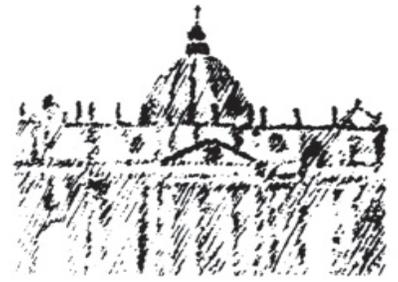


The Coming Home JOURNAL



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Rev. Mr. Frank O'Connell

How I Got This Way

By Chris Robinson

Honest, I never meant to love the Catholic Church. I didn't even realize it was Catholic books I had been reading, until it was too late. . .

I think I was tricked by the One who has the most jovial disregard for human preferences—the One who delights in surprising us, opening our eyes to bigger views of Himself, and taking us out of our comfort zones.

How on earth did I get this way—relieved and grateful to be received into the Catholic Church?

Evangelicals expect Catholics to become Protestants, but not vice versa. They tend to look bewildered when

they discover that, while I'm actively involved in an evangelical congregation with my family, I've become a Catholic. They seem to feel awkward about further conversation. I've written this essay as I've tried to imagine what questions evangelical friends might like to ask—if they felt comfortable asking.

My aim here isn't to persuade anybody else, but simply to describe what persuaded me—how my attitude

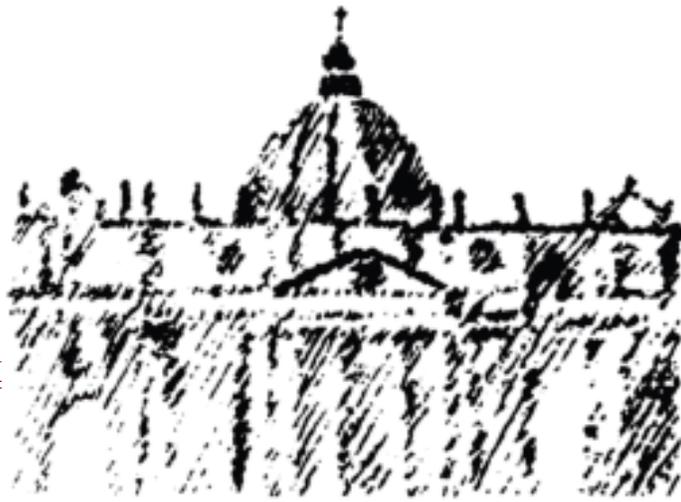
and thinking changed. My conversion didn't come from reading a few pages, so it's also difficult to summarize in a few pages. I've tried to keep this shorter, nonetheless, by avoiding long explanations of what Catholics believe and why, and sticking to my own story.

The trek began quietly around 1987 when I accidentally recognized that Catholics knew some good stuff.

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Welcome to the Third Edition of the Coming Home Journal.

There are many issues, both real and imagined, that separate non-Catholic and Catholic Christians. Some of these are really not all that crucial, and could be easily cleared up and set aside if either side just took the time to listen to one another with an open mind and charity. One of these might be our apparently different understandings of the priesthood of all believers. If Catholics and non-Catholics would study a document like Pope John Paul II's *Christifideles Laici* (The Lay Member's of Christ's Faithful People) they would discover that on this issue we're truly not that far apart—it's just that in many ways Catholic laity haven't discovered their birthright (I would also recommend a book by Russell Shaw entitled *To Hunt, To Shoot, To Entertain* (Ignatius Press).

Others issues that separate us are very important, but again if we took the time to patiently listen, we would discover how much we can celebrate together. Here we might include Mary, the mother of Jesus. On the surface, it appears that a gulf separates what Catholics and at least most conservative Protestants believe about Mary. But I believe once Protestants understand what we Catholics truly mean by what we believe, even with more difficult doctrines like Mary's Immaculate Conception, her Assumption, or the proposed dogma of Coredemptrix, Mediatrix and Advocate, they would discover that what we believe is not unreasonable. To help explain these things, we devoted our first edition of the CHJournal to Marian themes.

However, there are other issues that even once clearly explained and understood, the separations clearly remain. Hopefully, we've learned to understand and more honestly love one another, so that together we can stand one day without embarrassment before our Lord and respond with sincere hearts that though we disagreed we did so with charity. In

the second edition of the CHJournal we covered one of these issues: the Authority of the Church. I hope the conversion stories and articles clearly explained why we accept and submit our consciences to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, and believe that the Catholic Church, with all of her warts, is yet the "pillar and bulwark of truth" referred to by Paul in 1 Timothy 3.15.

In this third edition of the CHJournal, we begin to take on another of these issues, maybe one of the most significant issues that divides Christians: the Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. This isn't only a dogma that divides Catholics from other Christians, for there are a great variety of interpretations floating around Christendom, even amongst Christians of the same Protestant denominations. And given this wide berth of interpretations, some Christian leaders have avoided putting their weight on any particular opinion. Even John Wesley, who tried to hold a careful position between Protestantism, high liturgical tradition and the Church of England, is reported to have said in his later years that he would make no comment on the Real Presence for this was something for which only the angels knew the answer.

I say that we're only beginning to cover this theme in this edition because there is much to cover when it comes to the Catholic understanding of the Eucharist. I pray that with the conversion stories and articles in this edition, we can at least wet your appetite to study deeper and more historically the uninterrupted conviction that Christ's words "This is my body...this is my blood" were meant to be taken literally and very seriously. We fully understand those who find this hard to believe, as did those who first heard Jesus refer to this and responded, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" (John 6.60) Granted, when the priest places



the consecrated host on our tongues, it still feels and tastes like bread, and when we drink the consecrated wine, it still warms the gullet like the fine wine from which it came. However, as I hope these articles will help explain, we believe they are changed because Christ said so, the Apostles said so, the Early Fathers said so, the Church has continued to say so ever since the beginning, and because all things are possible with our loving Heavenly Father.

As we've said from the beginning of our work, the goals of the Coming Home Network International and this journal are not to proselytize, but rather to explain in clear terms the truth about and the truths of the Catholic Church. Almost all of our authors this quarter are converts to the Catholic Church, one having been an Anglican minister, and another a Presbyterian minister. The lone non-covert is James Cardinal Gibbons, former Archbishop of Baltimore. It is our prayer that these articles and stories are an encouragement to your faith. If you have any questions or comments, please either contact us or the person who gave you this free journal. We want to do whatever we can to help those outside the Catholic Church, those who have left the Church, or those who are life-long Catholics but have lost the "joy of their salvation," to discover the great joys and truth of the Catholic Faith.

May the Father richly bless you as you seek to follow Jesus His Son, through the loving guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Sincerely In Christ,

Robinson, continued from page 1...

