

Lesson 23: Orate Fratres

We're back on our feet again and everyone is praying together.

The gifts having been prepared, the priest invites everyone to pray: "Pray brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father."

Standing, the people reply: "May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of His name, for our good and the good of all His holy Church."

'My sacrifice and yours.' Just what does THAT mean? Many things, but especially that the Mass is a sacrifice, not just a meal, and it is the re-presentation of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, but in an unbloody manner. Everyone who participates in the Mass is asked to make a sacrifice, because making a sacrifice is a proof of love. Our religion demands that we love God.

Sometimes the sacrifice we make is simply the time and effort that we have made to get to Mass. For some folks in the world, that's easy because the local church is just next door. For others, it is very difficult because it is far away. And for others, going to Mass might even be dangerous, especially in areas of the world where Christians are persecuted and martyred for their faith.

Our sacrifice can take many forms, but what truly matters is that we are offering it to God.