

## **ON THE HOLY EUCHARIST**

### **Q. What does the word Eucharist strictly mean?**

A. The word Eucharist strictly means pleasing, and this Sacrament is so called because it renders us most pleasing to God by the grace it imparts, and it gives us the best means of thanking Him for all His blessings.

### **Q. What is the Holy Eucharist?**

A. The Holy Eucharist is the Sacrament which contains the body and blood, soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

### **Q. What do we mean when we say the Sacrament which contains the Body and Blood?**

A. When we say the Sacrament which contains the Body and Blood, we mean the Sacrament which is the Body and Blood, for after the Consecration there is no other substance present in the Eucharist.

### **Q. When is the Holy Eucharist a Sacrament, and when is it a sacrifice?**

A. The Holy Eucharist is a Sacrament when we receive it in Holy Communion and when it remains in the Tabernacle of the Altar. It is a sacrifice when it is offered up at Mass by the separate Consecration of the bread and wine, which signifies the separation of Our Lord's blood from His body when He died on the Cross.

### **Q. When did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist?**

A. Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper, the night before He died.

### **Q. Who were present when our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist?**

A. When Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist, the twelve Apostles were present.

### **Q. How did our Lord institute the Holy Eucharist?**

A. Our Lord instituted the Holy Eucharist by taking bread, blessing, breaking, and giving to His Apostles, saying: "Take ye and eat. This is my body"; and then, by taking the cup of wine, blessing and giving it, saying to them: "Drink ye all of this. This is my blood which shall be shed for the remission of sins. Do this for a commemoration of me."

### **Q. What happened when our Lord said, "This is my body; this is my blood"?**

A. When Our Lord said, "This is my body," the substance of the bread was changed into the substance of His body; when He said, "This is my blood," the substance of the wine was changed into the substance of His blood.

### **Q. How do we prove the Real Presence, that is, that Our Lord is really and truly present in the Holy Eucharist?**

A. We prove the Real Presence -- that is, that Our Lord is really and truly present in the Holy Eucharist:

1. (1) By showing that it is possible to change one substance into another;
2. (2) By showing that Christ did change the substance of bread and wine into the substance of His body and blood;
3. (3) By showing that He gave this power also to His Apostles and to the priests of His Church.

### **Q. How do we know that it is possible to change one substance into another?**

A. We know that it is possible to change one substance into another, because:

1. (1) God changed water into blood during the plagues of Egypt.
2. (2) Christ changed water into wine at the marriage of Cana.
3. (3) Our own food is daily changed into the substance of our flesh and blood; and what God does gradually, He can also do instantly by an act of His will.

### **Q. Are these changes exactly the same as the changes that take place in the Holy Eucharist?**

A. These changes are not exactly the same as the changes that take place in the Holy Eucharist, for in these changes the appearance also is changed, but in the Holy Eucharist only the substance is changed while the appearance remains the same.

**Q. How do we show that Christ did change bread and wine into the substance of His body and blood?**

A. We show that Christ did change bread and wine into the substance of His body and blood:

1. (1) From the words by which He promised the Holy Eucharist;
2. (2) From the words by which He instituted the Holy Eucharist;
3. (3) From the constant use of the Holy Eucharist in the Church since the time of the Apostles;
4. (4) From the impossibility of denying the Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist, without likewise denying all that Christ has taught and done; for we have stronger proofs for the Holy Eucharist than for any other Christian truth.

**Q. Is Jesus Christ whole and entire both under the form of bread and under the form of wine?**

A. Jesus Christ is whole and entire both under the form of bread and under the form of wine.

**Q. How do we know that under the appearance of bread we receive also Christ's blood; and under the appearance of wine we receive also Christ's body?**

A. We know that under the appearance of bread we receive also Christ's blood, and under the appearance of wine we receive also Christ's body; because in the Holy Eucharist we receive the living body of Our Lord, and a living body cannot exist without blood, nor can living blood exist without a body.

