

## Your Favorite Page - Fitness and Performance Reviews

A gross ignoramus = 144 times worse than an ordinary ignoramus.

A photographic memory but with the lens cover glued on.

A prime candidate for natural de-selection.

A room temperature IQ.

Bright as Alaska in December.

Donated his body to science before he was done using it.

Fell out of the family tree.

Gates are down, the lights are flashing, but the train isn't coming.

Got a full 6-pack, but lacks the plastic thingy to hold it all together.

This employee got into the gene pool while the life guard wasn't watching.

Has two brains; one is lost and the other is out looking for it.

He's so dense, light bends around him.

If brains were taxed, he'd get a rebate.

If he were any more stupid, he'd have to be watered twice a week.

If you give him a penny for his thoughts, you'd get change.

If you stand close enough to him, you can hear the ocean.

One-celled organisms outscore him in IQ tests.

Some drink from the fountain of knowledge; he only gargled.

Takes her 10 hours to watch *60 Minutes*.

Was left on the Tilt-A-Whirl a bit too long as a baby.

Wheel is turning, but the hamster is dead.

He would be out of his depth in a parking lot puddle.

His men would follow him anywhere, but only out of morbid curiosity.

I would not allow this employee to breed.

She sets low personal standards and then consistently fails to achieve them.

Since my last report, he has reached rock bottom and has started to dig.

This employee is depriving a village somewhere of an idiot.

This employee is really not so much of a has-been, but more of a definitely won't be.

This employee should go far - and the sooner he starts, the better.

This young lady has delusions of adequacy.

When he opens his mouth, it seems that this is only to change whichever foot was previously in there.

Works well when under constant supervision and cornered like a rat in a trap.

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# CROSS LINKS

CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS, UNITED STATES PROVINCE OF PRIESTS AND BROTHERS  
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August, 2014

Dear Hearts and Gentle People,

And how has your summer been so far? I hope it's been safe and accident-free, with no crises or anything like that. Hopefully the floods and fires and heat and chills haven't affected you too much. The only big event here in South Bend was back on June 30<sup>th</sup> when a storm packing 80 mph straight line winds did a number on trees and homes in the area. St. Mary's was spared, but the Burke Golf Course and Cedar Grove Cemetery took a hit. Huge old trees were just snapped like toothpicks. It happened late at night and I actually slept through the whole thing! In things like this, I'm not sure if being deaf is an advantage or a disadvantage!!

In the past couple of months we celebrated other big events. Three Holy Cross men were born into eternal life. On May 18, **Rev. Merwyn J. Thomas, C.S.C.**, died. Merwyn was 74 years old. His priestly life was spent entirely in education at Notre Dame High School, Holy Cross College and the University of Notre Dame.

The next man to hear the call of the Lord was **Rev. Barry Cabell, C.S.C.**, who died in Austin, TX on June 16 at the age of 67. He started his religious life as a Holy Cross Brother and later discerned a call to the priesthood. Barry was a psychologist and served in many places in the USA, as well as Mexico, Bolivia, and Canada.

A couple of weeks later, on June 27, at the age of 88, **Rev. Alfred F. D'Alonzo C.S.C.**, ended his earthly journey. Al was a member of Coach Leahy's undefeated football teams before entering Holy Cross, and also a member of the Monogram Club and team chaplain. His ministry was in education in high schools, as well as Kings College and Notre Dame.

Looking ahead, another set of significant events will unfold as twelve men will enter the Old College and Postulant programs. On August 2, ten novices will make their First Profession of Vows in Colorado Springs. On September 13, six men will make their Final Profession of Vows and be ordained to the Diaconate the next day.

If you want more information on the above (eulogies, more details on seminarians, latest news of Holy Cross) see our website at [www.holycrossusa.org](http://www.holycrossusa.org). It's a good read!

