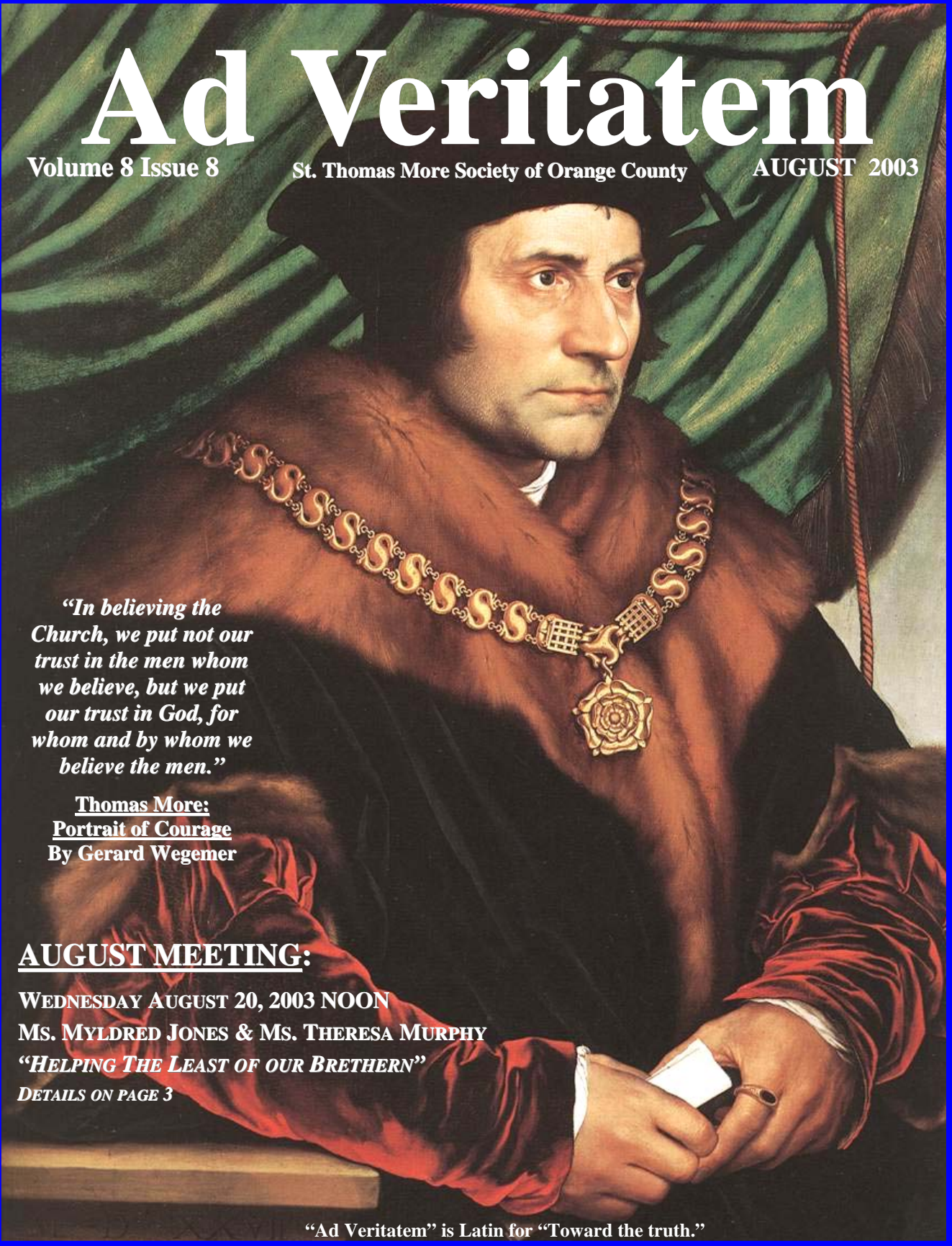


Ad Veritatem

Volume 8 Issue 8

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

AUGUST 2003

A detailed oil painting of Thomas More, showing him from the chest up. He is wearing a dark cap, a thick brown fur collar, and a red robe. A gold chain with a large rose pendant is around his neck. He is looking slightly to the right with a serious expression. The background is a green draped cloth.

“In believing the Church, we put not our trust in the men whom we believe, but we put our trust in God, for whom and by whom we believe the men.”

Thomas More:
Portrait of Courage
By Gerard Wegemer

AUGUST MEETING:

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 20, 2003 NOON

MS. MYLDRED JONES & MS. THERESA MURPHY

“HELPING THE LEAST OF OUR BRETHERN”

DETAILS ON PAGE 3

“Ad Veritatem” is Latin for “Toward the truth.”



WHO WE ARE

In 1966, the movie *A Man For All Seasons* inspired the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to recognize this film as the Picture of the Year. This was one of the few occasions in the history of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences where the life of a religious figure won the hearts of the motion picture industry's elite. The central figure portrayed in *Man For All Seasons* was, of course, St. Thomas More, the great lawyer, statesman, apologist, husband, father and faithful Catholic. In 2000, St. Thomas was honored as the Lawyer of the Millennium by a secular panel of historians for the British Commonwealth. Shortly thereafter, John Paul II declared St. Thomas as the Patron Saint of Statesmen.

Inspired by a homily given by Bishop Norman McFarland at the 1995 Red Mass of Orange County, 5 "fearless" members of the Orange County bar met shortly thereafter at the law offices of Rutan and Tucker in Costa Mesa. These lawyers all shared the realization that the legal practice takes a severe toll on the personal and spiritual lives of those involved in it and that many in the legal profession had become too focused on the material life with the natural consequence being the de-emphasis on their spiritual life. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of a new organization for lawyers and judges in the County of Orange with its mission being to publicly support and encourage the spiritual development of its members in their Catholic faith. The group chose as its patron St. Thomas More, the greatest lawyer of his time, who was a dedicated husband and father with a deep and profound commitment to his Catholic faith, his profession and his fellow man. Thus the St. Thomas More Society of Orange County was born.

Attendance at the monthly meetings in the early years was sporadic. Our spiritual director, Fr Hugh Barbour, wisely advised us not to worry about numbers because it was more important "to be than to do or say." He encouraged the virtues of patience and perseverance. His sage advice, together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and St. Thomas More, has led us to our current level of a fourteen member Board of Directors of lawyers and judges and a mailing list for the monthly newsletter of over 970.

The goal of the Society is to inspire and lift up the minds and hearts of the legal community of Orange County to follow the example of St. Thomas More by integrating God in every aspect of their professional and personal lives. The Society seeks to accomplish this goal through inspirational speakers at monthly meetings, this newsletter, the Red Mass, a website, an annual spiritual retreat and other events. The St. Thomas More Society also seeks to provide a haven where those who are committed to their Catholic faith as well as those who are seeking to learn more about the Church, can find fellowship and encouragement in the face of overwhelming media and cultural forces working against that pursuit.

St. Thomas More, please pray for us. ☩

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

David Belz at (949) 347-0447 or email to dbelz@kuhnbelz.com, or
Anne Lanphar at (714) 800-3225 or email to alanphar@firstam.com.
VISIT OUR WEBSITE at www.stthomasmore.net

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St. Michael's Abbey

AD VERITATEM EDITORS

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AUGUST MEETING

MYLDRED JONES & THERESA MURPHY
“HELPING THE LEAST OF OUR BRETHREN”

WHEN:

NOON

Wed. Aug 20th

WHERE:

**First American Title Ins. Co.
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\$10 for lunch

Myldred Jones has a B.A. degree in Sociology & Social Studies from Wittenberg University and has completed graduate studies in Sociology & Public Administration at USC. Ms. Jones has been a high school teacher, a juvenile probation officer and a Lt. Commander in the U.S. Navy. She also established the first “Adolescent Hotline” at Children’s Hospital of LA. She has numerous awards and honors. Ms. Jones is the founder and Vice President of Casa Youth Center.

