

CATHOLIC PARISH OF St Brigid's HEALESVILLE, St Aloysius YARRA GLEN & Our Lady of the Snows MARYSVILLE  
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ALL PUBLIC MASSES ARE  
SUSPENDED UNTIL  
FURTHER NOTICE



OFFICE HOURS  
PARISH STAFF ARE  
CURRENTLY WORKING  
FROM HOME

DEBBIE'S MOBILE NO:  
0448 664 731

SHARON'S MOBILE NO:  
0448 658 418



SEE OUR WEBSITE FOR  
LINKS TO  
TELEVISED MASSES  
LINK:  
<https://bit.ly/StBsHville>

MASSSES WILL CONTINUE  
TO BE RECORDED  
WEEKLY  
(THANKS ROD!)

COLLECTIONS

Healesville to 19th July  
Church: \$5  
Presbytery: \$5

Yarra Glen to 19th July  
Church: \$40  
Presbytery: \$5  
Op Shop: \$2700

Marysville



**FROM FR FRANCIS DENTON**

**What is the Mass? (Part 3)**

**“Full and Active Participation”: a Reappraisal of Sacrosanctum Concilium**

Human beings are surely the strangest creatures in God's creation! We are a composite of body and soul. We share with the rest of the animal kingdom a material body, while sharing with the angels a spiritual, rational soul. Understanding this is important in terms of how we are called to know, love and serve God. Perhaps some people wrongly assume that we need to become angels, to leave behind our 'sinful' body and become pure spirits with God. In fact, this is a dualist heresy ('body: bad, spirit: good') which has cropped up throughout the centuries in various forms under the names of Gnosticism, Manicheism, and the Albigensian heresy. No, we are not angels and God neither expects nor wants us to become angels! We are human beings and Christ became a man in order to redeem the whole human person, body and soul. It is as embodied beings that God calls us to worship him. Therefore, when it comes to the liturgy we are called to serve God with our whole being, body and soul.

The fullest expressions of the Sacred Liturgy across all the ancient Rites of both the East and the West demonstrate how well the liturgy engages the whole person. The use of beautiful sacred art and architecture, vestments, vessels, flowers, candles, etc., engages our sight; the use of the proclaimed Word, the singing of beautiful, solemn sacred music, the pealing of bells, etc. engages our hearing; the use of fragrant incense engages our sense of smell; the use of physical gestures, the sign of the cross, standing, kneeling, etc. engages our sense of touch; even the sense of taste is invoked as we come to receive the Eucharist. Of course, the Mass doesn't merely engage the bodily senses for the sake of sensory delight; rather these serve as aids to heighten our spiritual awareness. The Mass necessarily engages those human faculties related to the spirit: our intellect and our will. Through our participation in the Mass we seek to know, love and serve God more perfectly, and in doing so we are sanctified in proportion to our receptivity to the graces offered. In the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Second Vatican Council teaches: "In the liturgy the sanctification of man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs." (SC, n.7). The action of the liturgy aims to ensure that "the faith of those taking part is nourished and their minds are raised to God, so that they may offer Him their rational service and more

abundantly receive His grace" (SC, n.33). In every Mass God offers us the graces necessary for our sanctification, however it is not an automatic process. We must use our freedom (via the faculties of our intellect and will) to actively choose to receive these graces. For this reason, at any one particular Mass one congregant (through a fervent, prayerful disposition) can have a life-changing experience, while the other (bored and distracted) remains largely unaffected spiritually. God requires us to be active participants in our reception of the sacramental graces made available through the Mass.

In paragraph 14, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* states: "Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy" (SC, n.14). This is among the most commonly cited and (alas) misunderstood quotations from the Second Vatican Council. The "full, conscious and active participation" demanded here does not imply an aerobic-level activity on the part of the congregation – it's not about creating jobs for people to do at Mass! In fact, the Latin word 'actuoso' would be more accurately translated as 'actual' rather than 'active'. Here the Council Fathers are saying that all the faithful attending Mass should be fully engaged in spirit and body, *consciously* and *actually*, praying with all their heart, mind, soul and being.

Does this mean that we are expected to understand every single word or gesture of the Mass? This strikes me as an impossibly difficult demand. If ascending the mountain is too hard, should we therefore flatten the mountain to our level? Flattening the mountain might make it easy to climb but it also diminishes the view from the top! There has been an unfortunate tendency in the Post-Conciliar era to want to 're-contextualise' (ie. 'dumb-down') the Mass – to make it so accessible and instantly comprehensible that in the process the mysterious and transcendent dimensions of the Mass became obscured if not altogether forgotten. However well-intentioned this was, an unintended consequence was the reduction of the liturgy to a human construct, one that could be endlessly manipulated and altered. The quest for novelty with the aim of entertaining and amusing the congregation overshadowed the liturgy's true purpose: our participation in Christ's work of Redemption through the Paschal Mystery. This happened in spite of the Second Vatican Council's very clear directive to the contrary: "Therefore no person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority." (SC, n.22.3) This is because "the visible signs used by the liturgy to signify invisible

divine things have been chosen by Christ or the Church." (SC, n.33). We can compare the Sacred Liturgy to Sacred Scripture: it is a gift we receive in faith from the Church, not a by-product of our own creativity to be manipulated for our own purposes. We don't change the liturgy; the liturgy changes us!

