

THE CENTRALITY OF THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

AT CHRISTENDOM COLLEGE

The Church teaches that the Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life”¹ and that the celebration of the Mass “is a sacred action surpassing all others. No other action of the Church can equal its efficacy.”² That is why “as a natural expression of the Catholic identity of the University. . . members of this community . . . will be encouraged to participate in the celebration of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, as the most perfect act of community worship.”³ Those central truths are taught and lived at Christendom College, a “Catholic coeducational college institutionally committed to the Magisterium”⁴ of the Church, in the following ways:

The Celebration of the Sacred Liturgy

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

- Mass is offered frequently: twice daily Monday through Saturday and twice on Sunday (the day on which we gather as one family).
- Mass in the Roman Rite is celebrated: in the Ordinary Form in both English and Latin (under the guidance of the bishop of the Diocese of Arlington).
- The Ordinary Form of the Mass is celebrated with the solemnity appropriate to each feast, utilizing worthy sacred vessels and vestments, and drawing upon the Church’s rich tradition of chant, polyphony, and hymnody.
- The Ordinary Form of the Mass is celebrated reverently and with rubrical fidelity.
- The majority of the College community attends daily Mass regularly and with great devotion.

In order to facilitate the proper disposition for the worthy reception of Holy Communion, the Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation is offered three times daily Monday through Friday; twice daily Saturday; and once on Sunday.

If a student is ill and unable to attend Mass, but requests Holy Communion, one of the college chaplains will provide Holy Communion according to the Rite of Pastoral Care of the Sick.

Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament

- The daily celebration of the Eucharist is complemented by regular exposition and adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament.
- Eucharistic exposition and adoration is celebrated daily Monday through Friday when school is in session.
- A First Friday Holy Hour followed by all-night exposition and adoration occurs each month when school is in session.

¹Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, Second Vatican Council, 11.

²Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctam Consilium*, Second Vatican Council, 7.

³Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, St. John Paul II, 39.

⁴Christendom College Mission Statement.

Christendom College is a fruit of the Second Vatican Council and has always recognized the centrality of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in Catholic life. The College, from its founding, has always striven to provide for its students a reverent and elevated liturgy in keeping with the mind of the Church and the teachings of the Second Vatican Council's document on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Consilium*.

Following up the construction of Christ the King Chapel, there has been an ever greater emphasis upon the beauty of the Sacred Liturgy. With respect to the role of *musica sacra* in the celebration of the Mass, there is special emphasis on preserving the Latin patrimony of plainchant and polyphony especially for the celebration of the Lord's Day.

The College has always sought to be an example of the authentic implementation of the Second Vatican Council and has always sought to be in full communion with the bishops of the Diocese of Arlington. In a particular way, the College recalls the late Bishop John Keating's *A Pastoral Letter on Reverence for the Eucharist* (<https://www.ewtn.com/library/BISHOPS/KEATEUCH.HTM>), promulgated on December 4, 1988, which advocates a reform of the reform in keeping with the true teaching of the Second Vatican Council. Over its forty year history, the College has always had an important role to play in bearing witness to the mind of the Church not least with respect to the reverent celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Visiting priests in good standing are welcome both as celebrants and as concelebrants at any of the College's public Masses in the Ordinary Form. Such priests are also welcome to celebrate Mass privately according to either Form of the Mass. The latter can be done either in the Chapel of Christ the King, outside of the hours of Mass and Eucharistic Adoration, or in Padre Pio Hall, the chaplains' residence. The chaplaincy arranges for servers for visiting priests who desire to celebrate Mass privately in the Extraordinary Form.

In these ways, then, the College seeks to integrate into its corporate life the celebration of Mass in the Extraordinary Form. All the same, in its own corporate celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, both daily and in particular on Sunday, the Day of the Lord, the College and its chaplaincy both remain committed primarily to the solemn celebration of the Mass in the Ordinary Form, both in fidelity to the practice of Pope Saint John Paul II, Pope Emeritus Benedict, and Pope Francis, and in accordance with the desire of our local ordinary, Michael Burbidge, the Bishop of the Diocese of Arlington.

Concerning the celebration of the Mass according to the 1962 Missal Romanum, it is currently restricted to private celebration. In the recent past, the Traditional Latin Mass (TLM) was being celebrated twice a week in the chapel. Under the direction of the Bishop and the Vatican's document, *Traditionis Custodes*, the TLM is no longer being celebrated publicly. When the opportunity presents itself, the celebration of the TLM, twice a week, will be requested of the bishop. Whatever direction or guidance the school in turn receives will be respectfully followed.