

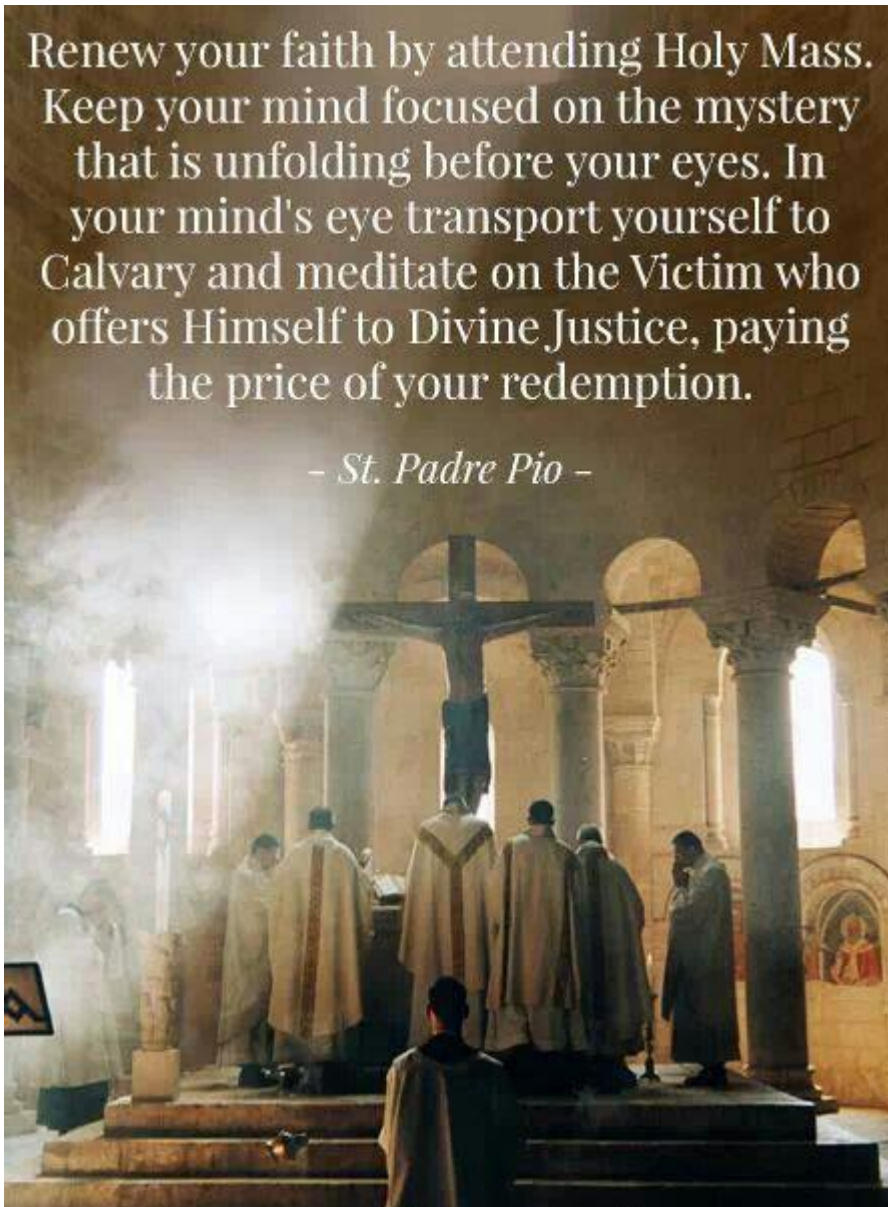
FROM FATHER JOHN: “Shout joyfully to God, all the earth; sing praise to the glory of his name; proclaim his glorious praise. Say to God: “How tremendous are your deeds!” Come and see the works of God, his tremendous deeds among the children of Adam. Bless our God, you peoples; loudly sound his praise. Hear now, all you who fear God, while I declare what he has done for me. When I appealed to him in words, praise was on the tip of my tongue.” ~ Psalm 66

Blessed be God who filled my soul with fire!!!

Someone asked me for a copy of my Sunday homily. That got me to thinking that maybe I should share the homily with the entire parish and all the people who follow St. Ann’s on social media. My homily from this past Sunday is below but please be aware that when I give the homily at mass it never comes out exactly the way in which I wrote it.

