



Sacrifice – the Heart of the Eucharist

Deacon Greg Ollick, M.A.
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The Mass

- ▶ If someone asked you to explain just what the Mass is, how would you explain it to them?
- ▶ Does the concept of **sacrifice** come to mind?
- ▶ Does the notion of a **sacred banquet** or meal come to mind?
- ▶ We have to understand the Mass first of all and essentially as a **sacrifice**.



The Sacrifice of the Mass

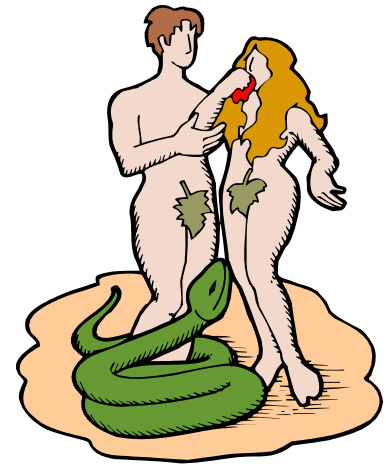
- ▶ *Sacrosanctum Concilium* – The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
- ▶ “The Liturgy of the Mass is the Summit toward which all of the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the font from which all her power flows. For the goal of the apostolic endeavor is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of his Church, to take part in the *sacrifice* and to eat the Lord’s Supper.” (SC 10)

The Sacrifice of the Mass

- ▶ “On the night that he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic *sacrifice* of his Body and Blood. This he did to perpetuate the *sacrifice* of the Cross throughout all ages until he should come again. He entrusted to his Church a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet, a pledge of future glory.” (SC 47)

How is the Mass a sacrifice?

- ▶ Why was a **sacrifice** necessary at all?
- ▶ Why did Jesus have to offer his own life as a **sacrifice** to the Father for our salvation?
- ▶ The theology of the Fall and Redemption
- ▶ Original Sin – an **infinite breach** (a separation) between us and God
- ▶ Why was the breach infinite?
- ▶ It was infinite because it was between us and the infinite good and loving God.
- ▶ Example



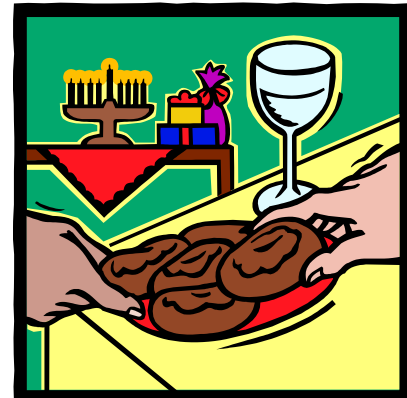
Redemption

- ▶ No human being could repair the breach
- ▶ All of the sacrifices of the Old Testament were insufficient/ineffective. (bulls, lambs, grain)
- ▶ Christ – our new High Priest – alone is capable of repairing the wound of sin.
- ▶ Jesus, as a human being, stands representing us (as our priest) in our place and offers an **efficacious sacrifice** on our behalf.
- ▶ Christ is both the **victim** and the **priest**.
- ▶ This victim is divine – of infinite value – God's life blood for our salvation.



The Sacrifice of the Mass

- ▶ Hebrews 10:1–14
- ▶ Priestly theology
- ▶ How is all of this re-presented for us in the Sacrifice of the Mass?
- ▶ Exodus 24:3–8
- ▶ The **Mosaic Covenant**
- ▶ Sealed in blood – blood is sacred, blood is the source of life. (Altar – God / Blood – unites the people with God)



The New Covenant

- ▶ Failure of the people to keep the covenant.
- ▶ All of their offerings could not save them.
- ▶ Through the prophets God promised a new time – a new covenant.
- ▶ Jeremiah 31:31–34
- ▶ The **New Covenant** will wash away their inequity and cleanse them from their sin.



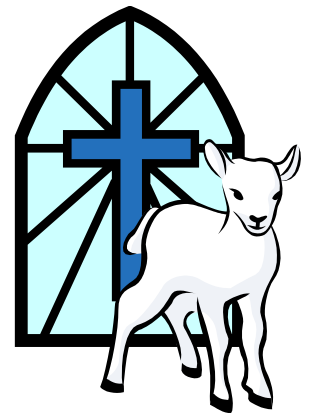
The Last Supper



- ▶ They gathered to celebrate the **Passover** in a ritual meal very familiar to Jesus and the apostles.
- ▶ They knew the history of Israel and the promises.
- ▶ Luke 22:14–20
- ▶ This is the blood of the New Covenant promised by God through Jeramiah and sealed with the blood of Christ's **sacrifice** the next day. It was anticipated and **made present** for them that night.

The Eucharistic Sacrifice

- ▶ “This is my body given for you. This is my blood poured out for you.” – sacrificial language.
- ▶ “Do this in remembrance of me.”
- ▶ Do what? Do what he has just done. Perpetuate this sacrificial meal. Make the sacrifice present and effective for all generations, so that all people can participate.
- ▶ How is the Mass the **re–presentation** of the Sacrifice of Christ?