Theresa Murphy holds a B.A. degree in Counseling Psychology from Cal State Long Beach. She has worked with Precious Life Shelter since 1989. In 1994, she became the executive director and in 1996 became the Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer. Ms. Murphy also has received numerous awards.

Ms. Jones (age 94) will discuss Casa Youth Shelter which is a temporary shelter for run-aways and youth in crisis enabling them to come through the crisis with an increased personal strength and a sense of renewal while in a supportive environment, with family reunification as a primary goal. Ms. Murphy will discuss the mission of Precious Life Shelter which is to help pregnant women who want to give life to their child and also want to become independent and self-sufficient.

For more information, please contact either David Belz at (949) 347-0447 or email to dbelz@kuhnbelz.com, or Anne Lanphar at (714) 800-3225 or alanphar@firstam.com. EVERYONE IS WELCOME! †

RED MASS

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2003
 HOLY FAMILY CATHEDRAL
 6:30 PM MASS
 RECEPTION FOLLOWING
 FOR DETAILS, SEE PAGE 9**

FIRST THURSDAY MASS

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 EVERYONE IS WELCOME! †**

CALENDAR REMINDERS



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FAITH OF OUR FATHERS: *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*

FR. HUGH BARBOUR, O. PRAEM, PH.D.
Our Chaplain

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN



**THE INSTITUTION OF
THE EUCHARIST**
Nicolas Poussin
(1640)

Some argue against the Catholic teaching that the

Mass is a sacrifice. The early Church Fathers tell us that it is. In Genesis 14:18 Melchisedek the High Priest and King of Salem offers a sacrifice of bread and wine. In Hebrews 7 Christ is priest after the order of Melchisedek in fulfillment of the prophecy of Psalm 110:4: *“Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedek.”* Did Christ then offer up bread and wine like Melchisedek, who prefigured His eternal priesthood?

Answer: At the Last Supper in the Gospels Christ the High Priest commands His Apostles to do as He did with the bread and wine in commemoration of Him. Were the Apostles then meant to share in that one priesthood of Christ as His instruments offering His Body and Blood under the appearances of a sacrifice of bread and wine?

Answer: Yes. We read that the Apostles offered the Eucharist in Jerusalem and Troas (Acts 2 and 20), and in Corinth the sacrifice of Christians is contrasted with the sacrifices of the Temple and to the sacrifice of the pagans (1 Cor. 10-11). In Malachy 1:11 the last of the Old Testament prophets declares: *“From the rising of the sun to its setting, my name is great among the gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and here is offered to my name a clean oblation.”* (Mal. 1:11). Has this prophecy of Malachy come true? Is there everywhere in the world offered a sacrifice which is, according to the Hebrew word he uses *“minhah”* an unbloody or grain offering?

Answer: Just go to Holy Mass in any Catholic Church and you’ll find the answer is *“yes.”* You’ll see the fulfillment of that biblical prophecy: *“So that from east to west a perfect offering may be made to the glory of your name.”* What is true of the Mass today has been true since the beginning of Christianity. Let’s see what the early Fathers of the Church taught about the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the offering up under the appearances of bread and wine of the Body and Blood of Christ, which were offered for our salvation on the cross at Calvary. These quotations are drawn from Eastern and Western Church Fathers and span the first six centuries of Christianity. They attest to the universal teaching in the early Church that the Eucharistic Liturgy is a sacrifice.

THE DIDACHE

This passage contains a direct reference to the fulfillment of Malachy’s prophecy being the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass (cf. Malachy 1:11, 14). The Didache is one of the most ancient and authoritative Christian writings, reflecting the teachings and liturgical practices of the first-century Church.

*“On the Lord’s own day assemble in common to break bread and offer thanks; but first confess your sins, so that your sacrifice may be pure . . . your sacrifice must not be defiled. For here we have a saying of the Lord: ‘In every place and time offer Me a pure sacrifice’ (Greek: *thysia*) . . . for I am a mighty king says the Lord and My name spreads terror among the nations.”* (A.D. 98).

ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

Writing just after the end of the first century, only a few years after the death of St. John the Apostle, St. Ignatius gives us a short but powerful indication of the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist. He refers to those who absent themselves from the Eucharist celebrated by the bishop and his priests. The Greek word he uses for the *“altar”* used in Christian worship is *thysiasterion*, which means *“place where sacrifices are offered..”* *“Let no one deceive himself;”* St. Ignatius warns, *“whoever keeps away from the altar (thysiasterion) deprives himself of the divine bread.”* (Letter to the Ephesians 5:2; A.D. 10).

Faith of our Fathers (Continued on page 10)

THE LIVING PRESENCE

THE BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE EUCHARIST

BY ANNE LANPHAR, ESQ.

On December 7, 2001, I visited Ground Zero in lower Manhattan. I couldn't really see anything but, like many Americans, I was compelled to visit the site and say a prayer. I then walked to Chinatown to visit the Fire Station which had lost so many firefighters in the September 11th tragedy to place some flowers in their memory. I was deeply saddened and as I started to walk away, I noticed a small cross on the exterior of an old building in the middle of the block. As I approached I saw the name of the church was "The Church of The Most Sacred Blood." This was obviously a Catholic church! I entered this very small, very old church in Chinatown to make a visit before the True Presence knowing I would find solace with Christ. I no longer felt alone – I had found home. The Church contained about 20 elderly people, all of Chinese ancestry. (At 5 foot 7 inches, I was clearly the tallest person in the Church!) Approximately 10 minutes after I entered, I was given a special gift: suddenly at 2 o'clock in the afternoon Mass began in this small church in a very old part of an old city.

Since the Mass was celebrated in Chinese, I did not understand a single word but I understood everything! I felt joy and warmth of the Mass – the greatest gift God has given us because Christ truly comes to each of us through the Eucharist. I was actively participating in the living covenant of Christ as foretold by the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament. I was reliving both the first Passover and the Last Supper; but this Mass was not merely a "reenactment" of those special historic events but a fulfillment in present time of Christ's promise: "*I will be with you always.*"

The Last Supper was not a surprise event preceding Christ's death but an integral part of God's plan from the beginning of time. The tenth and final of the plagues sent by God to force Egypt to free the Jews was the death of the first born son of all those who failed to prepare the Passover feast as directed by God. That night, the Angel of Death passed over all homes which celebrated the Passover meal which included unleavened bread, bitter herbs and the sacrifice and consumption of the meat from a lamb (without blemish and without broken bones) and then using the blood of that sacrificial lamb to mark the outside of the home with a branch of hyssop (Exodus 12). The blood from this innocent lamb ("Passover Lamb") was the sign to the Angel of Death to "pass over" this home. But it is extremely important to note that the participants at the meal were *required* to eat of the lamb or, despite the blood on the door, they would not be protected from the Angel of Death. The events of that night and the Passover meal were a "type" – a pointer – to the true savior to come many generations later. It is also important to note that Scripture clearly states that God commanded that this Passover meal be celebrated always: "*This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations you shall observe it as an ordinance for ever.*" (Exodus 12:14)

After being released by the Pharaoh, Moses led the nation of Israel out of Egypt to Mount Sinai, where the Law (Ten Commandments) and the Old Testament covenant

was sealed between God and His people. As the Jews were led through the desert to the Promised Land, God fed them with manna – bread from heaven. And each day as they traveled to the Promised Land, they received this life sustaining

bread from heaven. At the end of each day's travels, the Jews were required to set

The Living Presence (Continued on page 6)



**THE DISPUTATION
OF THE HOLY
SACRAMENT**

Sanzio Raffaelo
(1510)

*The Passover
meal began
with the
Last Supper
and was
completed
at Calvary:
the perfect
Pascal Lamb
(unblemished by
sin and without
broken bones)
has spilled His
own blood
to protect
His people
from the
Angel of Death
for all time.*



