

St. Basil the Great Catholic Church

Meaning of the Mass

2019-2-3

The Opening Procession

I have a pretty decent guess what most of you were doing on June 19th, 2016, at exactly 10:21pm. A good amount of you were watching Kyrie Irving drain a three from way downtown over Steph Curry in Game 7 of the NBA finals. Three days later, a million people showed up for a victory parade. What were the players holding up for everyone to see? The trophy. It was held high since that is what they won and that's what they were proud of. By holding it up high, they were saying, "*This is who we are and what we did.*"

Every Mass here begins with the **opening procession**, where an image of the crucified Christ is held high and paraded down the main aisle, in front. The processional cross is what we Christians are proud of. The Cross is the symbol of God's victory over sin. This isn't what we accomplished, but what God achieved for us. We don't brag about how great we are; we brag about how great our God is and how much God loves us. The cross is our destiny, our burden, and our triumph. We say with St. Paul: "*We preach Christ crucified*" (1 Cor 1:23).

The opening procession also signifies that we are on a **journey**. Earth is not our home. We are pilgrims here temporarily but we were made for Heaven. Although we do not all participate in the opening procession down the main aisle, we stand during it to show our participation. The opening procession is both a **parade** and a **pilgrimage**. It ends at the altar, which signifies the sacrifices we need to make in life and also the Heavenly banquet that awaits us.