Here's another good read: not sure just who God is, or are you bothered by some of the things we were taught about God that just don't fit your spiritual experience and maturity? Take a look at a book by Rev. Nicholas Ayo, C.S.C., titled "Your God May Be Too Small; Misleading Descriptions of God that Disaffect Us." It's available through Corby Books ([www.actapublications.com](http://www.actapublications.com)).

In closing, I simply remind you of our need for your assistance in the mission of Holy Cross, through prayer and through financial support. The cost of education impacts families severely and the same is true of Holy Cross: have to feed the minds, bodies, and spirits of those men in formation, as well as the ones who are in charge of formation. Any help you can give would be appreciated.

Love deeply, laugh often, pray faithfully!

# EUCCHARIST, LITURGY AND COMMUNITY: A RECIPE

A big part of my ministry at Sanctuary at St. Paul's (a full-service retirement community in South Bend) is presiding at the liturgy each day. The only day I don't preside is Monday, my day off. This is the first time in many years that presiding was part of my daily routine. Previously I lived in community houses where we took turns presiding. Some Holy Cross priests would concelebrate, while others (myself included) would "be a people." We'd participate just as you do at your daily or Sunday Mass.

When I first took the job at St. Paul's, I knew daily Mass presiding was part of the job description. I was leery - could I do this on a daily basis? Most folks don't realize this, but it takes a lot of energy not only to prepare and speak a good homily, but also to prayerfully facilitate the gathered community's experience of "God-with-us."

Sure, I could whip through the Eucharist and be done in 15-20 minutes with little or no expenditure of energy. No doubt many folks would be quite happy with a "quickie" like that! But what has surprised me to no end over these last three years of ministry is seeing how a good liturgy done prayerfully can build up a prayerful and active community, and how a prayerful and active community contributes to good liturgy.

Now, by "good liturgy" I'm not talking about great singing, perfect proclamation of the Word, precise adherence to the rubrics and the words, an exquisitely crafted homily, etc. Yes, those elements can help, but if a Mass does not vibrate the God-life in the participants, then I hesitate to call it good liturgy.

I made up that phrase "vibrate the God-life". I couldn't think of any other way to describe the feeling. You *know* when you have been deeply touched by the Eucharist. It's an unmistakable feeling. It makes you thoughtful and peacefully joyful. It makes you want to linger and talk with your fellow parishioners. It deepens your awareness and gratitude for the blessings that mark your life. You have a deep-down sense that "Yes, God is with me, with us." It doesn't happen every time, but methinks it could happen more than it does.

Now it's important to note that a fruitful Eucharistic celebration is not all up to Father, the choir and musicians, the cantor, the readers and other ministers. You have a

role too. We ministers feed off you, just as you feed off us. I can tell you honestly that I have a very different attitude and feeling towards those who stand in back of church than I do towards those who are actively participating. I struggle every time with the rash judgment of "Why are you even here if you're not going to participate?" So I tell myself: "Well, at least they're here; God's grace works in very strange ways sometimes." I'm quite sure that Jesus had his "back-of-church -types" in the crowds that followed him.

As I said above, a major key to the Eucharist is how we feed each other. So often the expectation is that Father carries all the responsibility. If a Mass is boring or unfulfilling, it's his fault. I beg to differ. A liturgy where you truly feel God-is-with-us is a liturgy that involves the whole Body. Priests and lay ministers feed community with Word and Sacrament; community feeds ministers with whole-hearted participation in attentiveness, singing, and responding; community feeds community with gratitude and happiness at each other's presence. The feeding is all-encompassing; every single person is involved.

Feeding each other finds expression in the 2nd Eucharistic Prayer. I'm not a fan of the new Mass translations, but every so often there is a particularly captivating phrase. Right after the Mystery of Faith, the celebrant gives "thanks that you have held us worthy to be in your presence and minister to you." Have you caught that phrase and wondered about it? I mean, how do we minister to Jesus present on the altar in the bread and wine? But when we take Jesus also present in the Body of Christ - the gathered community - then yes, ministering makes a lot of sense. We minister to Jesus by ministering to each other. And in this way, the prayer continues, we are "gathered into one by the Holy Spirit."