**THE FEAST OF THE
PASSOVER**

*Dieric Bouts the Elder
(1464)*

***The connections
between the Passover
and the institution of
the Eucharist
become even more
clear by studying the
full liturgy
("Haggadah") of the
Passover Sedar
which consists of
four parts or "cups."***



THE LAST SUPPER

*Leonardo da Vinci
(1498)*

(Continued from page 5) **The Living Presence**

up a special tent or tabernacle for the Lord and the Ark of the Covenant which held the tablets containing the Ten Commandments (the law) and fresh manna from that day (precursor of the Eucharist). "And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before me always." (Exodus 25:30)

At the Last Supper, Christ was celebrating the Passover feast in accordance with the law (Mark 14:12-16). While the Passover ritual meal commemorated God's deliverance of the Jewish nation from captivity in Egypt, the Last Supper initiated the events of deliverance from sin by the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Christ became the perfect Pascal Lamb – the unblemished perfect sacrifice to God whose blood would protect us from the Angel of Death. In the New Testament, it is important to note that Jesus used the word "covenant" only once: at the Last Supper. "And He took a cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And He said to them 'This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many'" (Mark 14:23-24). Jesus words show the sacrificial Passover meal of the Old Testament was being converted into the sacrificial meal by which His new covenant would be established.

The connections between the Passover and the institution of the Eucharist become even more clear by studying the full liturgy ("*Haggadah*") of the Passover Sedar which consists of four parts or "cups."

First, the preliminary course consisted of the blessing of the festival day ("*kiddush*") spoken over the first cup of wine, followed by the serving of a dish of herbs.

The second course included a recital of both the Passover narrative and the "*Little Hallel*" (Psalm 113). This was followed by the drinking of the second cup of wine.

The third course was the main meal. Grace was spoken over the unleavened bread, bitter herbs and lamb after which the third cup of wine, known as the "*cup of blessing*," was consumed.

The Passover ritual was completed with the singing of a hymn, the "*Great Hallel*" (Psalm 114 - 118) followed by the drinking of a fourth cup of wine, known as the "*cup of consummation*."

In the Scriptural recounting of the Last Supper, there appears to be a significant omission in the order of Jesus' last Passover meal with His disciples. The cup blessed and distributed to the Apostles by Jesus is identified as the third cup in the Passover rite which is apparent from the singing of the Great Hallel: "And when they had sung a hymn..." (Mark 14:26). Paul later identified this "*cup of blessing*" with the Eucharistic cup (1 Cor. 10:16).

In Mark 14:25, Jesus says, "Truly, I say to you, I shall never again drink of the fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." But instead of proceeding immediately to the climax of the Passover with the drinking of the fourth cup, we read: "And when they had sung a hymn (*The Great Hallel*), they went out to the Mount of Olives." (Mark 14:26). Why did Christ not complete the Passover meal as required by the law?

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Scripture states: "And going a little farther, he fell on his face and prayed, 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but thou wilt.'" (Mark 14:36). Later at Calvary before He dies, Jesus cries out, "I thirst." (John 19:28). Since this obviously was not the first time He was thirsty during His passion, John points out that Christ spoke these words to cause the fulfillment of Scripture (John 19:28). In response to Christ, the Roman guards acted: "A bowl of sour wine stood there; so they put a sponge full of the vinegar on a hyssop branch and held it to His mouth." (John 19:29). This is the same hyssop used in

The Living Presence (Continued on page 8)

ECCLESIA DE EUCHARISTIA*

OF HIS HOLINESS POPE JOHN PAUL II

HOLY SEE'S SUMMARY OF ENCYCLICAL "ECCLESIA DE EUCHARISTIA"

The fourteenth Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II is intended to offer a deeper reflection on the mystery of the Eucharist in its relationship with the Church. The document is relatively brief, but significant for its theological, disciplinary and pastoral aspects. It will be signed on Holy Thursday, during the Mass of the Lord's Supper, within the liturgical setting of the beginning of the Paschal Triduum.

The Eucharistic Sacrifice, "*the source and summit of the Christian life,*" contains the Church's entire spiritual wealth: Jesus Christ, who offers himself to the Father for the redemption of the world. In celebrating this "*mystery of faith,*" the Church makes the Paschal Triduum become "*contemporaneous*" with men and women in every age.

The first chapter, "*The Mystery of Faith,*" explains the sacrificial nature of the Eucharist which, through the ministry of the priest, makes sacramentally present at each Mass the body "*given up*" and the blood "*poured out*" by Christ for the world's salvation. The celebration of the Eucharist is not a repetition of Christ's Passover, or its multiplication in time and in space; it is the one sacrifice of the Cross, which is represented until the end of time. It is, in the words of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, "*a medicine of immortality, an antidote to death.*" As a pledge of the future Kingdom, the Eucharist also reminds believers of their responsibility for the present earth, in which the weak, the most powerless and the poorest await help from those who, by their solidarity, can give them reason for hope.

"*The Eucharist Builds the Church*" is the title of the second chapter. When the faithful approach the sacred banquet, not only do they receive Christ, but they in turn are received by him. The consecrated Bread and Wine are the force which generates the Church's unity. The Church is united to her Lord who, veiled by the Eucharistic species, dwells within her and builds her up. She worships him not only at Holy Mass itself, but at all other times, cherishing him as her most precious "*treasure.*"

The third chapter is a reflection on "*The Apostolicity of the Eucharist and of the Church.*" Just as the full reality of Church does not exist without apostolic succession, so there is no true Eucharist without the Bishop. The priest who celebrates the Eucharist acts in the person of Christ the Head; he does not possess the Eucharist as its master, but is its servant for the benefit of the community of the

saved. It follows that the Christian community does not "*possess*" the Eucharist, but receives it as a gift.

These reflections are developed in the fourth chapter, "*The Eucharist and Ecclesial Communion.*" The Church, as the minister of Christ's body and blood for the salvation of the world, abides by all that Christ himself established. Faithful to the teaching of the Apostles, united in the discipline of the sacraments, she must also manifest in a visible manner her invisible unity. The Eucharist cannot be "*used*" as a means of communion; rather it presupposes communion as already existing and strengthens it. In this context emphasis needs to be given to the commitment to ecumenism which must mark all the Lord's followers: the Eucharist creates communion and builds communion, when it is celebrated truthfully. It cannot be subject to the whim of individual or of particular communities.

Eucharistic Encyclical (Continued on page 22)



FROM
PETER'S
SUCCESSOR,
POPE
JOHN
PAUL
II



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(Continued from page 6) *The Living Presence*

the Passover rite for sprinkling the blood of the Lamb on the doorstep to save God's people from the Angel of Death (Ex. 12:22). According to John, Christ then speaks His final words: "*It is finished; and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.*" (John 19:30).

The "**It**" that Jesus is referring at Calvary is the Passover meal: He had completed the Fourth Cup (the cup of consummation) by His death. The Passover meal began with the Last Supper and was completed at Calvary: the perfect Pascal Lamb (unblemished by sin and without broken bones) has spilled His own blood to protect His people from the Angel of Death for all time.

The ancient Passover ritual commemorated the deliverance of the people of God from the bondage of captivity BUT it was also a pointer to the ultimate Passover: the Passover meal begun in the upper room with the Lamb of God which was consummated at Calvary thereby transforming the Old Testament Passover into a new covenant to provide the redemption of all mankind for all time.

But if this is really the Old Testament Passover transformed and perfected in Christ's sacrifice on Calvary, there is still something missing: how do we fulfill the mandate that every participant of the Passover meal must eat the lamb to be saved from the Angel of Death?

The answer is found in John 6:53-56 but the answer was extraordinarily difficult for His disciples to understand and accept and was presented by Christ as a test of faith and those disciples who could not accept these "*hard words*" left Him (John 6:66). Jesus said:

"This is the bread that comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is His 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 dwells 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 are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever." (John 6:51-58).

