



The Mass is a participation in this one heavenly offering. The risen Christ becomes present on the altar and offers himself to God as a living sacrifice. Like the Mass, Christ words at the Last Supper are words of sacrifice, “This is my body . . . this is my blood . . . given up for you.” So, the Mass is not repeating the murder of Jesus, but is taking part in what never ends: the offering of Christ to the Father for our sake (Heb 7:25, 9:24). After all, if Calvary didn’t get the job done, then the Mass won’t help. It is precisely because the death of Christ was sufficient that the Mass is celebrated. It does not add to or take away from the work of Christ—it is the work of Christ.

(<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/is-the-mass-a-sacrifice>)

If the Mass is to be a [true](#) sacrifice in the literal sense, it must realize the philosophical conception of sacrifice. Thus the last preliminary question arises: What is a sacrifice in the proper sense of the term? Without attempting to state and establish a comprehensive theory of [sacrifice](#), it will suffice to show that, according to the comparative history of [religions](#), four things are necessary to a sacrifice:

- a sacrificial gift (*res oblata*),
- a sacrificing minister (*minister legitimus*),
- a sacrificial action (*actio sacrificica*), and
- a sacrificial end or object (*finis sacrificii*).

For the rest, the Communion of the [priest](#) is not the sacrifice, but only the completion of, and participation in, the sacrifice, it belongs therefore not to the essence, but to the integrity of the sacrifice. And this integrity is also preserved absolutely even in the so-called "private Mass" at which the [priest](#) alone communicates; private Masses are allowed for that reason (cf. Trent, Sess. XXII, can.

8). <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/10006a.htm>