In many years as a committed evangelical, I had read the right books, listened to leading pastors, and had even taken graduate-level classes in theology while my husband, David, was in seminary. I taught inductive Bible studies, college-age Sunday School, spent several years as a missionary. It was while we were missionaries in Egypt that I happened to read some older-than-evangelical books which reached deeper into me than anything I had read before. I wanted to read more of those great old books—and then it dawned on me that those authors were all Catholic.

It surprised me to realize I had been learning from Catholics. Years ago, when I had gone to Catholic Church with friends, I had been struck by the beauty of the liturgy, and surprised by both the clarity of the gospel and the apparent disinterest of most of the people around me. I hadn't meant to be arrogant, but I had assumed the Catholic Church was spiritually wasted; otherwise, why had God let the Reformation happen? Yet these Catholics whose books I had been reading—they knew some stuff!

I realized I was ignorant about Catholics. In some ways it seemed like Catholics and Protestants were all descendants from a generations-old family feud, in which

lic books were really “safe” to read, and partly from curiosity about Christian roots. But even more, I just wanted to know God better. If God was working in the Catholic Church but I failed to appreciate it, then I would not know Him as fully as possible. If God had a Catholic side, I didn't want to be guilty of closing my heart to that part of Him. I had an uncomfortable hunch that God might not be as separated from Catholics as we Protestants were.

I started reading church history. My initial belief was, roughly, that over time the Catholic Church had become irredeemably corrupt, and by Luther's day God basically gave up and started over with the triumphant Reformation.

History challenged that view. The Church was indisputably corrupt, but as a movement, the Reformation appeared to have had as many social and political motivations as spiritual. It was a tangled time. Holy leaders had called for reform from within the Church, while others like Luther felt they had no choice but to jump ship. Theologically, Reformers differed with each other significantly about matters of doctrine and practice. The Reformation didn't seem so clean and pristine—so triumphantly directed by God—as I had thought.

Reading beyond the Reformation... well, Protestant history seemed almost

Protestants usually didn't notice it.

My paradigm of the Church and her history began to wobble a bit. I hadn't grown up in a churchgoing family, but had spent time in several denominations and independent congregations. Over the years, with all the differing opinions I had vaguely wondered what Jesus had meant when He told the apostles that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth. Now I faced the puzzle: Protestant history didn't appear to validate a “Sola Scriptura” (Bible alone) view. Part of the legacy of the Reformation was Protestants splintering farther and farther from people they disagreed with over interpretation and application of the Bible. Yet it couldn't be that God had kept the roots of authority in the Catholic Church.

I read some biographies of respected Christians, including St. Francis of Assisi and John Hyde (“Praying Hyde”). While one was Catholic and the other Presbyterian, and they lived centuries apart, I was struck by several similarities, including: both were committed to celibacy, both were men of deep prayer, both bore various physical ailments with joy; both saw many instances of God's miraculous intervention. Both seemed to have delighted God—and yet there, in St. Francis, were all those Catholic peculiarities like devotion to Mary, and belief in transubstantiation, and submission to the Pope. I wondered if maybe God wasn't offended by those Catholic peculiarities as much as we Protestants were.

I moved on to explore Catholic beliefs. In addition to reading Protestant books about Catholic beliefs, I also actually read Catholic books about Catholic beliefs. It disturbed me to see that Protestant books consistently misrepresent Catholic teachings. I had thought that Catholic “prayers to saints” were an ignorant substitute for prayer to God, as if they believe the saints are equal to God or that God will not hear our prayers directly. I had thought that the notion of the infallibility of the Pope meant that Catholics think popes are sinless, and that everything they say is infallible. I had thought that the Catholic Church teaches that we are saved by works, not by grace. Even many Catholics misunderstand what the Church teaches about such things, but once I realized what she actually teaches, I had fewer objections.

This brought on a sense of “deja vu”. David and I were missionaries in a Mus-

both sides of the family had gotten used to excluding each other, and most didn't even know much about the original dispute.

Questions sprouted. Are Catholics really Christians, or not? Some Catholics sure seem to know Jesus; is that in spite of the Catholic Church? What keeps Catholics and Protestants apart? If Catholics aren't really Christians, I thought, I'd better find out and quit reading those old books!

So the first phase of exploration came partly from desire to know whether Catho-

embarrassing, even when written by Protestants. Our track record over the centuries was no more stellar than the Catholics'. Besides all the doctrinal disagreements, virtually every sin and fault we criticized in the Catholic Church had been repeated in Protestant history. We hadn't purified ourselves by getting away from Rome; the problem remained in us. The Catholic Church underwent many internal reforms, which Protestants didn't tend to be aware of. And it seemed clear that God continued to do wonderful things through faithful Catholics, although we

lim country. It was no easy task to talk with Muslims about our faith. They are sure they already know what Christians believe, and equally sure that Christians are wrong. Yet when Muslims state what they “know” Christians believe, there are lots of distortions. It almost seemed that the same thing was true with Protestants regarding Catholic theology. Just as one couldn’t learn about true Christianity by asking a Muslim—even one who claims to have been raised a Christian—it didn’t seem that one could learn about Catholicism by listening to Protestants. Just as Muslims seemed predisposed to not truly “hear” what Christians believe, so Protestants seemed prone to misconstrue what the Catholic Church teaches. It is so hard for us to consider that the truth we know may contain some error, or at least may only be part of the picture.

So I tried to be open-minded as I considered the Catholic Church’s viewpoints. I looked again at the Catholic belief in “sola verbum Dei”—the Word of God alone as authority, expressed through the Bible, through Sacred Tradition and through the Magisterium, the living Church leadership.

It dawned on me that Protestant beliefs actually don’t come solely from Scripture. Without admitting it, they follow their own brands of Magisterium and Tradition—each group having its own authoritative voice in interpretation of the Bible, whether it’s John MacArthur or R.C. Sproul or Jerry Falwell.

For example, baptism: is it a sign of individual faith, as believed by the Baptists, or a sign of the covenant, as Reformed folk believe? Should it be done by full immersion, as Baptists insist, or is it OK to sprinkle? The reason denominations disagree about this is because it isn’t absolutely clear in the Bible. People hold to one view or another because they accept the voice of authority of their denomination, which is their form of “Magisterium”, even though they don’t call it that.

When I married my Presbyterian husband, my church background had been basically Baptist. I eventually became reconciled to infant baptism because I learned that the earliest Christians practiced infant baptism. Even though we didn’t call it “the authority of Sacred Tradition,” it had made sense to me that what the earliest Christians had consistently done with this sacrament, must have been all right.