Some Christians argue that Christ was merely speaking figuratively. Throughout Christ's ministry when He was speaking figuratively, He made that quite clear. In John (Chapter 6), He repeats Himself *three separate times* and when some disciples reject His words, He does not seek to clarify to them that He was merely speaking figuratively. Instead He allows those people to walk away but turns to Peter and asks if they are also going to leave: "*Jesus said to the twelve, "Will you also go away?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."* (John 6:56-69).

Every Mass harkens back to the tabernacle of the Jews in the desert. Just as the Ark of the Covenant carried the law and the bread, every Mass has two parts: the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Each Mass is the ultimate Passover celebration begun by Christ at the Last Supper and consummated by His death and so for us to be protected from the Angel of Death, we too must also fulfill the command that we eat



**THE MIRACLE OF
THE MANNA**

Tintoretto

(1577)



*St. Thomas More Society of Orange County
Invites the Entire Legal Community to the*

Red Mass

**HOLY FAMILY CATHEDRAL
ORANGE, CALIFORNIA**

MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2003

EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION AT 6:30 P.M.

Reception with Dinner following in the Holy Family Cathedral Hall

JURISTS WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESSION, PLEASE CONTACT HON. MARY FINGAL ERICKSON



History of the Red Mass

The first recorded Red Mass, a special Mass for the Bench and Bar, was celebrated in Paris in 1245. For many centuries it was held in the chapel of the Order of Advocates, La Sainte Chapelle, which was built by Louis IX. In certain localities of France, the Red Mass was celebrated in honor of St. Ives, the patron saint of lawyers. In England, the tradition began about 1310, during the reign of Edward I. The entire Bench and Bar attended the Red Mass together at the opening of each term of Court. The priest and the judges of the High Court wore red robes, thus the Eucharistic celebration became popularly known as the Red Mass.

The tradition of the Red Mass has continued in the United States. Each year in Washington, D.C., the members of the United States Supreme Court join the President and members of Congress in the celebration of the Red Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The Red Mass is also celebrated in Sacramento and most other state capitals and major cities throughout the United States. The first Red Mass in Orange County was celebrated in 1988 and has become as much a tradition in Orange County as it is in the United States and other parts of the world. †

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(Continued from page 4) *Faith of our Fathers*

EPISTOLA APOSTOLORUM

This work, only discovered in 1895, was originally composed in Greek but exists today only in Coptic, Ethiopian, and Latin translations. The Ethiopian version is the most complete and contains a beautiful dialogue between Christ and His Apostles after the Resurrection about the offering of the Christian paschal sacrifice. This passage, translated especially for Envoy magazine, is not found in any English language collections of the Fathers. It's as though the objections of Protestants against the sacrifice of the Mass were already being

anticipated and answered back then:

"The Lord said, 'You will celebrate the memorial of My death, that is, the Passover Sacrifice . . . at the cock's crow, at dawn, you will perform My feast of love and My memorial' . . . The Apostles said, 'Lord, haven't You drunk to the full of the Passover Sacrifice? Is it then necessary that we do it again?' Jesus responded, 'Yes, it is necessary, until I come again from the Father'" (Epistola Apostolorum 13; A.D. 140).

ST. IRENAEUS OF LYONS

This great Church Father was a disciple of St. Polycarp and, as such, was the "spiritual

grandson" of St. John the Apostle, since St. Polycarp knew the Apostle. This means that the teachings St. Irenaeus received from his mentor came directly from the Apostles. This fact is important to keep in mind, since it demonstrates that the purity of apostolic teaching was handed on intact to each subsequent generation of Christians. The teaching on the Eucharist and the Mass as a Sacrifice that St. Irenaeus speaks of in this passage he received from the Apostles, through St. Polycarp.

"He took that created thing, bread, and gave thanks and said, 'This is My Body.' And the cup likewise, which is part of that creation to which we belong, He confessed to be His Blood, and taught the new oblation of the new covenant, which the Church, receiving from the Apostles, offers to God throughout the world . . . concerning which Malachy, among the twelve prophets, thus spoke beforehand: 'From the rising of the sun to the going down, My name is glorified among the gentiles, and in every place incense is offered to My name and a pure sacrifice . . . ' indicating in the plainest manner that in every place sacrifice shall be offered to Him, and at that a pure one" (Against Heresies 4,17,5; A.D. 170).

ST. HIPPOLYTUS OF ROME

St. Hippolytus composed a beautiful Eucharistic prayer at the beginning of the third century. The second Eucharistic prayer of the Missal of Pope Paul VI, which we use now, is based on it. In a commentary on Daniel 4:35 St. Hippolytus refers to the outlawing of the Church's sacrifice by the Antichrist at the end of time. Like many other Fathers who teach on the Sacrifice of the Mass, he too uses the language of the prophecy of Malachy.

"For when the gospel is preached in every place, the times being then accomplished . . . the abomination of desolation will be manifested, and when he (the Antichrist) comes, the sacrifice and oblation will be removed, which are now offered up to God in every place by the gentiles" (Commentary on Daniel 22; A.D. 220).

ST. CYPRIAN OF CARTHAGE

Later in the same century, this martyr bishop of Carthage, in the midst of the ferocious persecution of Christians by the Romans, clearly explains the Lord's Eucharistic Sacrifice as being "according to the order of Melchisedek."

"In the priest Melchisedek we see prefigured the sacrament of the sacrifice of the Lord, according to what Divine Scripture testifies, and says, 'And Melchisedek, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine.' Now he was a priest of the most High God, and blessed Abraham. And that Melchisedek was a type of Christ, the Holy Spirit declares in the Psalms, saying from the person of the Father to the Son: 'Before the morning star I have begotten Thee;



**THE MASS OF
ST GREGORY**

Adrian Isenbrant

(Date Unknown)

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Accompanied by Dr. Gerry Wegemer

Scholar & Author of THOMAS MORE: A PORTRAIT IN COURAGE

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(Continued from page 10) ***Faith of our Fathers***

Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedek.' This order is assuredly the one coming from that sacrifice: that Melchisedek was a priest of the Most High God; that he offered wine and bread; that he blessed Abraham. For who is more a priest of the most high God than Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who offered a sacrifice to God the Father, and offered the very same thing which Melchisedek had offered, that is, bread and wine, to wit, His Body and Blood? . . . For if Jesus Christ Our Lord and God is Himself the chief priest of God the Father, and has first offered Himself a sacrifice to the Father, and has commanded that this be done in commemoration of Himself, certainly the priest truly discharges the office of Christ, who imitates what Christ did; and he offers a true and full sacrifice in the Church to God the Father, when he proceeds to offer it according to what he sees Christ Himself to have offered." (Letter 62: 4,14; A.D. 253).

ST. SERAPION OF THMUIS

This great bishop of Lower Egypt (that means Northern Egypt - the Nile is lower near the sea) was a good friend of St. Athanasius, the defender of the Divinity of Christ against the Arian heretics. He offers us the earliest text we have of a Eucharistic prayer which was actually used in the Divine Liturgy of the Eucharist.

"Heaven is full, and the earth as well is full of your magnificent glory, O Lord of Hosts. Fill too this sacrifice with Your power and communion, for we offer You this living sacrifice and unbloody offering . . . Thus we offer bread, celebrating the likeness of His death and we implore You, O God of Truth, to reconcile us to all and have mercy on us through this sacrifice . . . and we offer wine using the likeness of blood. May Your holy Word come upon this bread, O God of Truth, that it might become the Body of the Word, and upon this chalice that it might become the Blood of the Truth" (The Anaphora of Serapion 4; A.D. 339 [original translation]).

ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM

The newly baptized converts of the Church in Jerusalem were treated to the classiest instruction on the sacraments ever given, the amazingly beautiful lectures of their bishop, St. Cyril. He describes the Holy Eucharist as an "awe-inspiring" sacrifice. Here he explains the liturgy after the consecration:

"Next, when the spiritual sacrifice, the bloodless worship has been completed, over that sacrifice of propitiation we beseech God for the public peace of the Churches . . . for all, in a word, who need help, we all pray and offer this sacrifice. Then we commemorate also those who have fallen asleep . . . for all those who have gone before us, believing that this [Eucharistic sacrifice] will be the greatest benefit to the souls of those on whose behalf our supplication is offered in the presence of the holy, of the most dread sacrifice." (Catechetical Lectures 5, 8-9; A.D. 350).

ST. EPHRAEM THE SYRIAN

This is my favorite patristic text on the sacrifice of the Mass. You won't find it anywhere published in an English translation except for here. St. Ephraem so closely identifies the action of Christ in the Eucharist with His sacrifice on the cross that he counts the three days of Christ's death and burial as beginning with His mystical, sacramental 'slaying' at the Last Supper:

"From the moment when He broke His Body for His disciples, and gave it to them, one begins to count the three days during which He was among the dead. Adam practically, after eating of the fruit of the tree, lived a long time, even though he was counted among the dead for having disobeyed the commandment of God. God had spoken to him thus 'The day when you eat of it, you will die.' Thus it was for Our Lord. It was because He had given them His Body to eat in view of the mystery of His death that He entered into their bodies as He entered later on into the earth." (Commentary on the Diatessaron 19, 4 [translated from the Armenian version]; A.D. 363).

THE LITURGY OF ST. MARUTHAS



**THE MASS OF
ST. BASIL**

Pierre Subleyras

(1743)

(Continued from page 12) ***Faith of our Fathers***

This liturgy of Syrian origin is attributed to St. Maruthas, the great Syrian missionary bishop in Persia and ally of St. John Chrysostom. St. Maruthas, known for his corpulence (there have been some fat saints!), was martyred around A.D. 412. He expands on the words of institution and consecration in the Mass to identify the Eucharistic Sacrifice with the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. (This text is not found in any English selections, so I have translated the passage.)

“On that last night on which He was about to save His creatures, observe and fulfill the law, and begin His New Covenant, while teaching those saved by Him the true doctrine, He took the bread into His pure hands, and giving thanks to His Father, He blessed, sanctified, broke, and divided it among His disciples and said: ‘Take eat, believe, and be certain, and so teach and preach that This is My Body which is broken for the salvation of the world, and to those who eat it and believe in Me it gives the expiation of sins and eternal life.’ Truly Lord we have done wickedly, evilly, and foolishly, and we have provoked Your wrath, nor have we kept even one of Your commandments. May you, O Good Lord, excuse us and be merciful for our crimes for the sake of the Sacrifice placed before You this day. Indeed it is You who have told us, ‘Whosoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood, and believes in Me, abides in Me and I in him, and I will raise him up on the last day.’ May He (the Holy Spirit) change this simple bread and make it the very Body which was immolated for us on the cross for the remission of sins and the eternal life of those receiving it.” (Liturgy of St. Maruthas of Maiferkat; circa A.D. 390).

ST. AMBROSE OF MILAN

The Roman Canon, or "First Eucharistic Prayer" of the Latin Church, is cited by St. Ambrose in his instructions on the sacraments given to the newly baptized during the week of Easter:

“And the priest says, ‘Therefore, mindful of His most glorious passion and resurrection from the dead and ascension into heaven, we offer You this immaculate victim, a reasonable sacrifice, an unbloody victim, this holy bread, and the chalice of eternal life. And we ask You and pray that You accept this offering just as You deigned to accept the sacrifice the high priest Melchisedek offered You.’ So as often as you receive, what does the Apostle say to you? As often as we receive, we proclaim the death of the Lord. If death [then], we proclaim the remission of sins. If as often as blood is shed, it is shed for the remission of sins, I ought always to accept Him, that He may always dismiss my sins. I, who always sin, should always have a remedy.” (On the Sacraments 4,6; A.D. 392 [original translation]).

In his Commentary on the Psalms, not yet available in English, St. Ambrose speaks clearly of the holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered on Christian altars:

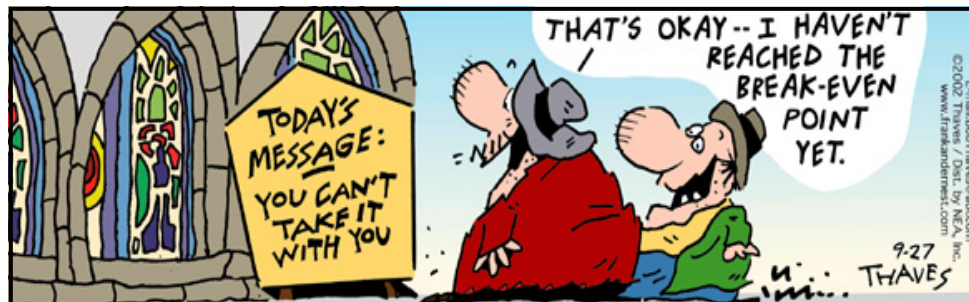
“We priests follow [Christ's cross] as we are able, so that we might offer sacrifice for the people, since, even though Christ is not seen to offer, nevertheless He is offered on earth when the Body of Christ is offered. Or rather, He is shown to offer in us, by whose word is consecrated the sacrifice which is offered.” (Commentary on Psalm 38, 25; circa A.D. 395 [original translation]).

ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

There are so many texts of St. Augustine in which he speaks of the Catholic Sacrifice of the Mass, that it's hard to choose which ones to quote! Here are two representative examples of his teaching on this subject.

“Was not Christ immolated once in Himself, and nevertheless under the sacrament He is immolated for the people not only on every Paschal Feast Day, but even every day, and is it not also the case that he does not err at all who, when asked, responds that He is so immolated?” (Letter 98, 9; A.D. 410 [original translation]).

“Recognize in this bread what hung on the cross, and in this chalice what flowed from His side whatever was in many and varied ways announced beforehand in the sacrifices of the Old Testament pertains to this one sacrifice which



THE PIANO AND THE MASTER



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



Wishing to encourage her young son's progress on the piano, a mother took the small boy to a Paderewski concert. After they were seated, the mother spotted a friend in the audience and walked down the aisle to greet her. Seizing the opportunity to explore the wonders of the concert hall, the little boy rose and eventually explored his way through a door marked "NO ADMITTANCE."

When the house lights dimmed and the concert was about to begin, the mother returned to her seat and discovered that her son was missing. Suddenly, the curtains parted and spotlights focused on the impressive Steinway on stage. In horror, the mother saw her little boy sitting at the keyboard, innocently picking out, "*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star.*"

At that moment, the great piano master made his entrance, quickly moved to the piano, and whispered in the boy's ear, "*Don't quit. Keep playing.*" Then leaning over, Paderewski reached down with his left hand and began filling in a bass part. Soon his right arm reached around to the other side of the child and he added a running obbligato. Together, the old master and the young novice transformed a frightening situation into a wonderfully creative experience. The audience was mesmerized.

That's the way it is with God. What we can accomplish on our own is hardly noteworthy. We try our best, but the results aren't exactly graceful flowing music. With the hand of the Master, our life's work truly can be beautiful.

So the next time you set out to accomplish great feats, listen carefully and you can hear the voice of the Master, whispering in your ear, "*Don't quit. Keep playing.*" Feel His loving arms around you. Know that His strong hands are playing the concerto of your life.

