

CDL. MÜLLER: MASS IS NOT OPTIONAL

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'The Eucharist is the only true form of adoration of God'

ROME ([ChurchMilitant.com](#)) - The former prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith is fighting back against those who see the Eucharist as "optional" or "[overrated](#)."

In [an interview](#) with The New Daily Compass, Cdl. Gerhard Müller made it clear that "No bishop has a right to [prohibit public masses](#)."

"Jesus became flesh, we believe in the resurrection of the flesh; therefore bodily presence is indispensable," said Cdl. Müller.

Pointing to an attitude of indifference to the Eucharist, which the Second Vatican Council calls "the source and summit of the Christian life" (Lumen Gentium 11, [CCC 1324](#)), Müller pulled no punches in expressing his displeasure: "It is scandalous that there are bishops who say the Eucharist is overrated," he lamented. "The Eucharist is the only true form of adoration of God."

Cardinal Müller made clear he doesn't like what many bishops have done to curtail the Eucharist and suspended public masses in the midst of this Wuhan crisis:

This virus represented a tragedy for many people. This is the precise reason the Church has the duty to propose a vision of human suffering and existence, in the perspective of eternal life, in the light of faith. The suspension of public Masses is an abdication of this task. It is the reduction of the Church to dependency on the state. It is unacceptable.

When asked about the shutting down of public Masses by the hierarchy, Müller responded: "It is one thing to take precautionary measures to minimize the risks of contagion. **It's another to ban the liturgy This is very serious, it's the secularist thought which has made its way into the Church.**"

The cardinal believes many bishops are acting as if they are civil heads of state rather than leaders of the Church. "We have witnessed priests being punished by their bishops for celebrating Mass for only a few persons. This means they conceive themselves as state officials. But our supreme pastor is Jesus Christ"

"Taking certain external measures is the task of the state. Our task is to defend the freedom and independence of the Church and the Church's superiority in the spiritual dimension. We are not an agency subordinated to the state," he said. Further, he added, "There is a risk in every human activity. It is certain that we must be careful not to endanger the lives and health of others, but this is not the supreme value."

Mass is ... the salvific act made present so that members of Christ's body may participate in His death and resurrection. As such ... Mass is not 'overrated,' but severely underrated.

With regard to watching Mass on television, Müller said, "God created us body and soul. God accompanied His people throughout history. He freed them from the slavery in Egypt. He did not perform a virtual liberation." He explained that man is a bodily species and that Christ became man to minister to us as corporal beings.

"God does not need the sacraments. We need them," he explained. "We are not simply animals, but neither are we angels. God instituted the sacraments for us. Marriage does not work only spiritually — there is a need for the union of body and soul. We

are not platonic idealists. We cannot follow Mass from home, except in particular circumstances."

These particular circumstances, according to Müller, do not include avoiding a virus.

"If you are in prison or in a concentration camp or other exceptional circumstances" it would be reasonable to participate spiritually through some form of media, he qualified.

The Mass is not meant to be a spectator event, the cardinal noted, but the salvific act made present so that members of Christ's body may participate in His death and resurrection. As such, he asserted, the faithful realize the Mass is not "overrated," but severely underrated.

"In the Mass, we participate in the Paschal Mystery. The Second Vatican Council made this clear in the Sacrosanctum Concilium and Lumen Gentium," he said. "Yet, there are bishops who say that some faithful are too attached to the Eucharist. It's absurd."

"The Eucharist is the only true adoration of God through Jesus Christ," said Müller.

This is a bourgeois, secularized Church, not a Church that lives on the Word of Jesus Christ.

Hypocrisy and lack of supernatural faith in some clergy is not lost on Müller, who understands the state of the human element in the mystical body of Christ and its need for purification. He called modernism within Catholicism a self-destructive ideology:

Just think of those who before and during the [Synod on the Amazon](#) said forcefully that indigenous peoples absolutely needed the Eucharist and for this it was necessary to ordain married men as priests. Now the same people shamelessly argue the exact opposite, that we don't need the Eucharist. They reason like Protestants, ignoring that the [central point of controversy since the beginning of the Protestant Reformation](#), is the Eucharist. **And now there are bishops who call themselves Catholics who do not understand the central value of the Eucharist. It is a real scandal.**



Cdl. Müller was ordained a priest in 1978

When asked about the bishops' concern on safeguarding the health of the flock, Müller responded that they are thinking like the world.

"This is a bourgeois, secularized Church, not a Church that lives on the Word of Jesus Christ," he said, reminding us that "Jesus said 'seek the Kingdom of God first.' What is life [and] all the goods of the world including health worth if you lose your soul?"

Müller is careful not to go to the opposite extreme, however. The divine and human, he noted, must work together, as God has willed it:

We must always combine faith and reason. Obviously we are not Fideists. We are not like those Christian sects that say that we do not need medicine — that we entrust ourselves only to God. Instead, entrusting oneself to God does not contradict the valorization of all that modern medicine offers. But modern medicine does not replace prayer. They are two dimensions that should not be separated but not superimposed.

"There is an underestimation of the supernatural aspect. We are immersed in the naturalist conception that comes from the Enlightenment," he said. "There is integration between faith and reason, between trust in God and competence in the natural sciences."

We must, Müller underscored, begin with faith.