Another example I pondered: the doctrine of predestination is believed, with variations, by those in the Reformed faith. Predestination is not an absolutely clear teaching in the Bible. If it were, the shelves of theological libraries would not be filled with books on the topic of predestination vs. free will. If you asked people in our Presbyterian church, I expect almost everyone would say they believe in the doctrine of predestination—not because they fully understand it or can even ar-

ticulate much about it themselves, but because it’s upheld by the denomination and articulated by smart guys like R.C. Sproul.

This mind-boggling notion came: the Catholic “distinctives” were not unbelievable, any more than Christian beliefs in general. They were just unfamiliar. They seemed unacceptable because I had been taught they weren’t true. I already accepted teachings from the Bible that offended non-Christians. My submission to those teachings didn’t come because they made total sense but because I am convinced the Bible is dependable, and I also believe reality isn’t limited to what I have personally experienced or what my little brain can comprehend. If the Bible clearly spelled out the Immaculate Conception, I would have believed it years ago, just as I believed in the Virgin Birth. I had changed my views on infant baptism due to sacred Tradition—could sacred Tradition also change my views on Mary? It’s really no more difficult to believe in the Immaculate Conception, if one believes in the authority of the Church, than it is to believe in the Virgin Birth, based on the authority of the Bible.

I saw more parallels. It’s no more difficult to believe in the assumption of Mary, than in the assumption of Enoch or Elijah. It’s no more difficult to accept the Church’s teachings about contraception, than to accept the Bible’s teachings about sexual morality in general. It’s no more

difficult to believe in the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist, than to believe in the Incarnation.

Notice, I didn’t say it’s easy to believe any of this. It goes against my human grain to put my trust in miracles I can’t absolutely prove, to live by unpopular standards, or to submit to authority beyond my little self. And yet ever since the gospel first struck me as true, I recognized the importance of growing in my knowledge and practice of the truth, however incon-

venient. One of my favorite Bible teachers was fond of saying that we should always live in obedience to our understanding of the Bible, and that we should always hold our understanding of the Bible in an open hand, for God to add to, or correct. The question I now asked was whether authority rested solely in the Bible, or whether the authority of the Word of God came, as Catholics claimed, through the checks-and-balances of the Bible, Sacred Tradition and the living Magisterium.

Again, Protestant history made the latter view seem more reasonable. The Catholic Church had succeeded in growing past so many of its own sins and blunders, while Protestants kept dividing in reaction to sins and blunders. The Catholic Church maintained its stand on the authority of the Bible, while most denominations weakened on that issue as generations passed.

Surprisingly, some issues were not difficult for me. Fairly early in my reading, it made sense to me that there is a major difference between worship and veneration. I didn’t see any problem with veneration of Mary and the saints. I also found the basic idea of purgatory surprisingly easy to understand, and even biblical. As long as I could mentally let go of the assumption that “This belief/practice couldn’t be right because this is what Catholics think/do....”

Eventually, with great uneasiness, I realized that Catholic theology made more

sense to me than what I had learned as an evangelical. I had quit “protesting”; I was a closet Catholic. I doubted myself: how could I be persuaded by ideas that didn’t even interest my evangelical friends, let alone persuade them? Scariest of all: David hadn’t shared my reading interest, hadn’t experienced the paradigm-shift, and now we didn’t want it to be something that would divide us. In the first years of our marriage we had been unified in our

In retrospect, I think we all tend to have dangerously oversimplified views of how God works in ministry and through leadership. When troubles arise which don’t fit the belief system—not only when leaders sin but when they show weakness or make unwise decisions—we tend to go into avoidance or denial. But at that point, on a personal level, I became angry and disillusioned over God’s permissiveness with all who call themselves Christians.

was all the more obvious to me that God had never lost the Catholic Church.

I guess my conversion happened in three general phases: first, my heart recognized God at work in the Catholic Church and was drawn to Him; second, my mind had to be satisfied that the theology was sound; third—again, a heart issue—I had some hard lessons to learn about God and reconciliation.

Interesting timing: shortly after that, David asked if I would be interested in taking whatever class people take when they want to become Catholics. I think he was hoping that more exposure to Catholics would disappoint me, and I would finally let go of this inconvenient interest. My phone call to the local parish church led first to the discovery that our wonderful priest, Fr. David Dye, is also a convert from Protestantism. From him, I learned about the Coming Home Network, a group of former evangelical clergy who have come home to the Catholic Church. I don’t know if you can imagine how alone I had felt in this whole process, how I wondered at times if it was God drawing me or whether I had “lost it”. At least if I had lost my mind and the Catholic Church looked like the true Church to me, I wasn’t entirely alone anymore!

sense of calling. Now we didn’t know what to do as missionaries since I had become Catholic-at-heart. David hadn’t read along with me in history and Catholic theology; now he didn’t want to read for the purpose of trying to talk me back into Protestant beliefs.

We ended up returning to the U.S. for a number of reasons: among them, our inability to find an acceptable school situation for our growing daughters, and frankly, my own burnout. Some people from the mission suggested that my interest in Catholicism had been a subconscious way of trying to escape the difficulties of our mission situation, and that once we were home from the field, my subconsciously-motivated interest would naturally decline.

The quandary did go onto the back burner for several years. It was not easy to reestablish life in the U.S. after spending our entire post-college adult life—a total of thirteen years—preparing and then serving as missionaries. We were, in a sense, “wounded soldiers”, and it was disappointing that with few exceptions our evangelical brothers and sisters were either too busy or felt too uncomfortable to help us heal. I got new insights into the story of the Good Samaritan when the people with the “right theology” tended to keep their distance from our pain.

I recalled many examples of committed Christians seeking God’s will and guidance, who ended up doing all kinds of ill-advised things—and the results ranged from the pathetic to the disastrous. This brought me deep anxiety. For several years my experience encouraged me to be a deist; it was a major exercise in faith to trust that God was really involved in Christendom. And yet I couldn’t help but believe in Jesus, so I couldn’t pitch Christianity and settle into deism, much to my frustration. I didn’t know what to trust God for anymore. I spent several years on the edge of cynicism, seeking to be content with simply trusting God, emptying myself of expectations.

In June of 1997, somehow I received grace to more deeply forgive the evangelical “system” which had wounded me. It’s a pivotal issue in the Christian life: our need to forgive other Christians who fall short, and beyond that, to be reconciled to God who doesn’t go along with our simplistic expectations. Afterwards I realized it took the same kind of grace for me to forgive evangelicals, as it would take anyone to forgive the Catholic Church for her faults. Somehow I found myself with more courage to face how badly we sincere Christians botch things—and with clearer faith in God’s ability to work beyond human and institutional flaws. It

The decision to become officially Catholic was still not a painless one. For every other step I had taken “in obedience to God”, I had received lots of encouragement and affirmation from Christians all around me. I hadn’t realized that approval had always been an important part of the bargain for me, until it was missing. There were lots of reasons why joining the Catholic Church would be impractical and difficult, but I didn’t think that was supposed to be my criteria for deciding. I worried, because I didn’t want to divide my family, didn’t want friends to feel hurt or confused, and I also preferred to avoid misunderstanding and criticism. Yet I also sensed that God wasn’t worried—that He was delighted, and even amused.

