OUR PART**

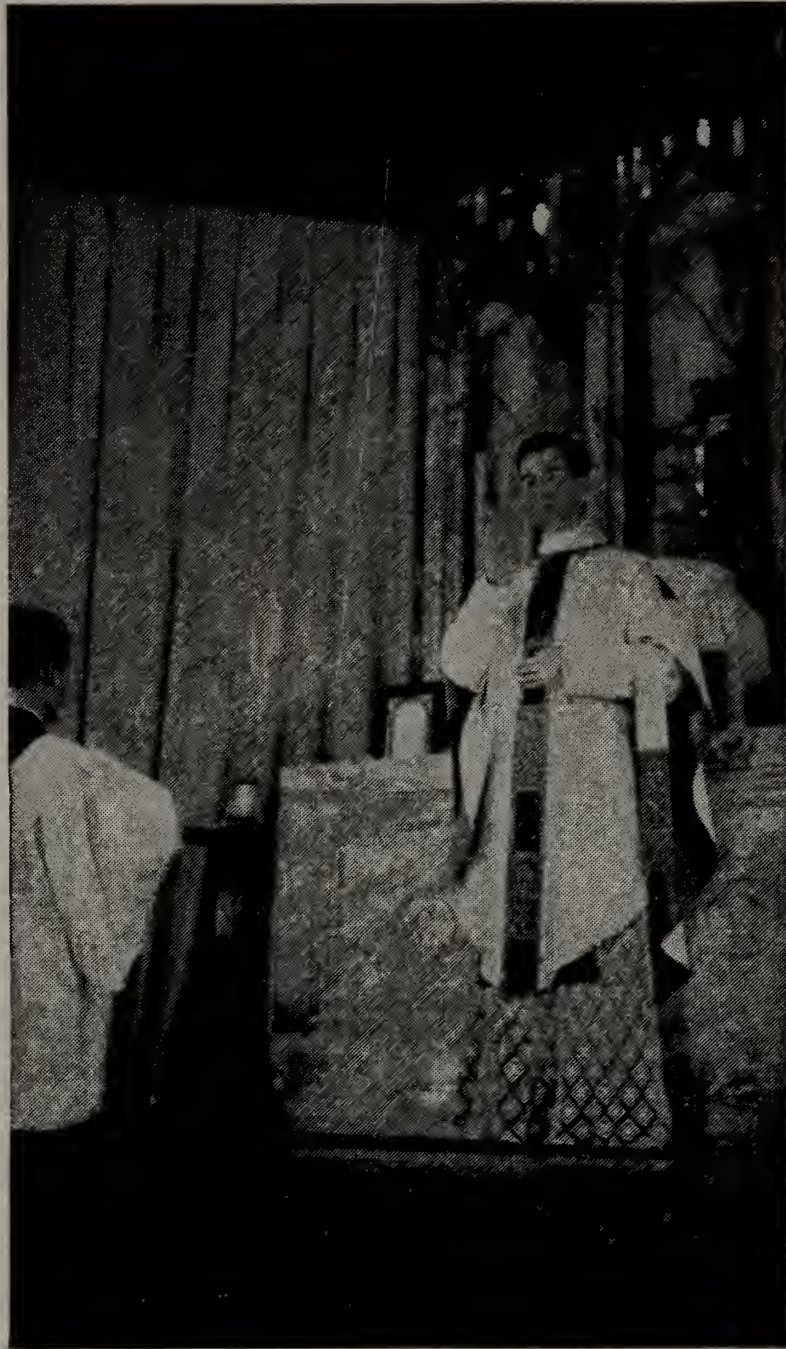
We leave Mass as children

of God.

Jesus is with us, we should

be like Him.





## Why We Should Go to Sunday Mass

We honor God by going to Mass. The Mass gives God the best, the highest honor.

We should be glad to honor God because  
He is so powerful.

He made all things.

We should be glad to honor God because He is so good. He gives us everything we have. He wants to make us happy forever in heaven.

The sacrifice of the Mass is the best gift we can offer to God.

It is infinitely better than the lamb Abel offered to God.

It is infinitely better than the gift Noe offered to God after the flood. It is the best possible gift, because at Mass we offer Jesus Himself to God the Father.

We receive great graces and blessings by going to Mass. Some of these graces are: grace to make us sorry for our sins, to keep us good, to make us better, to help us reach heaven. Some of the blessings are: health, kind parents, good brothers and sisters, teachers who tell us about God.

We do a great amount of harm to our souls by not going to Sunday Mass.

To miss Mass on Sundays or holydays through our own fault is a mortal sin.