**Q. Is Jesus Christ present whole and entire in the smallest portion of the Holy Eucharist, under the form of either bread or wine?**

A. Jesus Christ is present whole and entire in the smallest portion of the Holy Eucharist under the form of either bread or wine; for His body in the Eucharist is in a glorified state, and as it partakes of the character of a spiritual substance, it requires no definite size or shape.

**Q. Did anything remain of the bread and wine after their substance had been changed into the substance of the body and blood of our Lord?**

A. After the substance of the bread and wine had been changed into the substance of the body and blood of Our Lord, there remained only the appearances of bread and wine.

**Q. What do you mean by the appearances of bread and wine?**

A. By the appearances of bread and wine I mean the figure, the color, the taste, and whatever appears to the senses.

**Q. What is this change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of our Lord called?**

A. This change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Our Lord is called Transubstantiation.

**Q. What is the second great miracle in the Holy Eucharist?**

A. The second great miracle in the Holy Eucharist is the multiplication of the presence of Our Lord's body in so many places at the same time, while the body itself is not multiplied -- for there is but one body of Christ.

**Q. Are there not, then, as many bodies of Christ as there are tabernacles in the world, or as there are Masses being said at the same time?**

A. There are not as many bodies of Christ as there are tabernacles in the world, or as there are Masses being said at the same time; but only one body of Christ, which is everywhere present whole and entire in the Holy Eucharist, as God is everywhere present, while He is but one God.

**Q. How was the substance of the bread and wine changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ?**

A. The substance of the bread and wine was changed into the substance of the body and blood of Christ by His almighty power.

**Q. Does this change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ continue to be made in the Church?**

A. This change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ continues to be made in the Church by Jesus Christ through the ministry of His priests.

**Q. When did Christ give His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood?**

A. Christ gave His priests the power to change bread and wine into His body and blood when He said to the Apostles, "Do this in commemoration of Me."

**Q. What do the words "Do this in commemoration of Me" mean?**

A. The words "Do this in commemoration of Me" mean: Do what I, Christ, am doing at My last supper, namely, changing the substance of bread and wine into the substance of My body and blood; and do it in remembrance of Me.

**Q. How do the priests exercise this power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ?**

A. The priests exercise this power of changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ through the words of consecration in the Mass, which are words of Christ: "This is my body; this is my blood."

**Q. At what part of the Mass does the Consecration take place?**

A. The Consecration in the Mass takes place immediately before the elevation of the Host and Chalice, which are raised above the head of the priest that the people may adore Our Lord who has just come to the altar at the words of Consecration.

## **On Which the Holy Eucharist Was Instituted**

**Q. Why did Christ institute the Holy Eucharist?**

A. Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist:

4. To unite us to Himself and to nourish our soul with His divine life.
5. To increase sanctifying grace and all virtues in our soul.
6. To lessen our evil inclinations.
7. To be a pledge of everlasting life.
8. To fit our bodies for a glorious resurrection.
9. To continue the sacrifice of the Cross in His Church.

**Q. Has the Holy Eucharist any other effect?**

A. The Holy Eucharist remits venial sins by disposing us to perform acts of love and contrition. It preserves us from mortal sin by exciting us to greater fervor and strengthening us against temptation.

**Q. How are we united to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist?**

A. We are united to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist by means of Holy Communion.

**Q. What is Holy Communion?**

A. Holy Communion is the receiving of the body and blood of Christ.

**Q. Is it not beneath the dignity of Our Lord to enter our bodies under the appearance of ordinary food?**

A. It is not beneath the dignity of Our Lord to enter our bodies under the appearance of ordinary food any more than it was beneath His dignity to enter the body of His Blessed Mother and remain there as an ordinary child for nine months. Christ's dignity, being infinite, can never be diminished by any act on His own or on our part.

**Q. Why does not the Church give Holy Communion to the people as it does to the priest under the appearance of wine also?**

A. The Church does not give Holy Communion to the people as it does to the priest under the appearance of wine also, to avoid the danger of spilling the Precious Blood; to prevent the irreverence some might show if compelled to drink out of a chalice used by all, and lastly, to refute those who denied that Our Lord's blood is present under the appearance of bread also.

