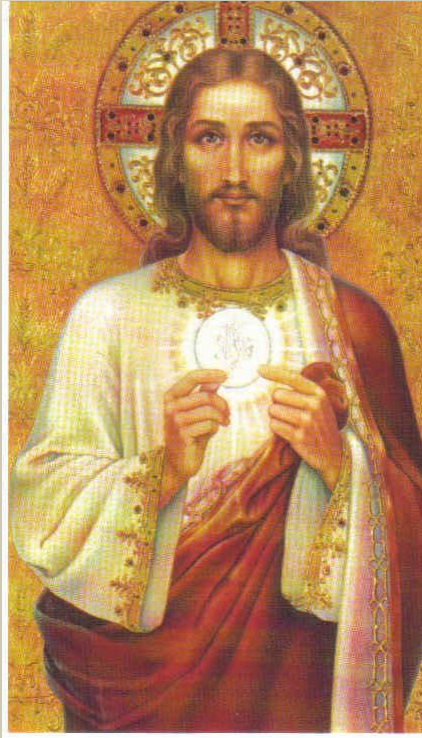


The Eucharist



The Mystery of Faith

Pope Paul VI: “The Catholic Church has always devoutly guarded as a most precious treasure the mystery of faith, that is, the ineffable gift of the Eucharist which she received from Christ her Spouse as a pledge of His immense love.” *Mysterium Fidei* Pope Paul VI

Saint Thomas Aquinas on the Eucharist: “The words, "mystery of faith," were handed down to the Church by the apostles, who received them from our Lord.” Summa Th. Q. 78, A. 3, *ad* 9

The words, “Mystery of Faith” are part of the words of consecration of the Traditional Latin Mass.

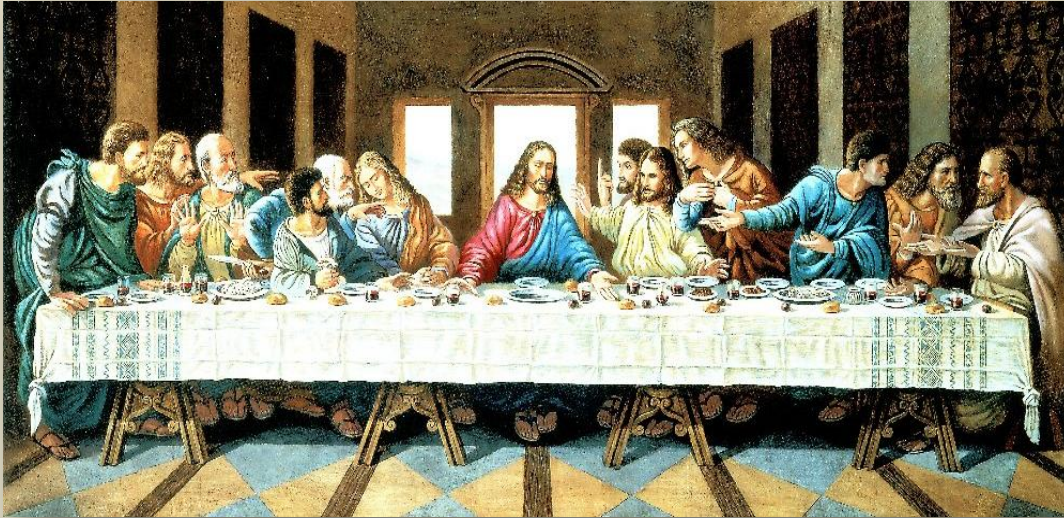
“FOR THIS IS THE CHALICE OF MY BLOOD, OF THE NEW AND ETERNAL TESTAMENT:

THE MYSTERY OF FAITH; WHICH SHALL BE Poured OUT FOR YOU

AND FOR MANY UNTO THE REMISSION OF SINS

Before we look at the Eucharist in scripture please watch this short 3 minute video. It is considered the most beautiful Eucharistic hymn ever written. The music is by Mozart and the lyrics are attributed to Pope Innocent III. Click [HERE](#)

The Last Supper



“Now as they were eating, Jesus took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to the disciples and said, Take, eat; this is my body.” And he took the chalice and when he had given thanks he gave it to them saying, “Drink of it, all of you for this is my blood of the new covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” Matthew 26:26-28

The Greek word for ‘Eucharist’ is found in the words of Jesus at the Last Supper: “And when he had given ‘ευχαριστησας’ he gave it to them saying...”

