

## Universality of the Church

The quote below is part of an item I found in *Father Pokorny's Catholic Quote*. It was written by a John Moody, a convert to the Catholic Church. The date of its composition was not given but the text indicates that it was at a time when the Mass, in the Latin Rite Church, was celebrated in Latin throughout the world. "Probably those who move about within their native land or beyond its border, more easily acquire a broadening vision of the Church's universal characteristics, than those who always stay at home. For not only in his own home town or within his own country, but thousands of miles from home, or in Europe, Asia, Africa, South America, Australia and upon the seven seas, the open doors of the Catholic Churches and cathedrals, with the tabernacles upon the altar and the familiar sanctuary lamp, give the visiting Catholic a 'homey' feeling, such as he could not possibly experience if not a Catholic.

It is not merely within his own neighborhood, or within the borders of his native land, that the Catholic can go to Mass and join with the priest in offering up the eternal Sacrifice of Calvary. It can be done freely - at least in peace times - in London, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Budapest, Athens, Tokyo, Singapore, Manila, Buenos Aires or Cape Town; in fact almost anywhere in the world and, for this brief hour at least, be completely 'at home' as one would be at their own parish church. When in foreign lands, a person may not know one word of the local languages spoken, may find it impossible to move about without a guide; but one is familiar with the Latin Mass (translated in the Missal), and can join in it and receive Holy Communion precisely as one would in one's own home town.

The fact of being able to go to Mass wherever the Catholic happens to be, profoundly impressed me even before my own Catholic days."

Today one may not be familiar with a language, not his own, in which the Mass is celebrated. Yet a Catholic who participates in Mass regularly would be familiar with the format of the Mass - Introductory Rite, Liturgy of the Word, Liturgy of the Eucharist, Holy Communion Rite - and thus be still able to participate fully, consciously and actively. The Universality - Catholicity - of the Catholic Church is manifest in the celebration of the Mass.

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