The Sacrifice of the Mass



- ▶ Victim – Christ (the same Victim of Calvary)
 - ▶ Priest – Christ (the same Priest)
 - ▶ Altar
 - ▶ People
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- ▶ Presbyterorum Ordinis – Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests
 - ▶ “Through the Sacrament of Orders by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, priests are signed with a special character and so are configured to **Christ the Priest** in such a way that they are able to act in the **person of Christ** the Head.”
(PO 2)

The Sacrifice of the Mass

- ▶ The Mass is the **sacrifice** of Calvary re-presented or **made present** again.
- ▶ Why did Christ will this?
- ▶ So that we can enter into it – all people of all times until He comes again.
- ▶ Receive the **fruits** of that sacrifice – forgiveness of sins, ability to keep the covenant, Christ himself.
- ▶ The Mass is a **meta-historical** event – transcends time and history. God is not bound by time and space.



The Mass



- ▶ More than a memorial
- ▶ It is truly making the one sacrifice of Christ present for us.
- ▶ The Jews had a sense of this when they gathered for the Passover. (The child asks...)
- ▶ We renew our part of the covenant, sealed by the blood of Christ.

The Invitation

- ▶ “Pray, Brothers and Sisters, that **my sacrifice and yours** may be acceptable to God the Almighty Father.”
- ▶ “May the Lord accept this sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.”
- ▶ Prayer over the gifts.



The Heart of the Mass

- ▶ We, as members of the common priesthood of all the faithful, make a **spiritual offering** of our lives in union with the perfect sacrifice of Christ.
- ▶ Our offering is now made efficacious.
- ▶ We then receive Christ and, as Christ-bearers, are united to one another. (We commune w/God by eating the sacrificed victim.)
- ▶ We are finally commissioned to go and share the Good News we have received, in Word and Sacrament, with the world – to live the sacramental life– to be become what we eat – to be a visible sign of God's invisible grace.



The Eucharist & the Covenant

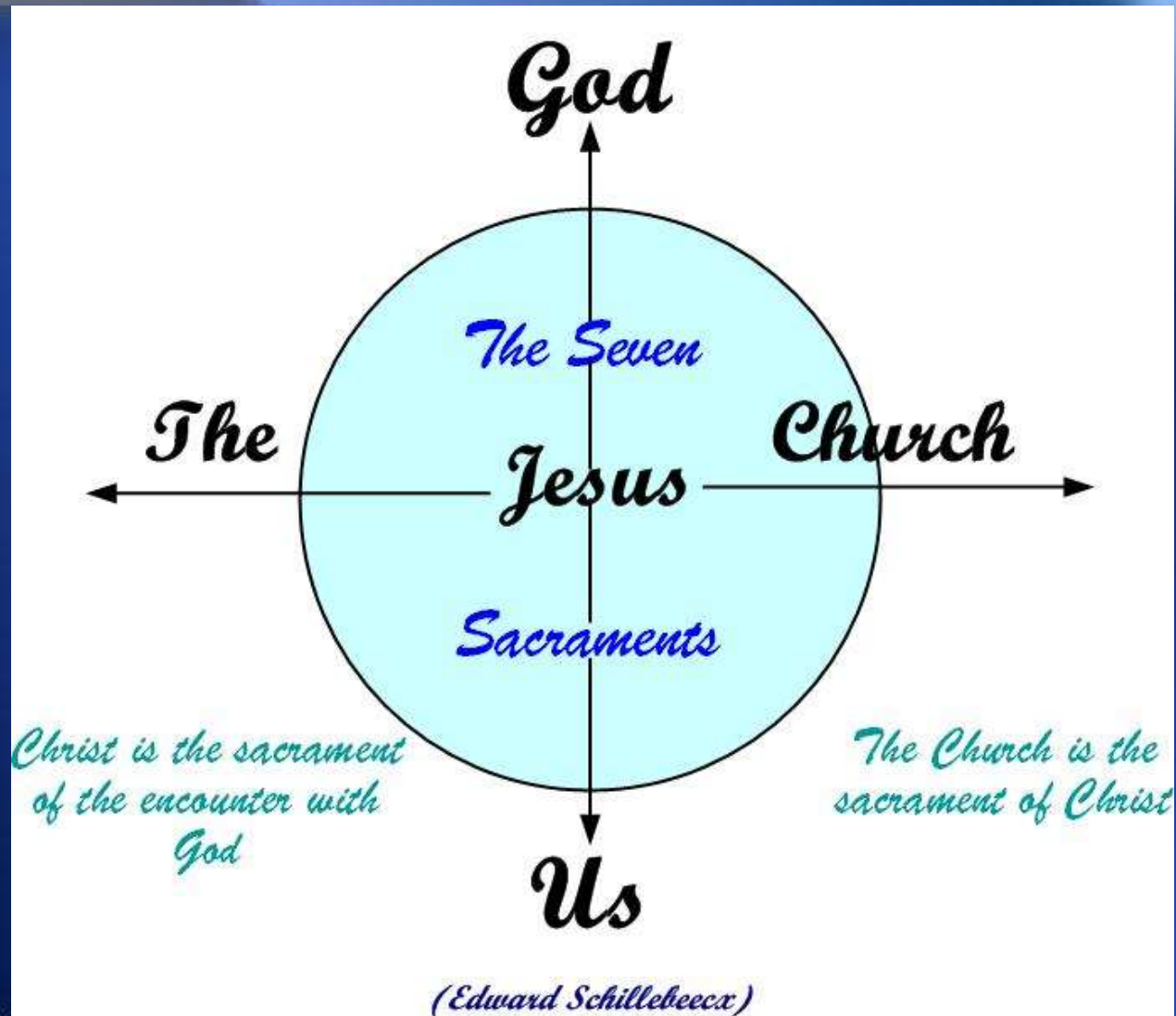
- ▶ *Adam*
- ▶ *Noah*
- ▶ *Abraham*
- ▶ *Moses*
- ▶ *David*
- ▶ *Jesus*

