

Understanding Our Liturgy Class for Monday February 21st, 2011

Eucharistic Prayer Three:

- **NTD:** (p. 40) “so that from the rising of the sun to its setting” vs. “so that from east to west”
 - “For from the rising of the sun to its setting, my name is great among the Gentiles...and there is offered to my name a pure sacrifice (מנחה): for my name is great among the Gentiles” (Mal 1:11)
 - The Hebrew word *mincha* (מנחה) nearly always has in the OT the signification of unbloody sacrifice, and, though occasionally meaning any sort of real sacrifice, is never used to signify interior acts of worship or such exterior oblations as are not real sacrifices.

The Eucharist as Sacrifice in Scripture and Early Tradition:

- cf. Gen 14:18 with Ps 109:4 and the epistle to the Hebrews
- cf. Ex 24:6-8 with Mt 26:28 (present passive ptc. used)
- 1 Cor 10:14-21 (cf. Mal 1:7)
 - “And this is indeed that clean oblation, which cannot be defiled by any unworthiness, or malice of those that offer (it); which the Lord foretold by Malachias was to be offered in every place, clean to his name, which was to be great amongst the Gentiles; and which the apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, has not obscurely indicated, when he says, that they who are defiled by the participation of the table of devils, cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord; by the table, meaning in both places the altar.” (Trent, Session 22, Ch. 1)
- Mt 5:23: “So if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember...” (Sitz...); cf. Heb 13:10
- Early Patristic Testimony: Didache 14; 1 Clement 44; St. Ignatius to the Ephesians 5; St. Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 41; St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, bk 4, 17.5

The Theology of the Eucharist as Sacrifice:

- Definition of Sacrifice: Sacrifice is an act of homage which furthers union with God through the offering of a gift which symbolizes interior oblation. God’s acceptance passes, so to speak, through the gift to the one making the offering, and the alliance or friendship is ratified by the eating of the sacrifice. Sacrifice is thus a form of mediation between God and man.
- The Ends for Which the Sacrifice of the Mass is Offered:
 - Adoration and Thanksgiving: In the Mass, the infinite gap between God and man is spanned with the offering of the God-Man himself. His perfect adoration and thanksgiving become ours. No worship is equal to the Mass.
 - Propitiation: The propitiatory power of the Mass lies in its power of moving God to dispense to men the treasures laid up for them by the sacrifice of the Cross.
 - Petition: The Mass also has impetratory power with God. Christ always lives to make intercession for us. In the Mass, Christ’s glorious wounds plead with the Father.
- The Fruits of The Sacrifice:
 - In appeasing God’s justice and releasing the graces necessary for conversion, the Mass *indirectly* leads to the forgiveness of both mortal and venial sins. (cf. Baptism, Penance, act of perfect contrition.)
 - The Mass *directly* brings about satisfaction for temporal punishment, for both living and dead.
 - The propitiatory and impetratory power of the mass is infinite and invariable but its effects fall below this and are proportioned to the dispositions of those who offer it.

Communion Rite:

- (p. 56) “Our Father, who art in heaven...”
 - Good example of an old form that persists because it has become part of our religious tradition
- **NTD:** (p. 57) “safe from all distress” vs. “protect us from all anxiety”
- **NTD:** (p. 57) “as we await the *blessed* hope and the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ”
- Sign of peace
 - entered liturgy because from Apostolic times, epistles read in liturgy (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20)
 - What about its location? SC 49, note 150: “Taking into account ancient and venerable customs and the wishes expressed by the Synod Fathers, I have asked the competent curial offices to study the possibility of moving the sign of peace to another place, such as before the

presentation of the gifts at the altar. To do so would also serve as a significant reminder of the Lord's insistence that we be reconciled with others before offering our gifts to God (cf. Mt 5:23)"

- **NTD:** (p. 60) "Behold the Lamb of God..."
 - drama and repetition comes out more clearly
- **NTD:** (p. 60) "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof..."
 - cf. Mt 8:8 (expression of humility and confidence)

Transubstantiation:

- **Substance:** That which exists in itself (e.g. a man, a tree, copper, zinc, a dog). A bodily substance is not its size, shape or color, its various properties, or the sum of all these. It has these things, is located, acts and reacts by means of them, and through them manifests itself to the senses. The subject as such is impervious to the senses and is discernible only to the intellect. Thus the Eucharist is *spiritually* discerned.
- **Accident:** That which exists in another, that which requires a subject in which to adhere (e.g. thought, extension, color, physical and chemical actions and reactions). Quantity, qualities, and various activities are all accidents of things.
- **A Conversion of Substance into Substance:** At the consecration, the "thing" which has the appearances, which through those appearances manifests its presence, the "thing" which is the subject of the qualities and activities, the chemical and physical properties and reactions which we associate with bread...this "thing"—which we call *the substance*—changes into another substance, that of the body of Christ, only the appearances of bread and wine remaining.

