

# The Theology of the Eucharist

## The Celebration of the Mass



Deacon Greg Ollick, M.A.T.  
2015

# The Holy Eucharist is Unique Among the Sacraments

- ▶ Blessed Sacrament
- ▶ Lord's Supper
- ▶ Holy Sacrifice
- ▶ Table of the Lord
- ▶ Body and Blood of Christ
- ▶ Sacrifice of the Mass
- ▶ Breaking of the Bread
- ▶ Holy Communion
- ▶ Sacrament of the Alter
- ▶ Real Presence
- ▶ The Source & Summit
- ▶ Sacred Mysteries
- ▶ Bread from Heaven
- ▶ Bread of Angels
- ▶ Memorial of our Lord's Passion, Death and Resurrection
- ▶ Sacrifice of Praise
- ▶ Viaticum

# What is Liturgy?

- ▶ Liturgy is the public prayer of the Church.
- ▶ We surround the Sacrament of the Eucharist with the liturgy of the Mass.



# Liturgy and Sacraments

- *Why the liturgy?*
  - Symbol of the faith
  - Gives glory to God
  - Celebrates the wonderful works of God
  - Is the mystery of Christ that the Church proclaims
  - Is "public work" (service)
  - Encourages, uplifts, challenges and instructs the faithful
  - Expresses the unity of the faithful
  - Is *not* only celebration of divine worship, but proclaims the Gospel



# The Eucharist & the Covenant

- ▶ *Adam*
- ▶ *Noah*
- ▶ *Abraham*
- ▶ *Moses*
- ▶ *David*
- ▶ *Jesus*
- ▶ *Communion – Covenant Union*
- ▶ *See the "Priest Behind the Priest"*



# The proper disposition for Holy Communion

- ▶ In the ancient Jewish sacrifices, those who took part were given part of the meat of the sacrificed animal, in the hope of a sort of communion with the divinity.
- ▶ Be Baptized
- ▶ Be Catholic
- ▶ Be in the State of Grace
- ▶ (1 Cor. 11:27-29)
- ▶ Offer the sacrifice of your life
- ▶ ***Come Hungry***



## Holy Communion

- › Who can attend Mass?
- › Who can receive Holy Communion?
- › Can a Catholic receive Holy Communion in another church?
- › How many times a day can one receive Holy Communion?
- › Can you bring the Host to the Cup and dip - intinction?

What about bringing Communion to a sick family member?

The core structure of the Mass goes back as far as the apostles. This core has never changed.

Additions and modifications were made over time to enhance meaning and understanding.



## Saint Justin's Outline 145 A.D.

- › Christians gather on Sunday
- › Writings of the Apostles and prophets are read.
- › The presider challenges the hearers to imitate these things.
- › All then offer prayers of intercession.
- › They exchange the kiss of peace.
- › What is gathered is given to the presider to assist those in need.

## Saint Justin's Outline 145 A.D.

- › The gifts of bread and wine (mixed with water) are brought forth.
- › The presider prays for a considerable time as he gives thanks. (Eucharist)
- › At the end all say "Amen".
- › The deacons give the "Eucharistized" bread, wine and water to all present and take some to those absent.

## The Eucharist

- › *Catholics believe the Eucharist, or Communion, is both **a sacrifice and a meal**. We believe in the real presence of Jesus, who died for our sins. As we receive Christ's Body and Blood, we also are nourished spiritually and brought closer to God.*
- › *AmericanCatholic.org*



## The Eucharist is

- › The **source and summit** of the Christian life. The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the Blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself.
- › CCC - 1324

## “Eucharist”

Comes from the Greek word  
“Eucharistia” which means  
“Thanksgiving”.

Saint Ignatius of Antioch  
Saint Justin



## The Institution of the Eucharist

- ▶ Luke 22: 19-20
- ▶ Luke 24: 13-35
- ▶ John 6: 30-33; 47-58; 60-69
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 10:16,17
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 11: 23-29



## Early Church witness:

- ▶ Ignatius of Antioch  
110AD
- ▶ Justin Martyr  
150AD
- ▶ Irenaeus  
190AD
- ▶ Origen  
240AD
- ▶ Cyril of Jerusalem  
350AD
- ▶ Athanasius  
370AD



## The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist

- ▶ **Matter of the sacrament:**  
bread & wine
- ▶ Bread: Wheaten,  
Unleavened
- ▶ Wine: Mixed with water
- ▶ **Form of the sacrament:**  
The Words of  
Consecration



## The Holy Eucharist is:

- ▶ A sacrifice –  
sacrament
- ▶ A communion  
–sacrament
- ▶ A Presence –  
sacrament



## Eucharist as a Sacrifice

In every Mass every day in every  
Catholic Church around the world,  
Christ re-presents His passion and  
death over and over again as a  
perfect sacrifice of love for us.