- ▶ *Communion –
Covenant Union*

- ▶ *See the “Priest Behind
the Priest”*

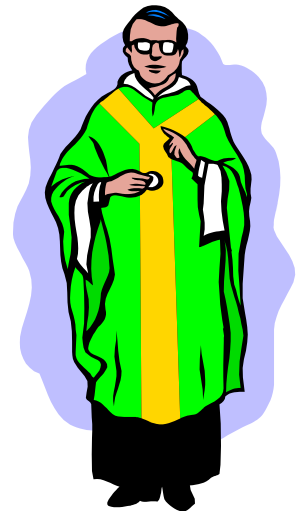


Liturgy and Sacraments



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, inspires, challenges and instructs the faithful
 - Expresses the unity of the faithful



Liturgy and Sacraments

► *Who* celebrates?

- An “action” of *Christ*


The whole *community* also celebrates.

The whole *community* offers sacrifice.

- The Priestly Community of the baptized
- The Sacrament of Holy Orders (in persona Christi)
- Other particular ministries
- The “unity of the Spirit” acts in all.



Who celebrates the Mass?

- ▶ In reality, all participants (priest and faithful) celebrate (or concelebrate) the Mass, but each in his or her own way. All concur in offering the Eucharist, but only the priest “consecrates.”
 - ▶ “All take part in this liturgical service, not indeed all in the same way, but each in that way which is proper to himself.” (LG 11)
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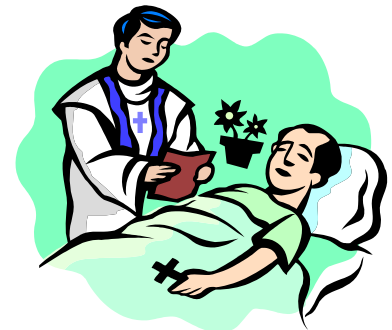
The Three-Fold Mission

- ▶ Priest



- ▶ Prophet (Teacher)

- ▶ King (Shepherd)



Purpose of the Sacraments

- ▶ Sanctify men
- ▶ Build up the Body of Christ
- ▶ Give worship to God
- ▶ Nourish & strengthen
- ▶ Confer the grace they signify
- ▶ Make the faithful “partakers in the Divine Nature” united with Christ



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



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.




Early Church witness:

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




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.
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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.
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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



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
- ▶ The sharing of the Body and blood of Christ has no effect other than to accomplish our transformation into that which we receive. (LG 26)



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.



Our Part in the Sacrifice

- ▶ Gather (family)
- ▶ Adore
- ▶ Thank
- ▶ Seek Forgiveness
- ▶ Ask for what we need
- ▶ Receive and Unite
- ▶ Pay attention
- ▶ Speak up
- ▶ Sing out
- ▶ Reach out
- ▶ Go forth



****** We must personalize the Mass by our own active, knowing and devout participation and involvement. ******

The Liturgy of the Mass

- ▶ Invitation
- ▶ Invocation
- ▶ Intercession
- ▶ Narrative
- ▶ Remembering
- ▶ Doxology



Receiving the Holy Eucharist

- ▶ **Believe** that this is the greatest action of man, to be united with the risen Christ.
- ▶ **Prepare** well – Come Hungry.
- ▶ **Fast** from food and drink. (Coffee, juice, cigarettes and gum break the fast.)
- ▶ Offer the **sacrifice** of your life
- ▶ **Make an act of reverence** & Communicate respectfully.
- ▶ Respond with “**Amen.**” (This is an act of faith in the Real Presence)
- ▶ Make an act of **thanksgiving** after receiving.
- ▶ **Actualize** the teaching of the Mass.
- ▶ **Walk in the Eucharistic presence** within you.



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)
- ▶ *Come Hungry and ready to Join in the Sacrifice.*



The Eucharistic Sacrifice

- ▶ 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 **offer the Sacrifice of the Mass** because, at every Mass all the angels and saints (heavenly hosts) join the celebration. "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord, God of Hosts"