

*The traditional Mass* is not about nostalgia or pining for the past. It is about being transformed by the wonder and beauty of holiness. Far from being dead and archaic, you will find that this ancient way of praying is very much alive and powerful, a way of encountering God that is vital in its freshness.

While the use of the Traditional Latin Mass had never completely died out, Pope Benedict's Mass gave the older liturgy a much-needed shot in the arm. Since September 2007, when *Summorum Pontificum* took effect, the Traditional Latin Mass has begun to spread. And while most Catholics born after 1969 have yet to attend a Traditional Latin Mass, more and more are expressing an interest in doing so.

However, some people are hesitant to take the plunge since they're not quite sure what to expect. With a little preparation, any Catholic who regularly attends the Novus Ordo will find themselves equally at home with the Traditional Latin Mass.

*"It was very beautiful, and I loved the music, but I didn't get much out of it because I had no idea what the priest was doing."*

*The truth is, the Extraordinary Form can be intimidating the first time you visit, because it is different from the form of the Mass most Catholics are (have become) used to (since Vatican II). It has an ethos all its own, and its rhythms and patterns can take time to absorb.\**

*While it might take some time, I would argue that it is worth the effort as it will enrich your spiritual life and form you, just as it did for countless saints. (Sam Guzman\*)*

There is no simple answer to the 'why?' the language of the traditional Mass is not in the vernacular. (English in Australia) but suffice to say that the Latin language is a 'dead language' neither the words nor the meanings will ever change no matter the soft spin modern liturgist try to put on the translations.

Our Blessed Lord under the Roman Occupation probably spoke Latin, and His conversation with Pontius Pilate would almost certainly have been in Latin:

Pilate. *Tu es Rex Judæorum?* Jesus. Responds: *A temetipso hoc dicis, an alii dixerunt tibi de me? (St. John's Passion) 'other have told you of me.....etc'*

Holy Mass, pre-Vatican II, was the language used across every nation on earth, one could have attended Mass anywhere and it would have been the same (Latin) regardless of the local language. In this modern world of travel, attending Holy Mass in a common language would be a boon. A Traditional Mass can be found, not easily however without prior research, at most major tourist destinations, particularly since Benedict XVI's *motu proprio*. 'What was good then must still be good now' or similar were words used by Pope Benedict XVI to re-ignite the 'Old' Mass, as it is affectionately known.

The Traditional Mass or Mass in Latin can be traced as far back as 76 A.D.; this was the language of the Saints and Martyrs throughout the ages. Holy Mass in the 15th Century AD and the Tridentine or Traditional Mass of today are manifestly the same; the depth of the Church's Liturgy and Traditions are extraordinary.

**If I don't understand what the Priest is saying what's the point?** Guzman again.

*'When I first went to a Latin Mass, I was confused. It seemed much more complex than the Novus Ordo, with many new prayers and actions to learn. But while it is true there are extra prayers and actions, the basic structure is always the same, and similar to that of the Novus Ord (which is really 'the Old Mass' revised) The Mass of the Catechumens (the beginning of Mass to the Creed) and the Mass of the Faithful (from the Offertory to the end of Mass). Proof that the Mass is the Mass is the Mass is the Mass. Learning the visual cues of the priest and a few words of the prayers is immensely helpful in following along.\**

The house of God should be awe inspiring. It should feel out of the ordinary, a place set apart for the worship of the Almighty.

*Yet, our worship is too often not awesome, it is banal and commonplace. **And so one of the easiest traps to fall into is thinking that the Mass is for and about us. We begin to think that we are the audience and judge the Mass accordingly. What did I get out of it? Could I see and understand? Was the music to my taste? Really, though, the Mass isn't for you. It's for God—He is the audience. All of the prayers and actions are oriented toward offering a sacrifice of praise to Him. We have the privilege of participating in this great worship, and **we assist the priest in his offering.** But the Mass is not for us and our entertainment. Keep that in mind and I believe you will find Mass much more profitable.\****

In the Traditional Mass the Priest uses three different voices, A loud voice in proclaiming the Word of God and the Propers (special prayer for that day), the middle voice for unchanging General prayers (the Ordinary of the Mass) and the quiet voice during the Canon through the Consecration and up to the Our Father.

There are parts of the Mass where we are enjoined to participate, parts where the Priest uses the Latin words Oremus (Let US pray) Pater Noster (Our Father) Dominus Vobiscum (The Lord be with you) Domine non sum dignus (Lord I am not worthy).

*Immersing yourself in the traditional Mass is not about nostalgia or pining for the past. It is about being transformed by the beauty of holiness. Far from being dead and archaic, you will find that this ancient way of praying is very much alive and powerful, a way of encountering God that is vital in its freshness.\**

God is worthy of our prayerfulness, our quietude, our enjoyment of His presence and our respect for the saving graces we can receive through praying the Holy Mass.

*'We behold the wonder of God', present in the Holy Eucharist, present in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.*



Giuseppe Cacace / Getty Images

NB. I have used some of Sam Guzman's Blog and would encourage you to look further into this absorbing article. The link follows:

<https://www.catholicgentleman.net/2016/06/lift-hearts-10-tips-newcomers-latin-mass/>

To finish off, here is another quote from one of Sam Guzman's interviews:

*Interviewee: "I think I'm a good Catholic," he began, "but I don't go to mass. I hear it's a sin not to go, but I don't understand that. I guess I don't see the point. Can you give me any reasons why I should go?" His question was sincere, and it led to a long and healthy discussion of why being present at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is important in the life of a faithful Catholic.*

*But truth be told, many Catholics probably ask the same questions, even if they attend mass faithfully. What's the point? Why should I bother? This confusion and apathy about the source and summit of the Catholic faith is due to an almost complete failure of teaching on what the mass actually is.*

Guzman's Blog <https://www.catholicgentleman.net/2014/10/four-ends-mass/>  
(AMDG)