Remember, God doesn't call the equipped; He equips the called. Your worst days are never so bad that you are beyond the reach of God's grace. And your best days are never so good that you are beyond the need of God's grace. †

THE WRIT- INGS OF THOMAS MORE



MORE ON VIRTUE & EDUCATION

More....[did not] confuse learning and intellectual agility with virtue and character. As More put it, the liberal arts can "*prepare the soul for virtue.*" They can quicken the reason; they can form and perfect good judgment; they can clarify the highest principles which "*both instruct and inspire the mind in the pursuit of virtue*"; they can develop prudence in human affairs. By themselves, however, they cannot produce virtue or strong character.... More's fundamental principle in education was crystal clear: "*Put virtue in the first place..., learning in the second.*" In this way, as we have seen, he was convinced that his children would grow to be "*inwardly calm and at peace and neither stirred by praise of flatterers nor stung by the follies of unlearned mockers of learning.*"

Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage

Gerard Wegemer

Pg 90 †

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT: HOW WE RECEIVE THE LORD

BY: MICHAEL SHONAFELT, ESQ.

On some Sundays, I like to take my family to the Spanish mass at Mission San Juan Capistrano. At those Masses, one of the many beautiful cultural expressions that make up the rich tapestry of the Catholic Church is always on display. For instance, it is not unusual to see faithful, both young and old, processing on their knees in penance, weeping before the tabernacle, or gathering in colorful, festive parades in honor of the Saint of the day. One thing in particular strikes me about those Spanish masses: *how few people approach the altar to receive Communion.*

The Church is Catholic, in part, because it embraces and sanctifies all cultures. And each cultural expression, in turn, reveals one of the multifarious facets of our faith. To me, the Hispanic expression of faith seems to exemplify *reverence*. Of course, one should never attempt to propound an inverse correlation between the number of communicants and the reverence of that body of believers. The phenomenon of pious reticence to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord does stand in stark contrast to the standard practice of mainstream American Catholics, however. In mainstream Catholic America, it appears, on the surface, that no circumstance can render us unworthy of the reception of our Lord in the Eucharist.

THE NEED FOR PENANCE

The danger here is that communion will become a rote exercise in following the crowd, which, Sunday after Sunday, inexorably, channels up through the pews, and files into the queue, up to the altar, to receive the Lord -- in the worst case, without any thought at all as to the infinite sublimity and significance of that act. The danger is real and is evidenced by a disproportionate number of faithful who wholly neglect another sacrament: Penance. Pope John Paul II addressed this phenomenon in his apostolic letter *Dominicae Cenae*, written in the second year of his pontificate:

Sometimes, indeed quite frequently, everybody participating in the eucharistic assembly goes to Communion; and on some such occasions, as experienced pastors confirm, there has not been due care to approach the sacrament of Penance so as to purify one's conscience. This can of course mean that those approaching the Lord's table find nothing on their conscience, according to the objective law of God, to keep them from this sublime and joyful act of being sacramentally united with Christ. But there can also be, at least at times, another idea behind this: the idea of the Mass as only a banquet in which one shares by receiving the body of Christ in order to manifest, above all else, fraternal communion. It is not hard to add to these reasons a certain human respect and mere "*conformity.*"

As the letter points out, this phenomenon also stems from recent efforts by the clergy to emphasize the social aspects of the Eucharist as a feast, to the unfortunate neglect of emphasizing the essence of the Eucharist as the True Presence, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ. The teaching of the Church is clear:

Anyone who desires to receive Christ in the Eucharistic Communion must be in



THE INSTITUTION OF
THE EUCHARIST

Joos van Wassenhove

(1473)

The Blessed Sacrament (Continued on page 16)

(Continued from page 15)

the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance.” (The Catholic Catechism (“Catechism”), (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994) ¶ 1415, p. 356.) Accordingly, every approach to the altar of the Lord must be accompanied by a serious reflection on the state of our soul before God. If, upon an objective reflection, one is aware of sin serious enough to constitute a separation from God, one should receive the grace of the sacrament of penance first. Otherwise, the act of Communion becomes a sham expression of a union which is not really there. (Catechism, ¶ 1385, p. 350.)

THE NEED FOR FREQUENT COMMUNION

It is crucial to note, however, that there is a difference between reverence for the Eucharist and an excessive abstention born of an inordinate rigorism or an exaggerated notion of unworthiness. The Jansenist heresy of the 17th Century fell into this trap. Antoine Arnauld, cofounder of the Jansenist movement, railed against frequent communion, and equated abstention from the Sacrament as mark of higher perfection.

Juxtaposed against the Jansenist heresy is the Church’s ancient admonition that the faithful receive communion frequently as a means of being bonded closer to Christ and avoiding sin. As Pope Saint Pius X wrote:

“The desire of Jesus Christ and of the Church that all of the faithful should daily approach the sacred banquet is directed chiefly to this end, that the faithful, being united to God by means of this sacrament, may thence derive strength to resist their sensual passions, to cleanse themselves from the strains of daily faults, and to avoid those graver sins to which human frailty is liable.”

Saint Robert Bellarmine, writing against Jansenist abuses, wrote, “*Experience bears out that those who receive frequently with a desire to grow in holiness make wonderful progress in the spiritual life.*” For Bellarmine, frequent reception of Communion was “*the unique and infallible way of reforming the Church of Christ.*” Bellarmine confronted to proposition that it is more respectful to Christ to abstain from Communion by saying, “*It is precisely in receiving the Holy Eucharist even daily that we show forth the reverence which the Lord expects of us.*”

STRIKING A BALANCE

For centuries, the Church has emphasized the need for frequent communion -- and has warned against too much stringency based upon our own notions of unworthiness in the face of so sublime a sacrament. In the final analysis, none of us is ever truly *worthy* to receive the Lord in Communion. Yet He comes to us that way, and invites each of us to unite ourselves to Him sacramentally. However, the extremes of the Jansenist era appear to have given way to another extreme, casual frequent communion, without sufficient apprehension of the importance of the act and without serious preparation. We should not hesitate to approach the Lord when we have considered that He is truly present in the Eucharist, made a thorough examination of conscience, and find, upon that examination, that there is no mortal sin separating us from Him. Absent a consciousness of mortal sin, we *need* to receive Him, sinful as we are. The gift of His Presence and His loving invitation are too wonderful to pass up. †



TRAVELER’S MISSAL

*Bohemian
Miniaturist*

(1360)

MERCY HOUSE

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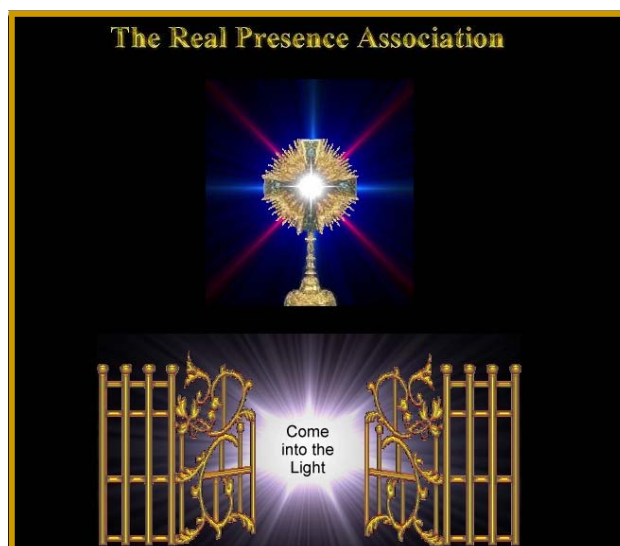
Mercy House is selling \$10.00 tickets to the event and retains 100% of direct ticket sales. Tickets will get you 20% off everything in the store on October 4th. Pre-sale is also available if you are not able to go on the 4th.

Please contact **Katy MacGregor** at katym@mercyhouse.net to purchase tickets.



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The Roman Catholic Church (i.e. the Latin Rite Catholic Church, & other Catholic Churches in communion with Rome) believe that the Eucharist is the Real Presence of Jesus Christ, body, blood, soul & divinity. This website provides historic evidence including early Church writers and other helpful information.



