

Dear Parishioners,

You may have seen recent news reports of the sacrifices people make for what is most important to them. Two recent news items come to mind:

In cities around the globe, hundreds of people camped out in line for three days...to buy a cell phone! Granted, this was no ordinary phone...it's the Apple iPhone 4! Whoopee!! These folks sacrificed **72 hours of their lives** to buy the newest version of this phone! Which means the three previous versions are now, presumably, obsolete. And soon, iPhone 5 will come along relegating iPhone 4 to the Dark Ages.

Now if that weren't bizarre enough, there were other people who traded **96 consecutive hours of their lives**, waiting in line for...a movie premier about vampires!

"But Father! It's like, y'know, *Twilight Eclipse!*"

News flash! That movie will be playing the next day...and the next. Granted, the possibility of seeing one of the film's stars upped the ante. But even if they spotted a star, how long did the thrill last? After going home their life returned to its normal routine...quickly.

So, what on earth do iPhones and vampire movies have to do with our Catholic faith? Well, it raises two important questions:

1. What is important enough to **you** that you would sacrifice your valuable time to have it?
2. As you asked yourself the first question, did **the Holy Mass** make your list?

We live in a society where people will trade hours or days of their life for perishable objects or fleeting experiences. If you want to know what's important to a person, observe how they spend their time. Very few people will arrive late for a movie, but many Catholics have no qualms about walking in late for their weekly encounter with the Jesus Christ Himself at Mass! Very few people will leave a movie before it ends, but many Catholics have no problem leaving Mass as soon as they've received Holy Communion, forgetting that their Communion is also with their fellow parishioners.

The way we live our Catholic faith has eternal consequences. If we make the Lord our highest priority in this life, He will make our being in Heaven with Him His highest priority in the next. If not, well...

As I write this, the Devil is whispering in my ear: "Father! What if the parishioners get mad at you for writing this, especially since you just got here?" So I whispered back: "I'd rather they be mad at me and make it to Heaven, then have them like me and not make it! So get lost, Satan!"

The Lord sacrificed **everything** He had to get us into Heaven. And he asks us today, as he asked St. Peter:

"So, could you not watch with me one hour?" (Mt 26:40)

One hour a week...for Heaven's sake...literally! I'll be there...**for the whole Mass**. How about you?

God's blessings...my prayers...