It’s a challenge to help Protestants understand, because Protestants change church membership for different reasons than I did: usually because of disagreements, disappointment, or even preferences—in doctrine, practice or even music. From that framework, my decision can seem like a rejection, or even a rebellion.

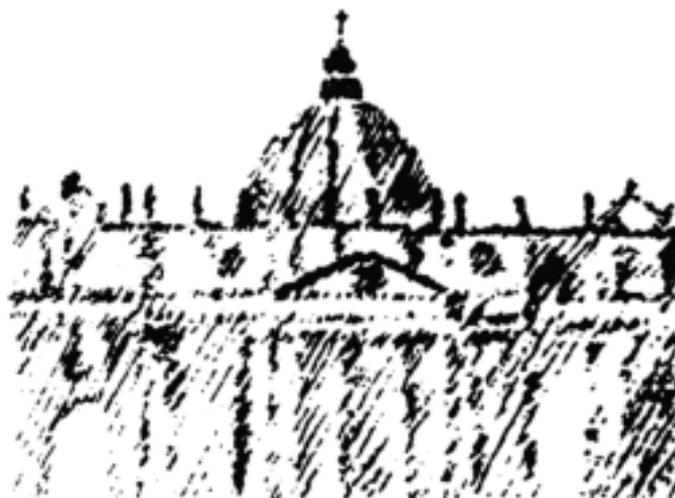
But my entry into the Catholic Church

came because of what I grew to believe about God and about the nature of the Church. It was a response to the greatness and mystery of God. Not a search for greener grass, but an acceptance of how big the lawn is. At one point our Presbyterian pastor told me, with characteristic warmth and concern, "We just can't let you do this—we can't let you join the Catholic Church!" And I thought, the only way for me to not become a Catholic would be to believe again that God is smaller, and shrink my heart in the process.

The Catholic Church rejoices over God's work in Protestant congregations, even though she considers their message incomplete. She sees them as part of God's family, as "separated brethren." The Gospel is powerful, and God blesses us as we submit to as much of it as we know. In contrast, there are many nominal Catholics who do not know or live the fullness of the truth which the Catholic Church teaches. It was a Catholic, G.K. Chesterton, who wrote, "It's not that Christianity has been tried and found wanting, it's that it has been found difficult and left untried." It is left untried not only by non-Christians but by many of us who call ourselves Christians, whether Catholic or Protestant.

In my case, joining the Catholic Church hasn't meant leaving my family's congregation. I participate in the Catholic Church on my own, while continuing worship, fellowship and service with my family. It might surprise people to hear that Catholic Church leadership encourages me to do this since my family is not Catholic. Fr. Dye even told David that if I get divisive, he will be David's advocate and get on my case.

The friends who have reacted most negatively to my news have been ex-Catholics or married to ex-Catholics. They sincerely feel that they did not find God in the Catholic Church, and instead



** Both the drawings of Peter on the cover of the last edition of the CHJournal and that of the Lamb of God on this edition's cover were drawn by Rev. Mr. Frank O'Connell. Deacon Frank is the director of AT THE WATER'S EDGE HEALING MINISTRY and has been a featured speaker and retreat leader for numerous parishes, youth groups, shrines retreat centers and renewal teams in the Cleveland Diocese and other areas of the country. You can find out more about his healing and teaching ministry at: <http://www.gsp-ind.com/watersedge/index.htm>

Affirming All Things

By Dwight Longenecker

American Gothic

Taking dramatic steps of faith runs in the family. In the eighteenth century my ancestors left Switzerland for the new colony of Pennsylvania to find religious freedom. The two Longenecker brothers were Mennonites—members of an Anabaptist sect so strict that they were persecuted by Calvin.

Seven generations later my part of the family had left the Mennonites, and I was brought up in a Bible Christian church. Like many churches in the sixties, our independent Bible church was a strongly evangelical and conservative group of Christians who were disenchanted with the liberal drift of the main Protestant denominations in the post-war period and set off to do their own thing.

That same independent movement included the foundation of a fundamentalist college in the deep South by the Methodist evangelist Bob Jones. So after the war my parents and aunts and uncles went to study there and it was natural for my parents to send my siblings and me there in the

1970s. In the heart of the so-called Bible belt, Bob Jones University incongruously mixes hollerin' hell-fire fundamentalism with grand opera and a famous gallery of fine religious art. BJU are the folks who gave Northern Irish firebrand Ian Paisley his honorary doctorate and who brand even Billy Graham as a liberal.

The religion in our own home was simple, Bible-based and balanced. Like our Mennonite forebears there was a quiet simplicity and tolerance at the heart of our

faith. We believed Catholics were in error, but we didn't nurture hatred towards them. At BJU the tone was different. There the Catholic Church was clearly the 'whore of Babylon' and the Pope was the Anti-Christ.

Anglican Orthodoxy

Ironically it was at BJU that I discovered the Anglican Church. We were allowed to go to a little Episcopalian schism church named 'Holy Trinity Anglican Orthodox Church.' The church was founded by a 'bishop' whose orders—an Anglican bishop later told me—were 'valid, but irregular'. He had been ordained by a renegade Old Catholic as well as a breakaway Orthodox bishop.

Along with some other disenchanted Baptists and Bible Christians I went to the little stone church and discovered the glories of the Book of Common Prayer, lighting candles and kneeling to pray. I was taken with the experience, and after searching for God's calling in my life, decided to be an Anglican priest. I

had studied English literature and visited England a few times and thought it would be perfect to minister in a pretty English village in a medieval church.

I wrote to the evangelical Anglican J.I.Packer and he suggested a few English seminaries. Oxford was the Mecca for devotees of C.S.Lewis, so when the opportunity to study at Oxford came my way I jumped at the chance and came to England for good. After theological studies

I was ordained and a life of ministry in the Anglican Church opened up.

The Affirmative Way

This whole period was a time of great growth and learning. Often it is the little bit of wisdom that makes the most impression; I will never forget a little quotation from the great Anglican social commentator F.D.Maurice I came across while I was studying theology. He wrote, "A man is most often right in what he affirms and wrong in what he denies." After the negative attitude of American fundamentalism and the cynical religious doubt which prevailed at Oxford, Maurice's statement was like a breath of fresh air.

It was sometimes tempting to feel guilty about leaving the religion of my family and upbringing, but with Maurice's viewpoint I increasingly felt the Anglican riches I was discovering were not so much a denial of my family faith, but an addition to it. So I took Maurice's dictum as my motto, and whenever I came across something new, I asked myself if I was denying or affirming. If I wasn't able to affirm the new doctrine or religious practice I wouldn't deny it—I would simply let it be.