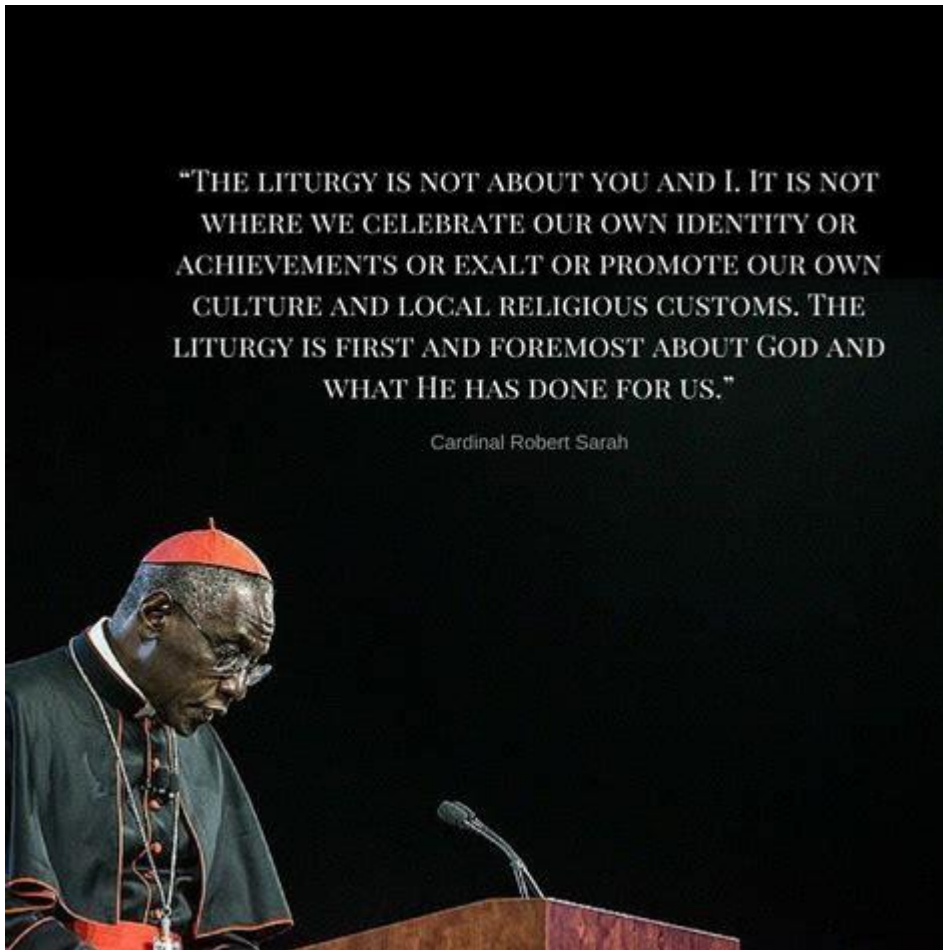
Renew your faith by attending Holy Mass.
Keep your mind focused on the mystery
that is unfolding before your eyes. In
your mind's eye transport yourself to
Calvary and meditate on the Victim who
offers Himself to Divine Justice, paying
the price of your redemption.

- St. Padre Pio -



I have some friends, Catholic friends, who I've known for around 35 years, who rarely, if ever, go to Sunday Mass. They go to mass on Christmas and Easter and maybe once or twice a year at other times.

As a priest, I often find myself "encouraging" them to attend mass. The reason they always give for not attending mass is "I don't get anything out of it." In fact, it's the most common reason that college aged Catholics give for not attending Mass. But to me, this is just an excuse and not a very good one either.



One time, when I was in eighth grade, my mom and dad were invited to a party. I remember it to this day. Now, this party was a bring-your-own-beverage party so my dad brought a bottle of Vodka and some tonic water so that he could make my mom and him a vodka tonic to have at the party. Once they got to the party, my Dad went off to make my mom and a couple of his friends a Vodka tonic.

They each took a sip of the drink. A sour, pained look came over each of their faces. No one had the heart to tell my dad how bad the drink was, until my mom quietly said to my dad, "Art this is the worst drink I've ever had." It turns out that my oldest brother, a senior in high school at the time, and a couple of his buddies, had drunk the entire bottle of Vodka and then

replaced the Vodka with water. When my parents got home, my dad about killed my brother, which is why I remember it to this day.

My dad's drinks were lousy because he didn't bring anything to the party. He wanted to bring something to the party, he meant to bring something, and it wasn't his fault, but the fact is he brought nothing to the party.

It's the same with the Mass. The Church teaches that the mass is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet. If we don't bring anything to the banquet, to mass, we won't get anything out of it. If we bring nothing to the liturgy, if we don't engage and participate in the liturgy, if we don't bring our heart, our soul, our lives, our hopes, our dreams to the mass, we won't get anything out of it.