Now what I've reflected on above is pretty much what happens or can happen at the Mass itself. But there are actually some things we can do *before* Mass so as to make the Eucharist a deeply significant part of our day or week. Basically we do two things.

First, we remember and we give thanks. The word *Eucharist* is derived from a Greek word for "thanks." Above all, we remember with deep gratitude all that God has done for

us in Jesus Christ, through his life, suffering, death and resurrection. If on a daily basis you give thanks to God for your personal experience of God's love at work in our lives in large and small ways, in good times and bad, in sickness and health, in poverty and plenty, then you are well-prepared to come to the Eucharist. I might add that it's important to remember not just present blessings, but also what has happened in the past. Many times events that were first seen as "bad" turned out to be real blessings in our lives.

Second, we come together to celebrate our being a community. This links the "me and God" spirituality into the "we and God" spirituality. Sometime when you are at Mass, really listen to every prayer from "in the Name of the Father..." all the way to "Go in peace." Note how often the plural is used.

The Mass, by itself, does not make community. It is the celebration of a community already existing. I would go so far as to say that the Eucharist is, by and large, the measure of a Christian community. From the way a congregation celebrates its Eucharist one can know immediately whether this is a living or a dying or dead community. A dead or non-existent community cannot have a living, prayerful communion with each other. "Communion" is not just with Jesus but also with all those around us. It's a communion that can take place in many ways, on many levels, at many times throughout the day or week.

It is difficult to have a sense of communion if we are not one body ... not only inside the Church, but outside as well, in our everyday life. This, by the way, is for me one of the major effects of the Eucharist at St. Paul's. The degree of caring for one another and for the other residents and staff is phenomenal. You can tell at the Greeting of Peace how much the folks enjoy and cherish each other. Ditto for the constant waves and "good mornings" as folks enter the chapel.

If we are not already a community before we enter the place where the Eucharist is being celebrated, we are not suddenly going to become a community after we come in. As I said above, the Eucharist is the measure of the life of the community or parish. A parish gets the Eucharist it deserves. Poor community, poor Eucharist. A vibrant Christian community cannot have a bad Eucharist.

Now I said above how the Body can feed itself and deepen the individual and communal relationship to the Lord Jesus. I might add that you have to feed yourself. How does one do this?

First, consciously and deliberately cultivate a sense of gratitude. Speak it, think it, feel it, pray it. Blessing upon blessing touches our life each and every day, from seeing the tiniest flower in the sidewalk crack to experiencing the joy of your family. Maybe you might not find a blessing in the deepest trials of life, but maybe you can, if only you look. One thing I can absolutely guarantee: if you're a constant complainer, you'll be hard-pressed to find God's blessings in your life.

A second way you can feed yourself is to take note of what and who you love, which will usually manifest itself in your use of time. As Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there will be your heart." Fr. Pedro Arrupe, the former Superior General of the Jesuits, had a beautiful way of putting it: "What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination, will affect everything. It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning, what you do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends, what you read, who you know, what breaks your heart, and what amazes you with joy and gratitude. Fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything."

So in addition to gratitude, the question for each of us is this: What am I in love with? Where is my treasure? To repeat: how do I use my time? What do I do with my evenings, how I spend my weekends, etc. How we spend our time on a daily basis quite obviously reveals what we are in love with and where our treasure is.

Is a good portion of my day spent on selfish thoughts and actions, drinking too much alcohol, watching YouTube videos that either have no inherent value or that denigrate or objectify others? If so, that tells me something about where my treasure lies. Or, am I spending my day with time for prayer, cultivating that attitude of gratitude, nurturing my relationships with family and friends, cultivating healthy habits, seeking to serve and care for others?

Good liturgy and meaningful Eucharist and communion with each other can truly be achieved. It just takes a little bit of work on our part.