Was Jesus speaking symbolically when He took bread and said, “This is my body?” Did the chalice really contain His blood? For that answer we will first go to Saint Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians chapter 11:23-30.

“For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, “This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord **in an unworthy manner** will be guilty of sinning against **the body and blood of the Lord**. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks **without recognizing the body of the Lord** eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and some of you have died.”

If Jesus was speaking symbolically then Paul clearly misunderstood. If we took a photograph and plunged a knife into it no crime would have been committed because the photograph is merely an image, a symbol of a person. But if we took a knife and plunged it into the person in the photograph a crime would have been committed and we would be guilty.

Paul makes the same analogy. He tells the Corinthians that whoever eats the Eucharist or drinks the blood in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of Jesus.

The Greek word used for 'unworthy' is 'anaxiōs' which means "unfit, unworthy or incompetent". Paul says that if you are "unfit" and you receive the body and blood of Christ you are "guilty."

The Greek word "guilty" (Greek, *enochos*) refers to the guilt of a crime worthy of punishment. It is the same word the Pharisees used when they accused Jesus of the crime of blasphemy: "He is *guilty* of death." It is hard to imagine that Paul believes the Eucharist is symbolic when he uses such strong words when writing to the Corinthians.

Paul then tells the Corinthians that if anyone eats the bread and drinks from the cup and doesn't recognize it as the body of the Lord they bring judgment upon themselves and some of them have done exactly that and they have therefore become ill and some have died.

Paul is telling the Corinthians that if they receive the Eucharist while in mortal sin they are guilty of profaning the body of Christ and they bring judgment, that is eternal condemnation, upon themselves.

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

The Greek word that Paul uses for "Remembrance" is the same word that Jesus uses in Luke 22:19. That word is 'Anamnesis.'

Anamnesis" translates into the Hebrew word "azkarah," which is used seven times throughout the OT in reference to sacrifices, which are Lev.2:2,9,16; 5:12; 6:15; 24:7 and Num. 5:26.

In the New Testament the book of Hebrews 10:3 uses this word in direct reference to sacrifice. The only other place this word is used in scripture is in Christ's words at the last supper.

The early Christians, given the normal use of this word, would have understood Christ's words to be speaking about a sacrifice.

What we are reading about in 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 is the Sacrifice of the Mass being celebrated in the city of Corinth.

The Gospel of John Chapter 6:48-66

I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down from heaven that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?”

Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day for my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and died. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?”

When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “Does this offend you? What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to me unless it has been granted to him by my Father.”

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

The most common interpretation of John 6 from Protestants is one found in the book *Hard Sayings of the Bible* by four prominent Protestant scholars. Their symbolic interpretation of John 6: 48-66 is: “To feed on Christ in one’s heart by faith with thanksgiving is to “eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood” and so have eternal life.”

Of course that goes against the plain literal reading of the text as well as the historical understanding of John 6 by every Church Father. That interpretation also goes against the words of the eyewitnesses who heard Jesus speak and they said, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” And “This is a hard saying, who can understand it?”

Christ’s own disciples walked away from Him after hearing those words and He did not call them back to tell them He was only speaking symbolically.

The bread of life discourse took place about a year before His Passion. John 6:48-66 records Jesus’ promise of the Eucharist which would be fulfilled at the Last Supper.

In John 6:51 Jesus tells us exactly what the “bread” is: “And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh”

Here Jesus equates his flesh that He will give to the world on the cross with the bread that He will give. At the Last Supper the apostles would have remembered those words when He took bread and said “This is my body.”