So when a Catholic friend in the USA suggested I visit a Benedictine Abbey, I took her advice and made arrangements to go to the closest one to Oxford—Douai Abbey. There I found a world as alien to evangelical Anglicanism as Oxford was to Bob Jones University. The monks impressed me with their sense of solemn self-mockery, and there was a sense of touching a Christianity far greater and wider than I had yet experienced.

St. Benedict the Balanced

My link with the Benedictines continued after I was ordained and went to serve as an Anglican curate. I made my annual retreat at Quarr Abbey on the Isle of Wight—just off the South coast of England, read about the history of monasticism and felt drawn to the Benedictine Way. There

seemed to be a balance, a simplicity and a profound spirituality which echoed back to the simple sincerity of my Mennonite ancestors.

Just as I was about to visit Quarr Abbey for my annual retreat a friend brought me a rosary from Walsingham. I had never touched such a Catholic artifact, but F.D. Maurice's wisdom touched me and I thought, "If so many Christians pray this way, who am I to deny it?" So I bought a book about the Rosary and learned how to pray the it. Any ideas of accepting the Marian dogmas were out of the question. I substituted different glorious mysteries which were more Christ-centered. My five Biblical glorious mysteries were: Transfiguration, Resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost and Second Coming. Despite my individualism another window was opened and something new affirmed for I found that the Rosary grew in importance and I started to receive great graces through the prayers of Our Lady.

When my curacy was finished I had three months free and decided to hitchhike to Jerusalem. So with backpack and a pair of sturdy shoes I headed across France and Italy staying in various religious houses along the route. I found my journey went best when I fit in with the monastic routine. So I would begin a day's journey with Mass and morning offices in one monastery, say my Anglican office whilst travelling, then arrive at the next monastery in time for Vespers, the evening meal and Compline.

The pilgrimage to the Holy Lands also took me further into Christian history. Part of the appeal of being ordained into the Church of England had been to leave the modern subjective church of Protestant USA and find deeper routes in the history and faith of Europe. Suddenly travelling through France, Italy and Greece to Israel I was immersed in a religion obviously older and deeper still than Anglicanism.

The Benedictine houses put me in touch with roots of faith which were deeper and more concrete than I imagined could exist. Although I realized my views were becoming 'more Catholic' I didn't fight it. I wanted to 'be right in what I affirmed.'

The Apostolic Ministry

I had been ordained for about six years when my dream came true and I went to be vicar of two beautiful old

churches on the Isle of Wight. By this time I was not an Anglo-Catholic, but I did regard my ministry in a very Catholic way. I knew we were separated from Rome, but I considered my ministry to be part of the whole Catholic Church. Despite the formal separation, I thought of Anglicanism as a branch of the Catholic Church, and prayed for the time of our eventual re-union.

My pilgrimage to the Catholic Church had—for the most part—been intuitive. I simply adopted the Catholic practices that seemed suitable, and when it came time to question certain doctrines I looked at them and made every effort to affirm and not deny. This mindset brought me almost unconsciously to the very doorstep of the Catholic Church. What I said to some friends who were considering conversion was true of me as well—I was more Catholic than I myself realized.

It was the Church of England's decision to ordain women as presbyters that helped clear my vision. Suddenly things became crystal clear. Women priests were not the problem. Instead it was what the General Synod's decision-making process revealed about the true nature of the Church of England. The key question was—"Is the Anglican Church a Catholic Church or a Protestant church? If she wishes to be considered Catholic then she does not have the authority to ordain women as priests. But if Protestant—like all Protestant groups—she may indeed take the decision to ordain women ministers. So when the General Synod took the decision, I was in a quandary. Everything within me said a Catholic church could not make such a decision on its own. Yet I hated taking a negative position about anything. According to my motto I was denying women priests and I was wrong to do so.

Then Fr. Leo Avery, the late Abbot of Quarr, gently pointed out that greater affirmations often include smaller denials. In other words you can't have everything. Choices need to be made. Denying women priests was merely the negative side of affirming something greater—the apostolic ministry; and affirming Catholicism had to include the denial of those things contrary to Catholicism.

Affirming All Things

The next few years were a terrible time of indecision. By now I was married

and we had two young children. I hadn't trained for any other career and if we left the Anglican Church there seemed nothing but an uncertain future. One Sunday evening I went to Quarr Abbey for Vespers and Benediction. As the monks chanted I agonized over the decision to leave the Church of England.

"But I only wanted to serve you in the ancient church in England!" I cried out to the Lord.

As the incense wafted heavenward and the monstrance was lifted, the still small voice replied, "But THIS is the ancient church in England." Then the struggles ended. My mind was made up, and in the Autumn of 1994 my wife and I began our course of instruction with Fr. Joe McNery at Quarr.

There was grief at losing our home and church, but at the same time we received a tremendous welcome from our new Catholic friends. It was during this time that Keith Jarrett—the secretary of the St. Barnabas Society—offered friendship, help and encouragement as he has done for so many who have taken the same step. Once we were received the St. Barnabas Society continued to be there with practical advice and financial assistance.

As we went through our instruction I not only read the documents of Vatican II, but did further reading in the Apostolic Fathers. Day by day I discovered that all the things I had come to affirm intuitively were part of the great unity of the Catholic Faith. When I became an Anglican I felt my Bible Christian background was being completed, and as we prepared to be received into the Catholic Church I realized that I could still affirm everything my non-Catholic friends and family affirmed, I simply could no longer deny what they denied. F.D. Maurice's little snippet of wisdom had brought me across the Tiber, and in becoming a Catholic I was affirming all things and denying nothing that was true.

Our reception took place in a quiet service one February evening in the crypt of Quarr Abbey church. That night all was harvest. There, as the monks sang their ancient and moving plainsong and we were finally received into full communion, the simple faith of my Mennonite forebears, the Bible Christians' love for the Scriptures and the ancient beauties of Anglicanism were all gathered together and fulfilled in

The Real Presence

By David Palm

When I was a young man, I used to hear stories of the courage of Great Protestant Reformers like Martin Luther and John Calvin. In my reformation heritage, the emphasis on the sole authority of the Bible generated examples of lonely figures who stood up against the tyranny of the Roman Church in the sixteenth century.

I was not raised as a Catholic. In fact, the Christian tradition in which I grew up is, in many ways, at the opposite end of the theological spectrum from Catholicism. We had no liturgy and no sacraments. For us the Eucharist (or Lord's Supper as we called it) was purely symbolic. We were adamant that the bread and wine remained bread and wine at the Supper. And this was taught consciously in juxtaposition to the Catholic Church's teaching that the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's fair to say, by virtue of this contrast to the Catholic Church's doctrine of the Real Presence, that I was taught to believe a doctrine of Real Absence.