**Q. What is necessary to make a good Communion?**

A. To make a good Communion it is necessary to be in the state of sanctifying grace and to fast according to the laws of the Church.

**Q. What should a person do who, through forgetfulness or any other cause, has broken the fast necessary for Holy Communion?**

A. A person who through forgetfulness or any other cause has broken the fast necessary for Holy Communion, should again fast and receive Holy Communion the following morning if possible, without returning to confession. It is not a sin to break one's fast, but it would be a mortal sin to receive Holy Communion after knowingly breaking the fast necessary for it.

**Q. Does he who receives Communion in mortal sin receive the body and blood of Christ?**

A. He who receives Communion in mortal sin receives the body and blood of Christ, but does not receive His grace, and he commits a great sacrilege.

**Q. Is it enough to be free from mortal sin to receive plentifully the graces of Holy Communion?**

A. To receive plentifully the graces of Holy Communion it is not enough to be free from mortal sin, but we should be free from all affection to venial sin, and should make acts of lively faith, of firm hope, and ardent love.

**Q. What is the fast necessary for Holy Communion?**

A. The fast necessary for Holy Communion is the abstaining from food, alcoholic drinks and non-alcoholic drinks for one hour before Holy Communion. Water does not break the fast.

**Q. Does medicine taken by necessity or food taken by accident break the fast for Holy Communion?**

A. Medicine does not break the fast; food taken by accident within one hour before Communion breaks the fast.

**Q. Is any one ever allowed to receive Holy Communion when not fasting?**

A. To protect the Blessed Sacrament from insult or injury, or when in danger of death, Holy Communion may be received without fasting.

**Q. Is the Holy Communion called by any other name when given to one in danger of death?**

A. When the Holy Communion is given to one in danger of death, it is called Viaticum, and is given with its own form of prayer. In giving Holy Communion the priest says: "May the body of Our Lord Jesus Christ guard your soul to eternal life." In giving Holy Viaticum he says: "Receive, brother (or sister), the Viaticum of the body of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which will guard you from the wicked enemy and lead you into eternal life."

**Q. When are we bound to receive Holy Communion?**

A. We are bound to receive Holy Communion, under pain of mortal sin, during the Easter time and when in danger of death.

**Q. Is it well to receive Holy Communion often?**

A. It is well to receive Holy Communion often, as nothing is a greater aid to a holy life than often to receive the Author of all grace and the Source of all good.

**Q. How shall we know how often we should receive Holy Communion?**

A. We shall know how often we shall receive Holy Communion only from the advice of our confessor, by whom we must be guided, and whom we must strictly obey in this as well as in all matters concerning the state of our soul.

**Q. What is a spiritual Communion?**

A. A spiritual communion is an earnest desire to receive Communion in reality, by which desire we make all preparations and thanksgivings that we would make in case we really received the Holy Eucharist. Spiritual Communion is an act of devotion that must be pleasing to God and bring us blessings from Him.

**Q. What should we do after Holy Communion?**

A. After Holy Communion we should spend some time in adoring Our Lord, in thanking Him for the grace we have received, and in asking Him for the blessings we need.

**Q. What length of time should we spend in thanksgiving after Holy Communion?**

A. We should spend sufficient time in Thanksgiving after Holy Communion to show due reverence to the Blessed Sacrament; for Our Lord is personally with us as long as the appearance of bread and wine remains.

**Q. What should we be particular about when receiving Holy Communion?**

A. When receiving Holy Communion we should be particular:

4. (1) About the respectful manner in which we approach and return from the altar;
5. (2) About our personal appearance, especially neatness and cleanliness;
6. (3) About raising our head, opening our mouth and putting forth the tongue in the proper manner;
7. (4) About swallowing the Sacred Host;
8. (5) About removing it carefully with the tongue, in case it should stick to the mouth, but never with the finger under any circumstances.