CYBER HEAVEN

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Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem* *Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"



A DAY AT THE TRACK

Just before the first race, a Priest visited one of the horses in the stable area and gave it a blessing. Bernie watched the horse race very carefully, and, sure enough, the blessed horse came in first. Intrigued, Bernie followed the Priest before the next race. Again, the Priest went to the stables and blessed another horse. Bernie quickly put five dollars on that horse and won close to fifty bucks! Well, the Priest kept blessing horses and Bernie paid close attention and kept winning cash!



The last race of the day was the biggest and Bernie saw the Priest with the horse, for that race also! Quickly went to his bank and withdrew his life's savings of \$35,000, raced back to the track and put it all on that horse!

He watched the race in certain anticipation of leaving with well over a million bucks. But it was not to be ... His horse was last to cross the line and Bernie was dead broke!

He couldn't believe what happened so he went looking for the Priest.

He found the good Father and asked, "What happened in the last race? That last horse you blessed finished dead last! Because your blessing didn't work, I've lost all of my money!"

The Priest said, "Sure, and that's the trouble with you Protestants! You can't tell the difference between a blessing and the Last Rites!" †

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

"It is not to be thought that life is a snare or an illusion because the bubbles cease in a champagne glass. No true unhappiness comes to man unless he places his heart in a false infinite. He who sees that all human love is nothing but Divine Love on pilgrimage will use it as a kind of Jacob's ladder to climb back again through virtue to the Source of all Love Which is God Himself." †

“END OF THE WORLD” PROPHECIES

MICHAEL SHONAFELT, ESQ.

As Prime Ministers Sharon and Abbas work together to make President Bush’s “*Path to Peace*,” a reality in the Middle East, a hillock in the ancient city of Jerusalem threatens to become ground zero for a catastrophic conflict that would render any prospect for peace in the Middle East as futile as trying to sew a button on a poached egg.

The oldest and third most holy Muslim site in the world is the “Noble Sanctuary,” a large walled garden containing the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the gold Dome of the Rock, in the center of the ancient city of Jerusalem. By twist of fate, the Noble Sanctuary also sits on the mount of the ancient Second Temple of the Jews, destroyed in 70 A.D., but still Israel’s most sacred spot and the situs of the “*foundation stone*,” upon which the Jews must build the new Third Temple. The Midrash Tanchuma conveys the intense Jewish sentiment concerning the Temple Mount and the foundation stone:

*As the navel is set in the center of the human body,
so is the land of Israel the navel of the world...
situated in the center of the world,
and Jerusalem in the center of the land of Israel,
and the sanctuary in the center of Jerusalem,
and the holy place in the center of the sanctuary,
and the ark in the center of the holy place,
and the foundation stone before the holy place,
because from it the world was founded.*

Many Christians, especially those in Evangelical Protestant circles, also hold the Temple Mount in high esteem. According to them also, the Old Testament prophecies designate this spot as the site of the Third Temple, the completion of which must take place before Christ returns in His glorious second coming, when He will defeat the Anti-Christ.

Notably, many Jews believe the construction of the Third Temple is imminent. In fact, a rabbinical school (or yeshiva) for the training of the priests for this temple is already up and running in Jerusalem. Sacred sacrificial vessels and priestly garments, not seen since about 70 A.D., have been prepared and lie in wait for the great rededication of the holy place and the resumption of temple sacrifice.

The only thing holding up the works is a perfect red heifer. Under the ancient Jewish purification ritual, prescribed in Chapter 19 of the Book of Numbers, no Jew may set foot on the Temple Mount until he is purified by the ashes of a perfect red heifer, without spot. Until the development of modern genetic engineering, no such perfect red heifer existed. But, on April 8th, 2002, it was revealed that Christian cattle growers in the United States had engineered a perfect red heifer, suitable for the Numbers 19 purification ritual.

Like three tectonic plates converging on a seismic collision course, the three major religions of the West may find their ultimate clash on the Temple Mount. Many Orthodox Jews deem the existence of a perfect red heifer as the herald of the New Age of temple sacrifice. Many Christians seek to hasten the advent of this age to bring about Christ’s return. Meanwhile, fundamentalist Muslims view the prospect of the rededication of the Temple at the Dome of the Rock as the ultimate act of provocation. The potential for a bitter conflict is very real. As Gershom Gorenberg, author of *End of Days: Fundamentalism and the Struggle for the Temple Mount* notes:

What happens at the one spot, more than anywhere else, quickens expectations of the End in three religions. And at that spot, the danger of provoking

TRUTH OR MYTH?



SAUL & THE
WITCH OF ENDOR

*Jacob Cornelisz
van Oostanen*

(1526)

(Continued from page 19) **End of the World Prophecies**
catastrophe is greatest.

The convergence of these events prompts serious questions. Are the prophetic interpretations which seem to be working to force the time and place of Christ's return truth or myth? What is the Catholic response to these and other end time prophecies, which have been the source of endless hand wringing and speculation for other religious sects? Is the preoccupation with eschatological prophecy a healthy spiritual exercise?

The Catholic Church has always tread cautiously over such ground. The Catechism points out certain events that must take place, but does so only in broad terms. There will be full inclusion of the Jews in the economy of salvation, a final trial that will shake the belief of many, some form of global spiritual deception, and the ultimate victory of God. (See Catholic Catechism, ¶¶ 671 - 677, pp. 175-177.) But, with respect to end-time prophecy, the Catholic Catechism notes:

Since the Ascension Christ's coming in glory has been imminent, even though "it is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority." This eschatological coming could be accomplished at any moment, even if both it and the final trial that will precede it are "delayed." (Id. at ¶673, p. 176.)

The Church's discretion follows the cues of its Founder, who, in various ways, warned His flock not to be preoccupied with dates, times and events:

But of that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone ... Therefore stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come. (Matt: 24:36, 42.)

The Gospels are replete with exhortations by Our Lord to focus on living each day as if the Master were to return *then and there*.

Who, then, is the faithful and prudent servant, whom the master has put in charge of his household to distribute to them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master on his arrival finds doing so. Amen, I say to you, he will put him in charge of all his property. But if that wicked servant says to himself, "My master is long delayed," and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eat and drink with drunkards, the servant's master will come on an unexpected day at an unknown hour and will punish him severely ... (Matt: 45-51.)

For this reason, preoccupation with teasing out from Scripture the precise metes and bounds of end-time prophecies appears to run counter to Christ's exhortations. For, if we can pinpoint the day and the hour, we will live as if the "*master is long delayed.*"

The proper way to interpret the End Times prophecies is as a call to holiness and salvation *now* while God still offers that opportunity: As the Catechism notes:

It inspires a holy fear of God and commits [us] to the justice of the Kingdom of God. It proclaims the "blessed hope" of the Lord's return, when he will come "to be glorified in his saints and to be marveled at in all who have believed." (Catholic Catechism, ¶ 1041, p. 272.)

As Catholics, we do not eschew all prophetic announcements: our faith is, in many ways, future-oriented. We live in the hope of that glorious moment of God's final revelation, when justice is achieved and when "*we shall know the ultimate meaning of the whole work of creation and of the entire economy of salvation and understand the marvelous ways by which his Providence led everything to its final end.*" (Id. at ¶ 1040, p. 272.) But we should view with suspicion any eschatological theory which propounds a definitive time for Christ's return or a particular triggering event that will compel the end. The time God gives us for our salvation is *now*: "*Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation.*" (2 Cor. 6:2.) †



THE LAST JUDGMENT

Michelangelo

(1537-41)

JOHN 6: 53-56

⁵³So Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have not life in you; ⁵⁴he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁵⁵For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.’”

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

54. Jesus clearly states that his body and blood are a pledge of eternal life and a guarantee of the resurrection of the body. St. Thomas Aquinas gives this explanation: “The Word gives life to our souls, but the Word made flesh nourishes our bodies. In this sacrament is contained the Word not only in his divinity but also in his humanity; therefore, it is the cause not only of the glorification of our souls but also of that of our bodies” (*Commentary on St. John, in loc.*).

