

## **The Paschal Mystery and The Twin Tables of the Liturgy**

By Peggy Lovrien

(#3 in a series)

When we teach our children and grandchildren about what it means to be Catholic, the celebration of the Mass on Sunday inevitably comes up. That is because we believe that weekly celebration of the God's Word and the Eucharist forms us and helps us to maintain our identity as Catholic people.

There are many things we can teach about our faith but two basic elements of weekly liturgy are central: Faith in the "Paschal Mystery" and understanding about the two parts of the Mass.

There are many kinds of spiritualities that a person can express. As Catholics, we know that the centerpiece of our spirituality is called the Paschal Mystery. These two words are a kind of code name for believers. When we see this phrase, we understand what it represents.

The phrase means that Jesus suffered, Jesus died, and the great mystery, Jesus rose from the dead to new life.

This rhythm of events in Jesus' life is evident in our lives, too. We face moments of fear, pain, and death. Because of our faith in the Paschal Mystery, we know that fear, pain, and death are not the final experience. We learn to embrace them as Jesus did, that is, to acknowledge the power these events *can* have over us. But we don't stop there.

Through the celebration of Word and Sacrament at Mass on Sunday, we learn to embrace suffering and die to what we already know as Jesus died, physically, to what he already knew. And like Jesus, we learn to look for the resurrection or new life beyond the fear, pain, and death. Looking for the resurrection or new life beyond death is what we call salvation.

As we all know, there are two parts to the Mass: The Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Beyond these important "twin tables" of the liturgy is an introduction and a conclusion. Our church documents teach us that we are fed at the twin tables of Word and Sacrament.

When we read the Bible during the Liturgy of the Word, God's word becomes very familiar to us. We begin to see the world as God hopes we will see it: a gift that we take care of with love and compassion. We begin to behave like Jesus behaved in relation to the world and its people as we listen to the proclamation of the Gospels.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist is our response in action to the proclamation of the Word. We come-into-union with one another as the Body and Blood of Christ after we remember our ancestors in faith, our role in continuing that faith, and Jesus' command to "do this in memory of me." Once we receive the Body and Blood of Christ, we

understand that, as temples of Christ, we bring the presence of Christ into daily life in order to transform the world into the kingdom of God.

As we prepare for the use of different words during Mass starting the last Sunday in November, it is important for us to remember that although some of the words change, our Catholic spirituality – the Paschal Mystery - does not change. Also, the shape of the Mass, Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist, does not change.

For example, we will still say the prayer, “I confess to almighty God” but with words that are translated more literally from the Latin text. The current text we use adapted the original Latin text. It substituted phrases with words that mean the same thing but do not literally express what is said in Latin. In November, we will use a translation that is closer to the words in Latin because these words are used in every Mass throughout the world in the different languages of the world.

TODAY	LATIN	NOVEMBER, 2011
I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers and sisters,	Confiteor Deo omnipotenti, et vobis fratres,	I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have <b>sinned through my own fault</b> in my thoughts	quia peccavi nimis cogitatione,	that I have <b>greatly sinned</b> in my thoughts
and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do:	verbo opere et omissione:	and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do:
(missing repeated phrase moved from above, “through my fault”)	<b>mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa.</b>	<b>through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;</b>
<b>and</b> I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin, all the angels and saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.	Ideo precor beatam Mariam semper Virginem, omnes angelos et Sanctos, et vobis fratres, orare pro me ad Dominum Deum nostrum.	<b>therefore</b> I ask blessed Mary ever- Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.