I'm a committed Catholic now, and the doctrine of the Eucharist played a significant role in identifying the Catholic Church as the Church that Jesus Christ established. A central question that drove me some years ago to reconsider the theology that I had been taught as an evangelical Protestant was, "What is orthodoxy?" Different groups of Christians hold mutually contradictory views on many doctrines, including the Eucharist; it's clear that they can't all be right. I was concerned about this disunity and confusion in Bible interpretation. So I began to search for some other means, besides my own all-too-fallible opinions, to determine what was orthodox. In the course of my reading I was exposed to the Catholic Church's claim to be the Church established by Jesus Christ. I had to find out whether this claim was true.

First Stop, the Bible
When I was challenged by the Catho-

lic view of the Eucharist my first stop was the Scriptures. My instincts as an evangelical Protestant were immediately to check everything against the Bible. So I began to seriously study the central passages that pertain to the Eucharist. I was moved most by my study of John 6:35-69.

Exactly one year before the Last Supper, on the eve of the Passover, Jesus delivered these stunning words to His followers:

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him (John 6:53-56).

Some Christians try to blunt the force

of these words. They contend that when Jesus said "eat My flesh" and "drink My blood" he was using a metaphor for faith; eating flesh and drinking blood means putting our faith in Jesus. But I learned that "eating flesh" and "drinking blood" already had an established metaphorical meaning for the ancient Jews. In the Old Testament it meant "to revile" or "to slander" (see Psa 27:2; Zech 11:9), not "to believe." Its symbolic meaning was that of brutal slaughter (Jer 46:10; Ezek

39:17). In ancient Jewish tradition the "eater of flesh" was the Devil himself, "the slanderer and adversary par excellence"¹. So if Jesus' words were to have a figurative meaning He would be saying that they must revile and slander Him in order to have eternal life. For His audience to understand these words as referring to faith is highly problematic.

Nor can the command to "eat" the Lord's flesh be taken metaphorically. St. John does not only use the normal Greek word for "eat," phagomai, but in verses 54, 56 and 57 uses the word trogo, a very vivid word meaning "to munch, gnaw." My research revealed that while phagomai is sometimes used metaphorically, trogo is never anything but literal in the Greek Bible and all other Greek literature.

In John 6:50-58 Jesus says six times that His hearers must eat His flesh and drink His blood. It is clear that His audience understood Him literally; they were scandalized by these words. But the Lord made no move to correct their understanding; rather, He simply reiterated His teaching more strongly. Elsewhere, when the disciples or others wrongly took Him literally,

He explained His figurative meaning to them (see, for instance, John 3:1-15 and Matt 16:5-12). In another Gospel passage, we are told that Jesus always explained the true meaning of His hard teachings at least to His own disciples (Mark 4:34). But in this case, He challenged even the Twelve that they could leave if they could not accept this teaching (verse 67).

When I had finished my study of John 6, I was rather startled at (and nervous about) the strength of the Catholic posi-

tion. And it became clear that the other passages of Scripture that deal with the Eucharist present a united picture. For instance, Jesus draws a parallel between the manna in the wilderness and His flesh that He will give us to eat (John 6:49-50). St. Paul makes the same parallel (1 Cor 10:3ff.). Jesus says, "This is My Body . . . This is My Blood" at the Last Supper (Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-21). St. Paul says that we partake of One Loaf (1 Cor 10:17), not many loaves as is the case in those Christian groups in which they teach that the bread remains bread. And he says that the one who eats unworthily is "guilty of the body and blood of Christ" (1 Cor 11:27).

Second Stop, the Fathers

I was now convinced from Scripture that the Catholic view was correct, but my "fate" was sealed when I began to study the views of the earliest Christians on the Eucharist.

Ironically, most helpful for me was the research of the eminent Protestant scholar J. N. D. Kelly in his *Early Christian Doctrines*². Kelly shows, through citation of the original writings, that Christians believed consistently—from the time of the Apostles onward—in the real presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist and in the Eucharist as the New Covenant sacrifice.

For instance, St. Ignatius of Antioch, a disciple of the Apostle John, writes around A.D. 106 that "the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins and which the Father in His goodness raised" (Epistle to the Smyrneans 6:2). Kelly observes that, "Clearly he intends this realism to be taken strictly, for he makes it the basis of his argument against the Docetists' denial of the reality of Christ's body" (Doctrines, 197). St. Ignatius' argument would not have been persuasive to his opponents unless belief in the Eucharist as truly the Body and Blood of Christ was pervasive (even among heretical groups!) by A.D. 106.

Justin Martyr writes around A.D. 130 that,

We do not receive these as common bread or common drink. But just as our Saviour Jesus Christ was made flesh through the Word of God and had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so also we have been

taught that the food which has been eucharistized by the word of prayer from Him . . . is the flesh and blood of the incarnate Jesus (First Apology, 66:2).

And St. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons, writing around A.D. 160, says:

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 all the world. . . . Then again, how can they [Gnostic heretics] say that the flesh, which is nourished with the body of the Lord and with His blood, goes to corruption and does not partake of life? . . . When, therefore, the mingled cup and the manufactured bread receives the Word of God, and the Eucharist of the blood and the body of Christ is made, from which things the substance of our flesh is increased and supported, how can [the Gnostics] affirm that the flesh is incapable of receiving the gift of God, which is life eternal, which [flesh] is nourished from the body and blood of the Lord, and is a member of Him? (Against Heresies, 4:17:5, 4:18:4-5, 5:2:3)

Note that here St. Irenaeus supports both the Catholic view of the real presence and the Eucharistic sacrifice in the same context. And so it is with all the Church Fathers: Tertullian, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Athanasius, Augustine, Cyril of Jerusalem. I read them and found they all believed in the Real Presence and the Eucharist as the New Covenant sacrifice.

Intellectually I was beaten. It was clear that the Catholic teaching on the Eucharist was both biblically correct and the continuous belief of the Church. It was, in a word, orthodox.

But did I believe it? How does one move over that hump from intellectual affirmation to heart-felt belief? I wrestled with this question for several weeks. Finally one night, after saying some evening prayers, I reviewed my faith as an

Evangelical Christian. "I believe," I said to myself, "in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, the second Person of the Trinity. I believe that He created all things in the universe. And I believe in His bodily resurrection from the dead. What is my problem with His Real Presence in the Eucharist?" And suddenly I realized that I had no problem. I believed.

