

UNDERSTANDING THE CATHOLIC MASS

(Researched and compiled by Bernie Ramis for the Roman Catholic Churches of Vernon)

INTRODUCTION

Between April 2026 and August 2026, lay liturgical ministers from our parishes of St. James in Vernon and Our Lady of the Valley in Coldstream attended the “*Foundational Workshop for Lay Liturgical Ministers*”. It was a beautiful opportunity for our Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Ushers, Music Ministers, and Altar Servers to reflect on the deep meaning behind our sacred traditions and why we do what we do during the Mass, and to appreciate how their individual roles help the liturgy flow with beauty and reverence.

Seeing the fruit of these gatherings, I felt a strong desire to share this grace with our entire community. The liturgy belongs to all of us, and we are all invited to experience that same sense of renewal and joy at the Lord’s banquet.

With the guidance and permission of our Pastor, Fr. Peter Hoan Nguyen, I have prepared a series of brief reflections designed to deepen our understanding of the Mass, re-ignite our reverence for the Holy Eucharist, and open our hearts to a “fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium, paragraph 14*).

Rooted primarily in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (published by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops), alongside Sacred Scripture and Church teachings, these brief 7-minute reflections will take place for 7 Sundays, just before Mass begins. They are designed to be bite-sized insights or small seeds meant to stir your heart, invite reflection, and inspire a deeper desire to explore the richness of our faith.

Whether you have been attending Mass for decades or are just beginning to explore Catholic tradition, you are warmly invited to join us. May these moments enrich your spiritual journey and renew your sense of wonder and awe every time you enter into the celebration of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

May God bless us all! Peace be with you!

Bernie