



Respect for the Most Holy Eucharist

Part I

by Joe Sixpack

God exists as a triune Being. He is one and the same God in three divine Persons; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The three persons are one, yet distinct. Time, space and dimension are boundaries of nature established for nature by the Supernature—God. Therefore, He is not bound by those boundaries, but rather imposes them on us. Because He is not bound by time, space and dimension, He experiences everything in the present. You and I can recall what happened a moment ago, anticipate what may happen a moment from now, and experience the present in...well, the present. For God, though, He experiences everything—from the creation of the universe to the end of the universe—all in the present. That is an interesting and perhaps even a mind-boggling concept requiring some contemplation on our part to realize the full ramifications of it all, so we'll make a practical application of it now to help drive home a point.

Because Jesus is God, the second Person of the Trinity, even while on earth He knew all things; He knew them all in the present. While on the cross He saw all the saints of the future (e.g., St. Francis, St. Anthony, St. Theresa, etc.) and all the evil of mankind (e.g., abortion, godless communism, Hitler, etc.), all at the same time. As God, He saw all these things and more, but as man His suffering on the cross was increased by the evils, while the good actually eased His suffering.

Evil, which is anything contrary to the holy will of God, no matter how small, increases Christ's suffering on Calvary, and it is worthy of punishment by Him. Evil is tantamount to spitting on Christ or ridiculing Him on the cross, but we see from the Gospel accounts that goodness is also a consolation to Him on the cross—the "good thief" and His mother's comforting presence. When we do good and avoid evil, we join the Blessed Virgin Mary in consoling Christ on the cross. When we commit evil, we join His tormentors at the foot of the cross...and even Satan...to make His suffering worse.

The Eucharist is the very heart of our holy and ancient faith. It is for this reason that Holy Mother Church, Christ's arbiter on earth, has established certain norms pertaining to our participation in the Mass, Communion and Adoration. These norms fall under both rules and moral teachings. This article will be the first to examine what we do, what we fail to do, and what we should do when it comes to the Mass and the Eucharist.

Let's begin with attire. If you had an audience with the Holy Father, how would you dress? Would you go dressed for a picnic, or would you wear your best? Unless you're a person who lacks complete respect for yourself or the Holy Father, you would wear your best to such an audience, of course. You wouldn't wear formal wear, such as a tuxedo or an evening gown, but neither would you wear blue jeans and a tee shirt or shorts and a halter top. You would dress for the occasion.

The Holy Father is merely a man. He is a very special man, by all means, chosen by the Holy Spirit through the College of Cardinals to lead His Church on earth, but a man nonetheless. If we would

dress appropriately for an audience with the Holy Father, where do we get off dressing like we're going to a picnic for the God of all creation at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass? Go to St. Peter's at the Vatican and try getting in dressed like that. The Swiss Guard will stop you and direct you to a room where you can borrow appropriate attire for your visit. Why? Because you are making a visit to a home of the Infinite Incarnate Word of God!

Many people have told me they don't dress up for Mass because they don't want to make the poor feel uncomfortable. That is a pitiful and invalid excuse. We don't go to Mass for the poor. We don't go to Mass to be with the people. We don't go to Mass to have a social gathering. We go to Mass to worship our Creator, the one true living and omnipotent God! A reality we all need to face about the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is, the ONLY purpose for going to Mass is to obey God's command that we worship Him as He desires. Read the Old Testament sometime. God very specifically told Moses how He wanted to be worshipped under the old covenant. Jesus told His apostles how He wants to be worshipped under the new covenant, and He left Holy Mother Church to set the standards for our participation in that worship. The Church's standard is set by demanding appropriate attire, a demand we pay little if any attention to in modern America.

Let's take this a step further. The sixth commandment says, "You shall not commit adultery". That commandment implies many other things, though, and the Church is the authoritative voice for those teachings. The sixth commandment actually deals with adultery, fornication, contraception, homosexual activity, prostitution, premarital sex, masturbation, pornography, and all forms of immodest behavior, impurity, and everything that leads to impurity. The sixth commandment applies to sexual *activities*, but the ninth commandment applies to all sexual *temptations and imaginings*.

I'm sorry if you'll be offended by this, but what we look at next applies directly to women, and indirectly to men. Ladies, when you come to Holy Mass looking like you were poured into your pants (usually jeans) and wearing halter tops and spaghetti straps, short skirts and short pants, you are dead wrong. Not only are you being immodest in your dress, but you serve to be a temptation to men...a temptation that can send both the wearer and the looker to eternity in hell.

"Well, the nerve of Joe Sixpack! I have the right to wear whatever I want!" No, ladies, you don't. One of the problems with Americans is that we have become confused about what our rights are. Archbishop Fulton Sheen taught rightly that there is a difference between liberty and license. License is doing as we want; liberty is doing as we ought. Just because I want to do a thing doesn't mean it's my right, regardless of what some judge says. He's not the final judge. God is the final judge. And God says that doing what I ought, what I'm supposed to do, is liberty. So I have a right to do what I'm supposed to do, not what I want to do.

We live in a sex saturated society. But we Catholics are obligated to set the example. One of the silliest things I ever saw one day was when a very attractive Catholic woman vocally criticized a priest who had been found out to have a lady friend, and she made her criticisms known while dressed in Daisy Dukes and a halter top. What right did she have to be that priest's critic? NONE! Don't throw stones if you live in a glass house.

No doubt this article has ruffled a few feathers, but I hope it motivates some discussion on the topic of proper dress for Holy Mass...and daily life, for that matter. This is What We Believe...Why We Believe It.

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