

ADORATION 101

THE SACRAMENT OF CHARITY:

The Conditions of Our Personal Active Participation in the Mass

This week we approach the section of Pope (Emeritus) Benedict XVI's 2007 Apostolic Exhortation on the Holy Eucharist that touches upon the conditions of our own active participation in the Eucharistic liturgy; a topic which is vital if we want to grow as a follower of Christ.

To begin with, we are reminded that our lives call for a "continual conversion." We cannot participate in the Eucharistic liturgy superficially, without examining our own lives in relationship to it. We need to develop the proper interior disposition before participating in the Holy Mass. For instance, Pope Benedict recommends recollection and silence before the celebration. Arrive 15 minutes or a half an hour early to pray and prepare yourself for the gift you are about to receive. In our parish we are fortunate in that we normally say the Holy Rosary before each Mass to help prepare ourselves. Take advantage. We could fast as well. We could go beyond the recommended one hour fast which is required by the Church before receiving Holy Communion and make it a point to fast a little longer to discipline ourselves so that our desires do not overcome us. Sacramental Confession is another invaluable tool in our active participation in the Eucharistic liturgy. We don't realize how blessed we are at St. Cyril & Methodius to have Confession before each Holy Mass. It is rare so take advantage.

"A heart recollected to God is what makes genuine participation possible." (Pope Benedict XVI, ¶155) We cannot be actively participating in the Sacred Mysteries unless we make an effort to participate in this life of the Church. And commit ourselves to Christ and to do our part within society. Simply being at Mass does not give us a right to conclude that we are participating in the celebration by simply being there in obligation. We must always make sure we take the necessary means to have a meaningful and fruitful active participation. Even those who are not physically present at Mass are able to participate, in a spiritual communion with the Lord, as long as they have the proper disposition to do so. Paul A. Ray

NEXT WEEK: Participation by Christians who are not Catholic