

Year of Faith

Issue Number 1

St Ethelbert's Parish, Deane, Bolton



Mass – Do I really have to go every Sunday?

Before considering what you “get” out of Mass, you should think about what you give. Our primary motive for going to Mass should be to give not to get. We give worship to God by participating in the sacrifice of Jesus which has won us salvation and eternal life. We participate by being attentive, responding, singing, and praying. And the truth of the Mass is that we do get something out of it as well. We “get” the Lord Jesus himself, who loves us beyond compare. This is the greatest gift of all. Church law holds that Catholics have a serious duty to participate in the Sunday Eucharist. Only a valid reason can excuse us from this responsibility, for example, sickness or unusually exhausting work. The reason for the law is because human beings have a natural weakness; we often need external prodding to do right. And, it is right to worship God for one hour on Sunday in thanksgiving and praise for the other 167 hours in a week that God gives us. Attending Mass is an act of love to God, our families, our friends, and fellow believers. People do indeed get bored at Mass. Many activities in life are boring, routine, even difficult. But they are good for us. Eating breakfast day in, day out can be boring, but it is essential to health. Going to school is tough at times, but it is required of you and it pays off. You are to develop your talents so you can prepare for a career and live a full human life. The question is: Are you a faithful Christian? Do you apply the same standard of fidelity to Mass attendance that you do in other areas of your life? Wouldn't you be upset if your car started only three times a week, or the water heater unpredictably dispensed ice cold water, or your computer crashed several times a month? We expect things and other people to be dependable. Doesn't God expect the same from us? Gale Sayers, a great player in the 1960s for a football team, titled his autobiography “I Am Third”, explaining, “God is first; my family and friends are second; and I am third.” Faithful Mass attendance is a way to show where your priorities are. Is God number one in your life?

In this Issue:

THE GIFT OF MASS

I don't get anything out of going to Mass! Do I really have to go every Sunday?

FAITH IN ACTION

Every week, after Mass, you will receive a short reflection to think about at home. Every Reflection is based on a key matter of our faith and our culture.

CATHOLIC CHECK

Check the kind of Catholic you want to be...



Faith in Action

“The ‘door of faith’ (Acts 14:27) is always open for us, ushering us into the life of communion with God and offering entry into his Church. It is possible to cross that threshold when the word of God is proclaimed and the heart allows itself to be shaped by transforming grace. To enter through that door is to set out on a journey that lasts a lifetime.” – Pope Benedict XVI, Porta Fidei, 1

The Year of Faith begins October 11, 2012. It is a timely and much-needed call from the Holy Father for a



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renewed dedication to the Faith. It is also chance for each of us to accept the Pope's challenge and vigorously seek an encounter with Jesus Christ so that this is a year in which we help make his desire for the Church's renewal a reality.

To help accomplish this goal, I invite you to join us in our Year of Faith Parish Project. Every week, after Mass, you will receive a short reflection to think about at home. Every Reflection is based on a key matter of our faith and our culture. Please pass them to others who might be interested. Thank you!

Pass it on – its the only way!

The Year of Faith marks two important anniversaries in the life of the Church: Fifty years ago, on October 11th, was the opening session of the Second Vatican Council; twenty years ago was the promulgation of The Catechism of the Catholic Church. Both of these have proven to be true compasses, directing us toward our heavenly goal. As you engage the Faith in Action reflections, which draw richly from Vatican II and the Catechism, I would encourage you to keep them in your heart and meditate upon them with the hopes of accomplishing what they suggest. I would also recommend that you share these reflections with your friends and family as a way to participate actively in the New Evangelization. The Year of Faith is an historic year. It is a time to focus and dive deeply into the life transforming faith of the Catholic Church.

Check the kind of Catholic you want to be...

✓Annuals:

can be seen in church in their “Sunday best” on Easter and Christmas only

✓Leaners:

use church for baptisms, weddings, and funerals

✓Pillars:

regular Mass attenders; give support, time, and selves

✓Specials:

help and give on only those occasions that appeal to them

✓Sponges:

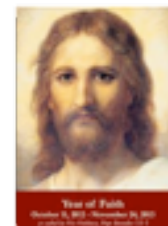
take all the church has to give, but never return the favour

✓Whingers:

stay on the outside and criticize and complain about everything

✓Hypocrites:

think they are better than everybody, even the Pillars



[from a pupil at a Catholic school in Bolton]