The Eucharistic Presence:

- Christ is present in the manner of a substance. Before consecration the whole substance of bread formally considered was present in the whole of its mass, or quantity, and also under every particle thereof. When bread is divided, it is not the substance as such which is divided, but the substance as modified by the accident of quantity; the substance formally as such is indivisible; it abstracts from dimensions or extension. So it is with Christ after the consecration.
- Christ's accidents are present in the Eucharist because of the principle of concomitance, but they are present only in the manner of a substance. Hence when we say that the body of Christ is present in a particular place, in the ciborium, in the tabernacle, in the mouth of the recipient, we do not mean that his body is present in the manner in which a body is normally present, i.e. in space. We mean that in the place occupied by the dimensions of bread there is really and truly present the body of Christ (along with its dimensions and other accidents), after the manner of a substance as such.
- **Accident and Sacrilege:** No violence can be done to the body of Christ in the sacrament. External agencies can only reach the appearances of bread and wine beneath which the body and blood of Christ remain undisturbed.
- **Manner of Consumption:** We truly consume the body and blood of the Lord but not in a gross and materialistic sense. The way the Lord is present to us in communion is very different from the way a body is present in space. The way I would cannibalize a mortal and corruptible man is very different from the way I consume the indestructible body of the risen Lord Jesus.

Effects of Communion:

- The proper and peculiar effect of the Eucharist is a special help for the attainment of that union which is called "the fervor of charity." This is the actual and conscious referring of our actions to God as our supreme Good and final End. The fervor of charity renders the soul less susceptible to the attractions of the world, the flesh, and the devil.
- The Eucharist remits venial sins and the temporal punishment due to sin.
- The Eucharist also gives spiritual joy in the fulfillment of the divine will.
- The Eucharist ultimately has an effect on our bodies as well. It is supremely appropriate that the body which has been sanctified by contact with this most blessed Sacrament should be a partaker of Christ's resurrection.

The Eucharist as Sacrifice:

“On the Lords Day...hold Eucharist, after confessing your transgressions that your sacrifice may be pure; but let none who has a quarrel with his fellow join in your meeting until they be reconciled, that your sacrifice be not defiled. For this is that which was spoken by the Lord, “In every place and time offer me a pure sacrifice, for I am a great king,” says the Lord, “and my name is wonderful among the heathen.”” (Didache 14)

“For our sin is not small if we eject from the episcopate those who have blamelessly and holily offered its sacrifices.” (1 Clement 44)

“Let no man be deceived: unless a man be within the sanctuary-altar he lacks the bread of God, for if the prayer of one or two has such might, how much more has that of the bishop and of the whole Church?” (Ignatius to the Ephesians 5)

“Hence God speaks by the mouth of Malachi, one of the twelve [prophets], as I said before, about the sacrifices at that time presented by you: 'I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord; and I will not accept your sacrifices at your hands: for, from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, My name has been glorified among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered to My name, and a pure offering: for My name is great among the Gentiles, says the Lord: but you profane it.' [So] He then speaks of those Gentiles, namely us, who in every place offer sacrifices to Him, i.e., the bread of the Eucharist, and also the cup of the Eucharist, affirming both that we glorify His name, and that you profane [it].” (St. Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 41)

“Again, giving directions to His disciples to offer to God the first-fruits of His own, created things—not as if He stood in need of them, but that they might be themselves neither unfruitful nor ungrateful—He took that created thing, bread, and gave thanks, and said, This is My body, etc. 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 all the world, to Him who gives us as the means of subsistence the first-fruits of His own gifts in the New Testament, concerning which Malachi, among the twelve prophets, thus spoke beforehand: I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord Omnipotent, and I will not accept sacrifice at your hands. For from the rising of the sun, unto the going down [of the same], My name is glorified among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered to My name, and a pure sacrifice; for great is My name among the Gentiles, says the Lord Omnipotent;—indicating in the plainest manner, by these words, that the former people [the Jews] shall indeed cease to make offerings to God, but that in every place sacrifice shall be offered to Him, and that a pure one; and His name is glorified among the Gentiles.” (St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, bk 4, 17.5)

The Mass According to Paul VI's Credo of the People of God

- We believe that the Mass, celebrated by the priest representing the person of Christ by virtue of the power received through the Sacrament of Orders, and offered by him in the name of Christ and the members of His Mystical Body, is the sacrifice of Calvary rendered sacramentally present on our altars. We believe that as the bread and wine consecrated by the Lord at the Last Supper were changed into His body and His blood which were to be offered for us on the cross, likewise the bread and wine consecrated by the priest are changed into the body and blood of Christ enthroned gloriously in heaven, and we believe that the mysterious presence of the Lord, under what continues to appear to our senses as before, is a true, real and substantial presence.
- Christ cannot be thus present in this sacrament except by the change into His body of the reality itself of the bread and the change into His blood of the reality itself of the wine, leaving unchanged only the properties of the bread and wine which our senses perceive. This mysterious change is very appropriately called by the Church transubstantiation. Every theological explanation which seeks some understanding of this mystery must, in order to be in accord with Catholic faith, maintain that in the reality itself, independently of our mind, the bread and wine have ceased to exist after the Consecration, so that it is the adorable body and blood of the Lord Jesus that from then on are really before us under the sacramental species of bread and wine, as the Lord willed it, in order to give Himself to us as food and to associate us with the unity of His Mystical Body.
- The unique and indivisible existence of the Lord glorious in heaven is not multiplied, but is rendered present by the sacrament in the many places on earth where Mass is celebrated. And this existence remains present, after the sacrifice, in the Blessed Sacrament which is, in the tabernacle, the living heart of each of our churches. And it is our very sweet duty to honor and adore in the blessed Host which our eyes see, the Incarnate Word whom they cannot see, and who, without leaving heaven, is made present before us.