What we need to remember is what Jesus promised us in the gospel and what he didn't promise us. Jesus didn't promise good music. Of course we want good music, but no offense to our musicians, if the music is lousy, it doesn't destroy the promise that our Lord Jesus made to us in the sacred scriptures. Of course we want a scripture passage that touches our lives, but if the scripture doesn't seem to make sense to us, it doesn't destroy Jesus' promise.

You know what else Jesus didn't promise, He didn't promise a great homily. Of course, all of us priests want to give great homilies, but if the homily is incredibly long and boring, it doesn't destroy the promise that our Lord Jesus made to us in the sacred scriptures.

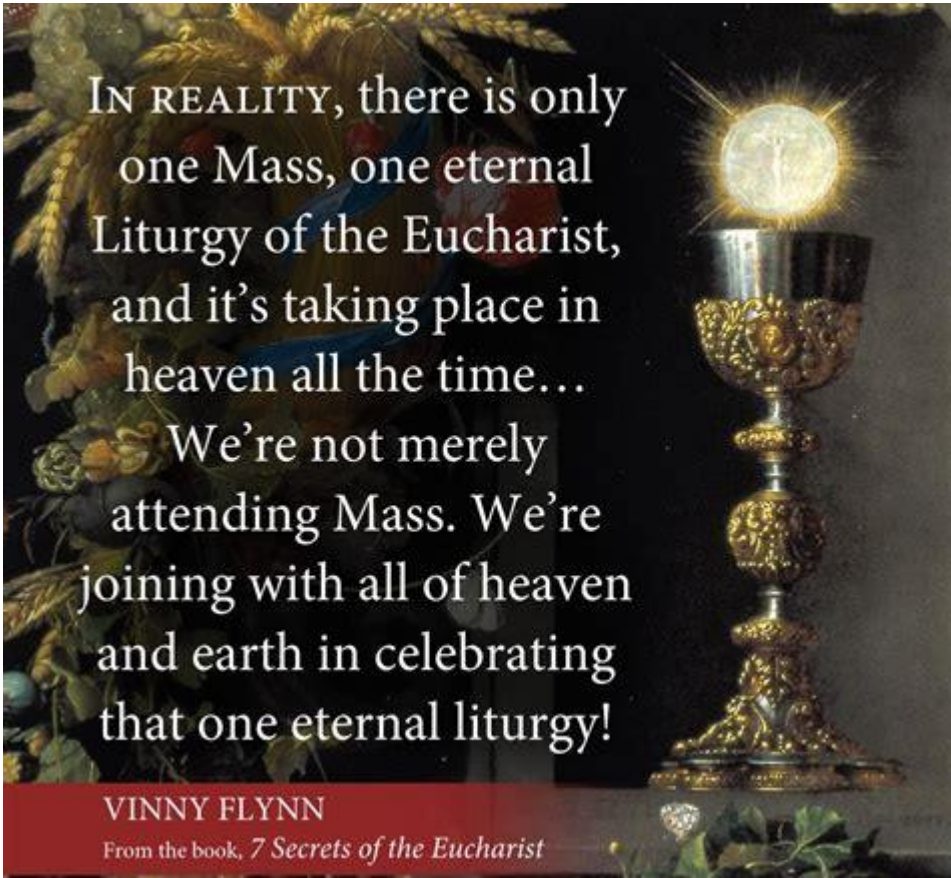
Our Lord Jesus said to us, *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* (Matthew 18:20) Our Lord Jesus promised to be present among us when we celebrate the liturgy. He is present among us right here right now. He is present on the altar, He is present in His Body and Blood, He is present in the sacred scriptures and He is present within each of us every time we come together to celebrate the mass.

Our Lord Jesus Christ promised us the bread of life, the bread that comes down from heaven, the bread that gives life to the world. He promised us his body and blood, to give his body and blood for the life of the world. He promised us something that is more important than good music or a good homily. He promised us a taste of the heavenly banquet, he promised us the one thing that gives life to our souls. He promised us that if we eat this bread from heaven, we would live forever.

On this table, the table of the Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ brings His Body and Blood, on this table, the table of the Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ brings salvation to the world, on this table, the table of the Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ brings each of us eternal life.

The only remain question is simple, what is it that we bring to this table, to the table of the Lord?

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.



IN REALITY, there is only
one Mass, one eternal
Liturgy of the Eucharist,
and it's taking place in
heaven all the time...

We're not merely
attending Mass. We're
joining with all of heaven
and earth in celebrating
that one eternal liturgy!

VINNY FLYNN

From the book, *7 Secrets of the Eucharist*