

# Whispers

a play for church that is set at Mass

By and Based on the Books of Robert J. Cormier ([www.thefaithkit.org](http://www.thefaithkit.org))

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*The play is set at Mass, and it opens just before a Sunday Mass is about to begin. There are two main characters; neither is named. Though these two people are actually in the sacristy or some other place where a microphone has been prepared, their dialog and hushed tone will suggest that they are sitting in the main body of the church, probably towards the back. This means that their whispers will have to be well-amplified.*

Person #1: This is good; we can sit here.

*A moment passes.*

Person #1: Are you OK here?

Person #2: I'm fine.

Person #1: Can you see?

Person #2: I'm fine.

*A moment passes.*

Person #2: What's that up there?

Person #1: What?

Person #2: That thing, next to the red light.

Person #1: That's the tabernacle.

Person #2: What's that?

Person #1: When they bless the bread to be the "body of Christ," they put the leftovers in there. It's helps us to feel that this is God's house.

Person #2: The "body of Christ," explain that one to me again.

Person #1: It's simple. Jesus has decided that he is going to stick around even though this means that he is probably going to get crucified. Before it's too late, he wants to do something to make sure the apostles will stick with the mission. He figures this is his last supper. He blesses the bread saying 'this is my body' and he gives it to them. In his mind, he is giving *himself* to the apostles. Since the cross came from this... don't you see how this makes communion into a sign of the cross... a sign of his body on the cross... that you can actually *receive*?

Person #2: Do *I* get to receive it?

Person #1: You're really not supposed to receive it unless you're part of the Church. The idea is that if you're not part of the Church, it must mean that you don't really believe that communion means what we say it does.

Person #2: No problem.

*Now there is silence until Mass is about to begin.*

Person #1: Just stand up; you don't have to sing.

Person #2: No problem.

*Mass begins and continues through the opening prayer.*

Person #2: Why you do start by blessing yourself?

Person #1: It helps us feel that we've actually started something. (*a moment later*) And it reminds us that we're here to remember how Jesus got to the cross.

*The readings begin. After the first reading:*

Person #2: Why did they read that?

Person #1: (*unless the first reading has an obvious and spiritually helpful theme which Person #1 can explain by extemporizing*) It's background information... to help us make more sense of the gospel when we hear it later.

*After the psalm and the second reading:*

Person #2: Why did we stand?

Person #1: Because in the gospel we hear Jesus quoted.

*The gospel is read. Then comes the natural homily which is given on this occasion. It is expected that the homily will provoke an extemporaneous question from Person #2, and that Person #1 will provide a faithful and uplifting response. This dialog should be brief but it need not be limited to one exchange.*

*At some point during the creed:*

Person #2: You know I can't say this with you.

Person #1: That's Ok; but maybe someday.

Person #2: What's going to change?

Person #1: I'm hoping that someday you'll sit down and look at what the basics really are, and why we believe them, and you'll see that the whole thing is actually obvious... which makes sense if God made us so we would know the truth.

*The collection starts.*

Person #2: This is where you guys get into trouble. People think it's all about money.

Person #1: Sure, but people also want the church to be nice, and heat in Winter, and they want someone to answer when they call on the phone.

*The collection is concluded. The offertory begins or is in progress.*

Person #2: What's happening now?

Person #1: They're setting up the last supper. Don't you see... everything's there—the table, the bread, the wine, the guy that plays the part of Jesus... and us... and we're not playing; we *are* disciples.

Person #2: And remind me why it's so important that we see a reenactment of the last supper.

Person #1: Because it's a live, NOT bloody way to see the moment Jesus gave up his life. (*a moment passes*) And if you're still wondering why the cross is such a big deal... think about it: if God the Father sends someone to show us His love, and this person, who represents the Father, is willing to give up his life so we will get the truth... what does this tell us? What does it mean about what God sees when He looks at us? What does it tell us about why we were made? (Is it possible we were made just to live here and then die?) What does it tell us about what we need to do so we will be able to receive all God wants to give us? (*a moment passes*) And keep in mind: God Himself designed the Mass. He stands behind it when we do it. He wants it to speak for Him.

*Now there is no conversation through the Preface and the first part of the Eucharistic Prayer. At the words "this is my body which is given up for you":*

Person #2: (*softly*) Wow.

*Mass proceeds to the Our Father which, ideally, is introduced by the celebrant with this words:* Now, with God present among us in this special way, let us pray for that which we want the most, which is the coming of His kingdom—when He will come here and change us, the living and those who have already died, to be forever His family in heaven. As a family, we say together...

*As the Our Father begins, Person #2 is heard to pray it quite audibly.*

*At a certain point late in communion:*

Person #1: I'll be right back.

*Sometime later:*

Person #2: (*quietly*) What do I have to do to receive communion?

*Silence.*

Person #2: (*a little louder*) Really, what do I have to do to receive communion?

Person #1: Just come back with me next week. Keep paying attention. Keep asking questions. Then, when you're ready, just talk to the father on your way out.

*The concluding rites begin.*

Person #2: How does it go... (*this audible whisper takes the place of the words of the celebrant*) in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.