

# THE BULLETIN

“So the faith was planted: so it must be restored.”

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## The Mass and Calvary

Adapted from a sermon by The Most Rev. Clarence Kelly  
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In the Epistle for the Mass of Passion Sunday, St. Paul compares the imperfect sacrifices of the Old Law with the perfect sacrifice of the new in which the Immaculate Lamb of God is immolated for our salvation. The sacrifices of the Old Law were indeed instituted by God Himself. Throughout the books of Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy God explicitly told Moses and Aaron what was prescribed for various types of sacrifices. But even though they were directly commanded by God, they still were only shadows of the good things to come. They were sacrifices without the necessary substance to appease the justice of God. Even the Old Testament itself testifies how inadequate were these prefigurements. The Psalmist declares: “Sacrifices and oblations Thou didst not desire” (Ps. 39:7). Therefore when Our Lord was about to suffer for us, He wished, before leaving this world, to bequeath to us the great confirmation of His love for us, and this He instituted at the Last Supper. It is none other than the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

This Divine testament of the love God has for His creatures has a twofold significance; it is a sacrament and a sacrifice. It is a sacrament whereby our souls are nourished with the Bread of Life. It is a sacrifice whereby we offer up to God a spotless Victim, through Whose merits all our sins are expiated, whereby we render to Him due honor and glory as our God and Creator, whereby we satisfy all that is due to the Divine Justice and obtain for ourselves His mercy and grace. Of all the sacrifices of the Old Law, all of which were only types and figures

of the Sacrifice of the Mass, that sacrifice of the paschal lamb was the most significant because it also had the nature of a sacrament and sacrifice. It had the nature of a sacrifice because the people of God were commanded to sacrifice the lamb, and by it, they received protection from the destroying angel which took all the first born of those in Egypt. It had the nature of a sacrament because they were also commanded to eat the flesh of the lamb in order to prepare them for their journey through the desert, which was a figure of our journey through this life.

If anything were needed to fill us with the necessary love and veneration for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, it would be the consideration of the solemn time and occasion when it was instituted. St. John the Evangelist begins his narrative of this event in this manner: “Jesus, knowing that the time was come, having loved His own who were in the world, He love them unto the end” (John 13:1). It was the night He began His Passion, the night before He was about to offer up Himself wholly and entirely for our salvation. In order that this offering might be more perfect, He would make it a perpetual offering and leave it to us, as His last testament, a non-ending pledge of His immense love for us.

As Jesus Christ is Himself the Victim Who is offered in the Sacrifice of the Mass, it follows that it cannot be offered to any creature, not even to the Mother of God, but to God alone. When we say Mass is celebrated in honor of any saint, we do not mean that Mass is offered to the saint, but to God in