It was all uphill from there. Only two Christian groups have believed consistently in the true presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist through all of Church history: the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox. Other considerations—notably the papacy and unity—steered me away from Eastern Orthodoxy and to the Catholic Church. And as my wife and I plowed through the myriad of other issues that imposed themselves between us and union with the Catholic Church—contraception, purgatory, confession to a priest, indulgences, Mary—we kept coming back to the touchstone of the Real Presence. There was no place else to get the Body and Blood of our Lord. Where else could we go?

I have continued to pursue my academic studies of the Eucharist and am ever more fully convinced that the Catholic Church's teaching is the teaching passed on by Jesus Christ to His apostles. It is eminently defensible. But it has also become deeply personal, a central facet of my Christian life. Union with our Lord in the Holy Eucharist brings me peace and joy beyond anything I have had in my life before.

And I have experienced His Presence in powerful ways. One evening after meeting with my spiritual director I went to pray in a small chapel where the Blessed Sacrament was reserved. All alone, I prostrated myself before the Lord and praised Him for His goodness and grace. His Presence filled the room; I was bathed in His love and a tremendous calm, joy, and love for my Savior filled my soul. I knelt there crying quietly for many minutes; I literally never wanted to leave that room. It was for me a small foretaste of heaven, the tremendous embrace of infinite Love that waits for us all after this life. That is what the Eucharist brings to us; the precious gift of the Lord's own Presence. And this is according to His promise: "And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt 28:20).

Transubstantiation and the Eucharist

By David Armstrong

Both “transubstantiation” and “Eucharist” are big words foreign to the everyday language of everyday Americans. We may be more familiar with words like “Monosodium glutamate,” “euthanasia” or “inalienable rights,” but yet in the same sense even these terms can make us feel intellectually lethargic.

Suppose most people mentally run by and assume the meaning of these terms much like most people drive and depend on automobiles which they haven't the foggiest idea how they actually run, let alone how to fix them. But when they do break down, or when foods with MSG start giving you headaches, it's time to start understanding these things we've taken for granted.

When it comes to the Eucharist—or the Lord's Supper as it is called by most Christian groups—and what really happens when the minister proclaims the words of consecration, there are many presumptions and misunderstandings floating around, especially when one Christian group tries to explain what another group believes. Too often, people who don't sit well with big words pass off their own opinions as fact to unsuspecting disciples. This has been particularly true in an increasing way over the last 500 years. What Catholics believe by these two terms—transubstantiation and Eucharist—is misunderstood by not only many outside the Catholic Church but also by many within it.

On October 11, 1551, the Council of Trent, in its Decree Concerning the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist (the Greek word for “thanksgiving”), defined the following propositions—which had always been the prevailing beliefs throughout Church history—as absolutely binding on all Catholics:

In the august sacrament of the holy Eucharist, after the consecra-

tion of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man, is truly, really, and substantially contained under the species of those sensible things. (1)

Immediately after the consecration the Veritable Body of our Lord and His veritable Blood, together with His soul and divinity, are under the species of bread and wine . . . as much is contained under either species as under both. (2)

By the consecration of the bread and of the wine a conversion is made of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the Body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of His Blood; which conversion is by the holy Catholic Church suitably and properly

called transubstantiation. (3)

When the Catholics Church teaches that Christ is substantially and physically present in the Eucharist, this doesn't negate other types of Christ's spiritual presence. Rather, this is referred to as “real” because it is a presence in the fullest possible sense of the word. (4) Therefore, the Catholic understanding of the Real Presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist must by its very nature

be distinguished from God's omnipresence, or a merely symbolic, “spiritual” presence. The great German Catholic theologian Karl Adam lucidly described the Eucharist:

So completely does Jesus disclose Himself to His disciples . . . that He gives Himself to them and enters into them as a personal source of grace. Jesus shares with His disciples His most intimate possession, the most precious thing that He Has, His own self . . . So greatly does Jesus love His Community, that He permeates it . . . with His real Self, God and Man. He enters into a real union of flesh and blood with it, and binds it to His being even as the branch is bound to the vine. (5)

The Catholic Church teaches that there are many purposes of the Eucharist, and numerous spiritual benefits which accrue from partaking in Communion at Mass—provided this is undertaken in a “worthy manner” and without conscious mortal sin. (6) It is the “source and summit of the Christian life,” (7) the sign of Christian unity, (8) and of the Body of Christ, the Church, (9) an act of Thanksgiving to God, (10) a memorial and sacrifice, (11) the central focus of the liturgy and Mass, (12) the empowering of the faithful for ministry, (13) a symbol of God's faithfulness and miraculous provision, (14) an anticipation of the wedding feast of the Lamb in heaven, (15) a remembrance of the Last Supper, (16) and of Christ's

Passion, Resurrection, and return, (17) a sign of salvation, the “bread of heaven,” (18) adoration and worship of God, (19) union with Christ, (20) the means of grace, cleansing from sin, and spiritual renewal, (21) and an offering for the dead. (22)

The daunting word “transubstantiation” is easily understood when broken down: “trans” means “change.” Therefore, the term is defined literally as the process of change of substance. The Catholic Church, in seeking to understand the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist, a doctrine delivered directly by our Lord and St. Paul, gradually developed an explanation as to the exact nature of this miraculous and mysterious transformation.

Contrary to the common misconception, transubstantiation is not dependent upon Aristotelian philosophy, since some notion of the concept goes back to the earliest days of the Church when Aristotle’s philosophy was not known. The eastern Fathers, before the sixth century, used the Greek expression *metaousiosis*, or “change of being,” which is essentially the same idea. The Church did, however, draw upon prevalent philosophical categories, such as substance and accidents.

of change: accidental and substantial. Accidental change occurs when non-essential outward properties are transformed in some fashion. Thus, water can take on the properties of solidity (ice) and gas (steam), all the while remaining chemically the same. A substantial change, on the other hand, produces something else altogether. An example of this is the metabolism of food, which becomes part of our bodies as a result of chemical and biological processes initiated by digestion. In our everyday experience, a change of substance is always accompanied by a corresponding transition of accidents, or properties.

In the Eucharist—a supernatural transformation—a substantial change occurs without accidental alteration. Thus, the properties of bread and wine continue after consecration, but their essence and substance cease to exist, replaced by the substance of the true and actual Body and Blood of Christ. It is this disjunction from the natural laws of physics which causes many to stumble (see John 6:60-69). See chart below.

Indeed, transubstantiation is difficult for the natural mind (especially with its

to reason; suprarational, but not irrational, much like Christian theology in general.

If one accepts the fact that God became Man, then it cannot consistently be deemed impossible (as many casually assume) for Him to become truly and really present under the appearances of bread and wine. Jesus, after His Resurrection, could apparently walk through walls while remaining in His physical (glorified) body (John 20:26-27). How, then, can transubstantiation reasonably be regarded as intrinsically implausible by supernaturalist Christians?