## Eucharist as a Sacrifice

The Mass is a true and proper **sacrifice** which is offered to God.

It is a sacrifice for the living and the dead for the remission of sins and the punishment due to sin. It is a sacrifice offered to God in satisfaction for the sins of man.

Council of Trent, Sept. 17, 1562



## Eucharist as Communion

Reception of the Eucharist makes the Christian a "Christbearer" and "one body and one blood with Him"  
St. Cyril (died 387)

"Every effect which bodily food and bodily drink produce in our corporeal life is also produced by this Sacrament in the spiritual life".

Council of Florence, Nov. 22, 1439

## Effects of Food/Eucharist:

- ▶ Sustain life
- ▶ Nourish the body (health)
- ▶ Stimulate growth
- ▶ Provide strength (fight disease)
- ▶ Gives joy



## Holy Communion:

- ▶ Preserves the life of the soul.
- ▶ Increases the life of grace.
- ▶ Cures spiritual diseases of the soul.
- ▶ Helps us grow closer to Jesus
- ▶ Gives us spiritual joy in the service of Christ.



## The Effects of Holy Communion:

- ▶ Strengthens our union with Christ.
- ▶ Separates us from sin. (venial sins forgiven, helps us to avoid future sin)
- ▶ Unites all who receive it.
- ▶ Commits believers to the poor. Charity
- ▶ Compels us to strive for Christian unity.
- ▶ CCC - 1391 - 1398



## Eucharist as the Real Presence

God's love for us is poured out in the sacrament of the Eucharist, where Christ is truly present for us, giving us life and healing. Through the Eucharist Christ is physically with us as he promised until the end of the age.

"Behold I am with you always, even until the end of the age."

(Matthew 28:20)



## Special Nature of Christ's Presence in the Eucharist

- ▶ Physical presence "par excellence"
- ▶ Local (specific time & place)
- ▶ A closer (less distant) relationship
- ▶ Constant reminder
- ▶ Unity (1 Cor 10:17)



## How is Christ present in the Mass?

- ▶ Christ's minister, the priest
- ▶ The community gathered
- ▶ The Word of God
- ▶ The Eucharistic species



## Ministers of the Sacrament of the Eucharist:

- ▶ Bishop
- ▶ Priest



### *Transubstantiation*

Council of Trent, Oct. 11, 1551

The "substance" of the bread and wine becomes the substance of Christ's body and blood, while the appearances or "accidents" of bread and wine remain.

(CCC 1376,1377)

## Transubstantiation

- ▶ Because Christ, Our Redeemer, said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of bread into the substance to the body of Christ, our Lord.

- ▶ CCC-1376, The Council of Trent

## What is present in the Eucharist?

- ▶ Body
- ▶ Blood
- ▶ Soul
- ▶ Divinity of Jesus Christ



## Transubstantiation vs. Consubstantiation

The prefix Trans- says that a change took place, the bread actually became the body of Jesus and the wine actually became the blood of Jesus. The prefix Con- says that the bread does not become the body of Jesus but co-exists with the physical bread so that the bread is both a bread and the body of Jesus. The same thing is true of the wine. It does not become the blood of Jesus, but co-exists with the wine so that the wine is both wine and the blood of Jesus.

The Eucharist is a sacrament that miraculously rolls away the centuries and allows us to participate in the Last Supper, stand at the foot of the cross and experience the glory of the risen Christ.

- ▶ Every time we eat this sacred bread and declare that your blood is in this cup, we proclaim your death, Oh Lord, until you come again.
- ▶ (1 Cor 11:26)

The Mass does not repeat the death of Christ, but makes it present to us.



## The Eucharist

- ▶ Christ's sacrifice made present for us.
- ▶ A sacrifice anticipating the future
- ▶ A sacrifice uniting the Body of Christ and the Communion of Saints

We are never closer to heaven than when we celebrate the Mass and receive into our hearts the Lord before whom every knee should bend of those in heaven and on earth.

## Foreshadows of the Eucharist:

- ▶ Melchizedek - Salem (Gen 14: 18-20)
- ▶ The Sacrifice of Isaac (Gen 22: 4-8)
- ▶ The Passover - God's love, care, nurturing and deliverance (Exodus 12: 1-28)
- ▶ Manna in the desert (Exodus 16: 2-16)
- ▶ Changing water into wine (John 2: 1-11)
- ▶ The Loaves and Fishes (All four gospels)
- ▶ The Last Supper (Luke 22: 14-20)
- ▶ The Road to Emmaus (Luke 24: 11-24)

Our history from slavery to fulfillment because the foreshadowing has given way to the Truth itself.

## When did Christ institute the Sacrament of the Eucharist?

- ▶ At the last supper when He said "This is my body. Do this in memory of Me."