Our 'full, conscious and active' participation in Mass in no way demands that we understand *everything* that takes place, as if that were even possible. The key is to understand the *essence* of the liturgical action itself as a sacred re-presentation of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ. What matters above all is our awareness that we are in the very presence of God! Again, the inexhaustible richness of the liturgy could be likened to scripture: even if we studied it for our entire life we would never plumb the depths. There are always fresh insights waiting to be discovered because in both the liturgy and scripture Christ Himself speaks to us (if we're willing to listen). This sets up a creative tension. One the one hand, when we come to Mass we want to understand as much as we can; on the other hand, we accept that we will never be able to understand *everything* because the Paschal Mystery that lies at the heart of the Mass surpasses human understanding. The Mass enables us to participate in the entire mystery of Redemption: the upper room of Holy Thursday, the foot of the cross on Good Friday, the empty tomb of Easter Sunday all converge on the Eucharistic altar. The Paschal Mystery made present for us in the Mass also orients us to eternity, where our salvation is fulfilled. The Mass is by its very nature a mystery, in fact it is *the* mystery of faith, one that ought to fill us with a sense of awe and wonder. If at times Catholics find Mass "boring" it's only because they have failed to see what they are participating in. Christ's crucifixion evoked many responses from those who witnessed it. Boredom was not one of them.

Recovering a sense of the sacred is vitally important if we are ever to make progress in our endeavour to enter into a 'full and active participation' of the liturgy. On this point the Council warned of "the intrusion of anything out of harmony with the inner nature of the liturgy" (SC, n.21). Superficial, worldly or profane elements (such as the intrusion of technological fads) are completely alien to the spirit of the liturgy that risk trivialising the Mass and obscuring the supernatural realities they are supposed to convey. The preservation of the integrity of the Sacred Liturgy demands the greatest diligence since it is the central celebration of the Christian faith. As the Second Vatican Council teaches: "every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the priest and of His Body which is the Church, is a sacred

action surpassing all others; no other action of the Church can equal its efficacy by the same title and to the same degree." (SC, n.7).

Here is one young Catholic's take on the meaning of the liturgy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmWs94KbiJQ>

**ALL MASSES IN OUR PARISH HAVE NOW BEEN SUSPENDED**

**St Brigid's, St Aloysius and Our Lady of the Snows: No Masses until further notice.**

**The Sacrament of Reconciliation** can be arranged on request, please phone Debbie on 0448 664 731.

**THE PARISH HOUSE**

We currently have a guest staying at the presbytery. If you need to access the parish house, please contact Debbie.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!**

Congratulations to **Jenny Youngberry** and **Stefanie Weda** who celebrate birthdays this week!



**PLEASE PRAY:**

For all of our parishioners, and their families and friends, and for their special intentions, and for all who need our prayers

**FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK**

Babies Emmett, Noah Glen Christie, Tedi and Santi; Roman, Blake Smith, Trish Leahy, John Snell, Abby Sharp, Peter Munro, Megan, Bernie Jansen, Andrew Sharp, John, Glenn, Lyn Francis, Dorothy Barber, Maureen Fogarty, Fiona, Annie Preuss, Michelle Ryan, Damian, John, Alison, Heather, Julie Bates, Garry Dettman, Bradley Jordan, Jeanette Henkel, Richard Galbraith, Debbie Huby, Geoff Lucas, Sandra Donkin, Dorothy Fraser, Glen, Fred Bullas, Fred Coullas, Evie Gleeson, Indy Dawes, Rade Krstic, Megan Williams, Michael Wood, Bill Howie, Jennie, Michael, Margo & Stephen Youngberry, Marie Hammond, John Mulholland, Rhiannon Days, Val Savitt, Ron Garland, Jaz Nueber, James Cooney, Robert, Mary & Gerard Bariola, Tilly Van der Zee, Albert Slawinski, Lydia, Joyce Slattery, Lawrie Field, Annie, Bob Ireland, Val & Michael Christie, Ted & Peter Bowling, Natasha, Mia, James, Richard Adams, Mitchell & Wynn Wilson, Carina Warton.

**FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES ARE IN AUGUST**

Ann Maris (03.07.07), Julie Ann Ward (03.07.86), Nick Pitt (John McDonald (03.08.93), Patricia Newell (06.08.07), John Youngberry (07.08.79), Barbara Pollard (11.08.09), Andrew Sotko (14.08.07), Fr Loughnan (15.08.02), Bernadette Hanley (18.08.09), Mary Thomas (19.08.07), Douglas Ireland (21.08.79), Zandor Hunka (22.08.06), Alison Snell (25.08.02), Maria Slawinski (25.08.82), Gerald Slattery, Derek Beeby, Tilly Blackburn, Thea Humphries, Maggie Lloyd-Smith, Margaret Pomeroy (23.08.19), Rosemary Fries (10.08)