Our Lord uses a strong word than just “eating” (the original verb could be translated as “chewing”) which shows that Communion is a real meal. There is no room for saying that he was speaking only symbolically, which would mean that Communion was only a metaphor and not really eating and drinking the body and the blood of Christ.

“All these invitations, promises and threats sprang from the great desire which (Jesus) had of giving us himself in the holy sacrament of the altar. But why should Jesus so ardently desire us to receive him in holy communion? It is because love always sighs for, and tends to a union with, the object beloved. True friends wish to be united in such a manner as to become only one. The love of God for us being immense, he destined us to possess him not only in heaven, but also here below, by the most intimate union, under the appearance of bread in the Eucharist. It is true we do not see him; but he beholds us, and is really present; yes, he is present in order that we may possess him and he conceals himself, that we may desire him, and until we reach our true homeland Jesus Christ wishes in this way to be entirely ours, and to be perfectly united to us” (St Alphonsus Liguori, *The Love of our Lord Jesus Christ reduced to practice*, chap. 2)

55. In the same way as bodily food is necessary for life on earth, Holy Communion is necessary for maintaining the life of the soul, which is why the Church exhorts us to receive this sacrament frequently: “Every day, as is desirable, and in the greatest possible numbers, the faithful must take an active part in the sacrifice of the Mass, avail themselves of the pure, holy refreshment of Holy Communion and make a suitable thanksgiving in return for this great gift of Christ the Lord. Here are words they should keep in mind: ‘Jesus Christ and the Church desire all Christ’s faithful to approach the sacred banquet every day. The basis of this desire is that they should be united to God by the sacrament and draw strength from it to restrain lust, to wash away the slight faults to which human frailty is liable’ (Decree of the S.C. Council, 20 December 1905)” (Paul VI, *Mysterium fidei*).

“The Savior has instituted the most august sacrament of the Eucharist, which truly contains his flesh and his blood, so that he who eats this bread may live forever; whosoever, therefore, makes use of it often with devotion so strengthens the health and the life of the soul, that it is almost impossible for him to be poisoned by any kind of evil affection. We cannot be nourished with this flesh of life, and live with the affections of death.[...] Christians who are damned will be unable to make any reply when the just Judge shows them how much they are to blame for dying spirituality, since it was so easy for them to maintain themselves in life and in health by eating his Body which he had left them for this purpose. Unhappy souls, he will say, why did you die, seeing that you had at your command the fruit and the food of life” (St Francis de Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, II, 20, 1).

56. The most important effect of the Blessed Eucharist is intimate union with Jesus Christ. The very word “communion” suggests sharing in the life of our Lord and becoming one with him; if our union with Jesus is promoted by all the sacraments through the grace which they give us, this happens more intensely in the Eucharist, for in it we receive not only grace but the very Author of grace: “Really sharing in the body of the Lord in the breaking of the eucharistic bread, we, though many, are one body, all of us who partake of the one bread” (1 Cor 10:17)” (Vatican II, *Lumen gentium*, 7). Precisely because the Eucharist is the sacrament which best signifies and effects our union with Christ, it is there that the whole Church manifests and effects its unity: Jesus Christ “instituted in his Church the wonderful sacrament of the Eucharist, by which the unity of the Church is both signified and brought about” (Vatican II, *Unitatis redintegratio*, 2). †



SCRIPTURAL CORNER



APOSTLE ST. JOHN
THE EVANGELIST

El Greco

(1606)

**The Navarre Bible, a renowned edition of Sacred Scripture prepared by members of the Faculty of Theology of Navarre University, consisting of the New Vulgate, the Revised Standard Version and commentaries.*

(Continued from page 7) *Eucharistic Encyclical*

“*The Dignity of the Eucharistic Celebration*” is the subject of the fifth chapter. The celebration of the “*Mass*” is marked by outward signs aimed at emphasizing the joy which assembles the community around the incomparable gift of the Eucharist. Architecture, sculpture, painting, music, literature and, more generally, every form of art demonstrate how the Church, down the centuries, has feared no extravagance in her witness to the love which unites her to her divine Spouse. A recovery of the sense of beauty is also needed in today’s celebrations.

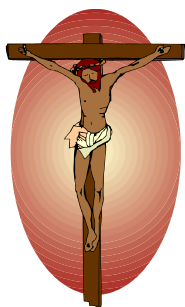


**MOSES & THE
TABLES OF LAW**
Piero di Cosimo
(Date Unknown)

The sixth chapter, “*At the School of Mary, Woman of the Eucharist,*” is a timely and original reflection on the surprising analogy between the Mother of God, who by bearing the body of Jesus in her womb became the first “*tabernacle,*” and the Church who in her heart preserves and offers to the world Christ’s body and blood. The Eucharist is given to believers so that their life may become a continuous Magnificat in honor of the Most Holy Trinity.

The Conclusion is demanding: those who wish to pursue the path of holiness need no new “*programs.*” The program already exists: it is Christ himself who calls out to be known, loved, imitated and proclaimed. The implementation of this process passes through the Eucharist. This is seen from the witness of the Saints, who at every moment

PRAYER PETITIONS



*Heavenly Father,
I offer you this day
all that I shall think
or do or say,
uniting it with
what was done
by Jesus Christ,
your only Son.
Amen*

We all need prayers—at some times more than others. If you have a special need for prayer, please let us know so we can join in prayer for each other. Leave a message on Anne Lanphar’s voicemail (714) 800-3225, or email your request to alanphar@firsttam.com

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

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- ☒ Massimo (child with serious illness).
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- ☒ Lieutenant Seth Wolcott & his family.
- ☒ US Air Force Pilot John Flynn
- ☒ All members of the US Armed Forces and their families.
- ☒ Baby Thomas Peter Council (serious illness).
- ☒ Kristin Burkett (serious illness),
- ☒ Ronald Moore (pass the bar exam).
- ☒ Diana Todora (pass the bar exam).
- ☒ Robyn Belz (serious illness).
- ☒ Myron Cohen (serious illness).
- ☒ Terry & Julie N (special intention).
- ☒ Darren M (questioning the Faith).
- ☒ Fr. Matt Munoz (special intention).
- ☒ Ryan McEachon (special intention).
- ☒ John Thompson (employment).
- ☒ Selma Mann’s family (2 medical conditions).
- ☒ Cindie Burnes, a young mother recovering from chemotherapy.
- ☒ Michael Shonafelt (special intention).

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FIVE LOAVES AND TWO FISH

BY ARCHBISHOP FRANCOIS-XAVIER NGUYEN VAN THUAN

**FROM
THE
LIBRARY**

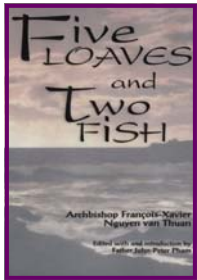
Written while under house arrest for nine and one-half years in North Vietnam, Five Loaves and Two Fish is Archbishop Thuan’s spiritual memoir, as a survivor of war and as a witness to Christ. The archbishop continued his priestly duties while under arrest. He tended his new flock in secret, saying Mass underneath mosquito nets late at night and silently distributing communion to other prisoners from his shirt pocket. He befriended and taught Latin hymns to prison guards, who, in return, brought him small quantities of bread and wine for communion and materials to make a cross.

Thuan’s witness remains a constant reminder to those in need that even in worst of times we are never without God’s love, through we must often rise to the challenge of discovering it in new ways. In this book Thuan shares his love with us, just as he did with the prisoners and guards at Phu Khanh. In the fact of often deplorable conditions, he remained a source of hope and encouragement to all who would listen.

These assembled reflections and intensely personal prayers will help the reader to find grace in the face of extreme difficulty by allowing God to multiply each of our blessings, as he multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed all who were hungry.

“The facts and episodes of his suffering in prison...strengthen us in the consoling certainty that when everything collapses around us and perhaps even within us...Christ remains our un-failing support.”

————— **Pope John Paul II**



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