

Why Celebrate the Eucharist: 10 Top Reasons—by Fr. Steve Lape

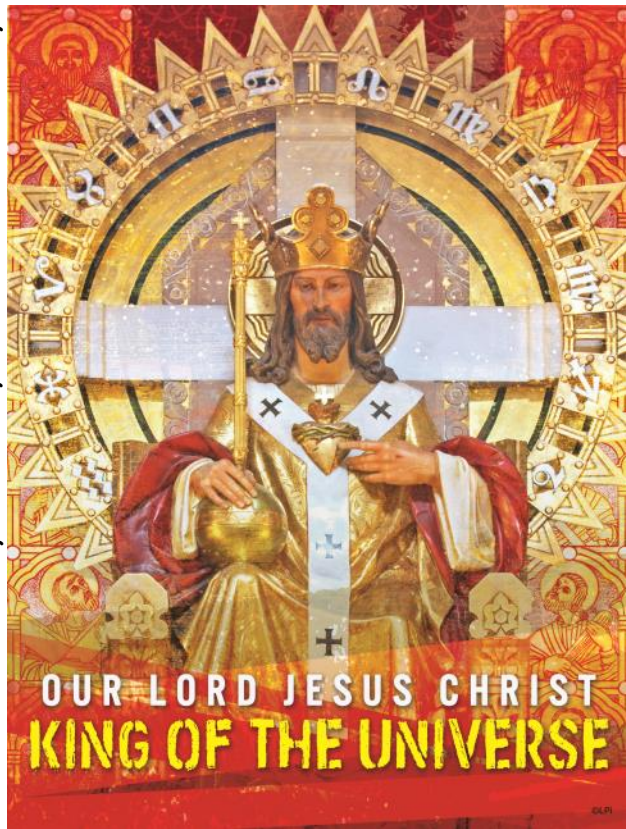
As we continue to reflect on the joy and the importance of the Mass during our diocese's Year of the Eucharist" (6/18/2017—6/3/2018), let's consider these reasons why it's crucial for us to attend each and every Sunday:

1) Our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ told His Apostles at the Last Supper to continue to share in His Body and Blood (as changed from bread & wine) in years to come, to "do this in memory of me," as Jesus said in the Gospels. As Jesus has given this command to all His disciples through what He told His 12 Apostles at the Last Supper, we fulfill the 3rd Commandment of "Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy" when we attend Mass on Sunday. As stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "The faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their pastor. Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin." As Bishop Matano reminds us in his recent "Year of the Eucharist" pastoral letter, those who miss Mass without a serious reason should go to confession before receiving Communion.

2) We're nourished & strengthened to follow Jesus more closely in living as faithful Christians (nourished through prayer, the Bible readings, eating & drinking Christ's Body and Blood, the power of music, the supporting presence of fellow Christian

believers).

- 3) We become more aware of God's unconditional, sacrificial love for us.
- 4) It's a sign of our unity as one Body in Christ, just as the Bible says we are as baptized Christians. It also helps us to grow in that unity of love and care for one another, seeing each other more as brothers and sisters in one family.
- 5) We can learn to become more like Jesus to the world in our words & deeds of love, peace, and self-less service.



6) Since the word "Eucharist" means "to give thanks," celebrating the Eucharist conveys to God our gratitude for all the good we have and are in our lives, and encourages us to be more thankful people in our everyday living.

7) It's the "source and summit of the Christian life," as stated in the Second Vatican Council's very important document known, in Latin, as "Lumen Gentium," which means "Light of the Nations" in English, referring to Christ as the Light of the world.

- 8) It trains us to better recognize the presence of Jesus in others, since Jesus Himself said, "Whatever you do to others, you do to me." (Matthew 25:40)
- 9) It teaches us how to live out Christ's ways and commands for our everyday living, through hearing His Word proclaimed.
- 10) It refreshes the soul and offers peace of mind.