Phago and Trogo

Because the Greek is the inspired language of the bible is always valuable not to rely on vernacular translations which do not always bring out the exact meaning of certain Greek words. There are two critical Greek words in John 6.

Verse 52: “The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to **eat**?”

In Greek the word used here for ‘eat’ is *phago* which means to **consume, to devour**.

Verse 53: “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man....

Again the Greek word used here is *phago*, to **consume, to devour**.

Now the Apostle John makes a change in Verse 54: “he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life....The Greek word used here for eat is *trogo* which means to **crunch, to gnaw**.

Verse 56 “He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him”

Again the Greek word used is *trogo* which means to **crunch, to gnaw**.

Why did the Apostle John use a different word for “eat?” and why is it a Greek word that means to **crunch, to gnaw**?

It is clear that John, as an eyewitness to this event, heard Jesus Christ emphasize the word “eat” in order to convey to those listening that He was not speaking symbolically. It was after Jesus used the word “trogo” to **crunch and to gnaw** that Jesus’ own disciples said, “This is a hard saying, who can listen to it?” and then they walked away.

Road to Emmaus



The Our Father

After the resurrection Jesus walked with two of His disciples on the road to Emmaus which is seven miles outside Jerusalem.

Jesus explained the scriptural prophecies that foretold how it was necessary that the Messiah would suffer, die and be glorified.

They walked with Jesus for several miles but they never recognized Him.

When Jesus gave them the Eucharist their eyes were opened and they recognized Him.

“So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He appeared to be going further, but they constrained him, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them. **And their eyes were opened and they recognized him**; and he vanished out of their sight. They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the scriptures?” And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven gathered together and those who were with them, who said, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” Then they told what had happened on the road, **and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.**” Luke 24:28-35

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our **daily** bread. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen

What did Jesus mean when he taught us to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread?”

Is there a Eucharistic meaning in those words?

Please scroll down



Around the year 380 Saint Jerome translated the bible from Greek to Latin, the common language of the western world. Jerome had moved to Jerusalem to learn Greek and Hebrew from the experts of his time. When he translated the Lord's Prayer from Greek to Latin he came across the Greek word "epiousios" here: "Give us this day our "epiousios" **ἐπιούσιον** bread. This Greek word occurs nowhere else in Scripture and is found nowhere else in Greek literature. Jerome, who felt that there was no Latin word that could fully give meaning to this, translated this word in two different ways.

We see in the Gospel of Luke that Jerome translates this word to mean "daily" and then in Matthew he translates this word to mean "supersubstantial". Jerome translated Matthew 6:11 in Latin as "panem nostrum supersubstantialem da nobis hodie."

It was recognized by the early Church that what Jesus is referring to in the Lord's Prayer is the 'supersubstantial bread', which is the Eucharist. This verse is an invitation for us to become daily communicants of the Eucharist.

Cyril of Jerusalem writing in the year 350 said: "Give us this day our supersubstantial bread. The bread which is of the common sort is not supersubstantial. But the Bread which is holy, that Bread is supersubstantial, as if to say, directed toward the substance of the soul." *Catechetical Lectures* 23, 15

St. Ambrose, when teaching catechumens, pointed out that one can see that when we pray the 'Our Father' in Mass, it is AFTER the consecration has taken place because what we will soon be eating is no longer bread but supersubstantial bread, bread that sustains our soul, the bread of eternal life.

Father Benjamin Reese writes: "If the "Our Father" is the perfect prayer, which is most perfectly prayed in the context of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, then does it not make sense that the daily bread that we most need and so ask for is the *supersubstantial bread* of the Holy Eucharist? It may surprise many Catholics to learn that this indeed is the teaching of the Catholic Church as expressed by the Council of Trent and as re-proposed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Furthermore, many Protestants who say this prayer daily may be shocked to learn that they are truly praying to receive Holy Communion daily and that this interpretation goes back to very words of Our Lord in the "Our Father": "Give us this day our daily bread". Read his article [HERE](#)

To see the Greek translation of scripture click [HERE](#)

Next topic: the **Protestant Objections** to the Real Presence in the Eucharist