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One Ordinary Sunday: A Meditation on the Mystery of the Mass

Paula Huston

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In *One Ordinary Sunday* the popular, award-winning writer Paula Huston draws on her spiritual wisdom and her talent as a novelist to provide both a moment-by-moment record of her experience of one particular Mass on one particular Sunday in her home parish in California and a theologically and historically rich exploration of the origin and meaning of the liturgy. For Catholics, the Mass is the "source and summit of the Christian life," as the documents of the Church put it. Yet many Catholics might confess to not understanding in any depth what goes on in an "ordinary" celebration of the Eucharist. In perhaps her most compelling and original book to date, novelist and spiritual writer Paula Huston guides us through a Mass on the Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time at her home parish in Arroyo Grande, California. Huston's personal and spiritual reflections offer fresh and often unexpected insights into the profound mystery at the heart of the Catholic faith. A natural storyteller, Huston deftly illuminates what might seem either mysterious to those unfamiliar with the Mass or overly familiar to those who have lost an appreciation of its mystery. In the Mass "we are healed and restored and spiritually fed," she writes. "We are handed strong armor against evil. We are unified and made whole as a people and as a Church. We get a little taste of heaven." Readers of this book will learn

- how our confession of sins at the beginning of the Mass differs from the sacrament of Penance;
- what it means to say that the Mass is a sacrifice;
- why the prayers of the Mass, especially the *Gloria*, are full of scriptural allusions;
- what the purpose of the Eucharistic Prayer is; and
- what happens at the consecration of bread and wine and how it is the most profound mystery and miracle of the Mass.

One Ordinary Sunday is for all Catholics, especially those who have questions about the basic practices of their faith, who are new to the Church and still somewhat baffled about its rituals of worship, or who have left the Church behind but still feel like part of the family.

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