Likewise, much of the objection to this doctrine seems to arise out of a pitting of matter against spirit, or, more specifically, an a priori hostility to the idea that grace can be conveyed through matter. This is exceedingly curious, since precisely this notion is fundamental to the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus. If God did not take on matter and human flesh, no one would have been saved. Such a prejudice is neither logical (given belief in the miraculous and Christian precepts) nor scriptural, as we shall see.

John Henry Cardinal Newman, whom very few would accuse of being unreason-

In all ages, Christians have sought to defend Christianity by means of philosophy and human learning (wherever the individual intellectual categories utilized were consistent with Christian faith). St. Paul, for instance, did this in his sermon on Mars Hill in Athens, where he made reference to pagan poets and philosophers (Acts 17:22-31). St. Augustine incorporated elements of Platonic thought into his theology, and St. Thomas Aquinas synthesized Aristotle and Christianity into a unified, consistent system of Christian thought (Scholasticism or Thomism).

Transubstantiation is predicated upon the distinction between two sorts

modern excessively skeptical bent) to grasp and clearly requires a great deal of faith. Yet many aspects of Christianity which conservative, evangelical, orthodox Christians have no difficulty believing transcend reason and must ultimately be accepted on faith, such as: the Incarnation (in which a helpless infant in Bethlehem is God!), the Resurrection, the omniscience of God, the paradox of grace versus free will, eternity, the Union of the Human and Divine Natures in Christ (the Hypostatic Union), the Fall of Man and original sin, and the Virgin Birth, among many other beliefs. Transubstantiation may be considered beyond reason, yet it is not opposed

able or credulous, had this to say about the “difficulties” of transubstantiation:

People say that the doctrine of Transubstantiation is difficult to believe . . . It is difficult, impossible to imagine, I grant - but how is it difficult to believe? . . . For myself, I cannot indeed prove it, I cannot tell how it is; but I say, “Why should it not be? What’s to hinder it? What do I know of substance or matter? Just as much as the greatest philosophers, and that is nothing at

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But What Do We Mean By “The Real Presence!”

By Dwight Longenecker

“But I believe in the Real Presence!” said Doug, my Bible Christian friend, “Why do you Catholics refuse to admit me to communion?” “Whoa!” I said, “I’m delighted to hear that you believe in the Real Presence, but what do you actually mean by this phrase?” “Well, I prefer to remain vague about the details,” said Doug. “I would only want to go as far as the Scriptures do, and St. Paul says in I Corinthians that the communion is ‘the sharing in the body of Christ.’ I don’t think you have to go further than that.”

Doug was happy to use the phrase to describe what he believed about the Lord’s Supper at his independent Bible Church. Most Anglo-Catholics use the phrase and even many Evangelical Anglicans seem fairly happy to use ‘real presence’ to describe their view of the Eucharist. Doug’s statement of belief, however, prompted in me more memories. I had come across Methodists, Reformed ministers and other free evangelicals using the phrase as well. When I became a Catholic I found lots of Catholics also using the phrase ‘real presence’ to refer to their Eucharistic beliefs.

What did everyone mean by this phrase? Could it be that God was using ‘real presence’ as a kind of ecumenical bridge? Was it becoming a universally accepted phrase which was bringing non-Catholics into the fold of the Catholic Church? I didn’t want to rule out this creative possibility, but I had my suspicions that ‘real presence’ was in fact, an elastic phrase which could mean almost anything, and was therefore the enemy of true ecumenism.

For instance, a Bible Christian might mean by ‘real presence’, “I feel closer to Jesus at the Lord’s Supper.” At the same time a Methodist might mean, “When we gather together the presence of the Lord is real among us”—referring simply to our Lord’s promise that “Where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midst.” A Lutheran might mean Christ’s risen presence is ‘with’ or ‘beside’ the bread and wine. An Anglican evangelical might say, “There

is a real sense in which Christ is present as the church gathers—for the Church too is the Body of Christ.” An Anglo-Catholic would say there is a real, objective abiding spiritual presence of Christ when the Eucharist is celebrated.

One of the reasons the phrase ‘real presence’ has become a flexible friend is because it has been lifted from its full context. Historically, Catholic theologians spoke of “the Real Presence of Christ’s body and blood in the sacrament of the altar.” More recently this has been conveniently shortened to “the Real Presence” with, at least in Catholic circles (as in the articles in this Journal), the full meaning of Transubstantiation being presumed. Some confusion has arisen as a result, since for many people ‘real presence’ has come to mean simply ‘the idea of the risen Lord’ or ‘the Spirit of Christ’ or even just the

‘fellowship of the church.’ In fact, the phrase ‘the real presence’ could mean just about anything to anybody. Undoubtedly there are modern expressions of faith that speak of the ‘real presence of the Christ within.’

Another reason why this phrase is so vague is because ‘real presence’ in most usage focuses on the abstract noun ‘presence’ and not on the body and blood of Christ. This implies that the ‘presence’ is

somehow separate from the Sacrament.

The widespread use of this phrase is a sign that many non-Catholics are coming around to a higher view of the Sacrament. For Catholics this is—on the one hand—a cause for rejoicing. On the other hand, it is a cause for concern because many non-Catholics—upon hearing Catholics use the phrase—quite innocently assume that Catholics believe the same thing they do. Thus, a Bible Baptist might use the phrase ‘real presence’ meaning he ‘feels closer to Jesus at communion,’ and hearing Catholics use the phrase, he might conclude that Catholics believe the same thing. They do, in fact, believe what he believes—Catholics DO feel closer to Jesus at Communion—but they also believe a whole lot more.

As a result—as with my friend Doug—the Bible Baptist cannot understand why he is not welcome to receive communion at a Catholic Mass. While the widespread use of the phrase ‘real presence’ seems encouraging, in reality it’s can be misleading. This ambiguous phraseology can encourage false ecumenism when the phrase ‘real presence’ becomes an artificial lowest common denominator.

I recently did a bit of research about the origins of the phrase ‘real presence’. I wanted to find out when the phrase was first used and why. I figured that finding out the background of the phrase might explain why and how it was being used today.

The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church defined ‘real presence’ as

an especially Anglican phrase which “emphasized the real presence of the body and blood of Christ at the Eucharist as contrasted with others that maintain that the Body and Blood are present only figuratively or symbolically.” The first edition of the dictionary quoted the sixteenth century English reformer Latimer to show his use of the phrase, “this same presence may be called most fitly a real presence, that is, a presence not feigned, but a true and faithful presence.”

That sounded pretty Catholic, but then it became a bit more complicated because the second edition of the same dictionary points out that the English Reformers only used the phrase with other expressions which made it a phrase for receptionism—the belief that the bread and wine only become the body and blood of Christ to those who receive it faithfully. Latimer is quoted in the second edition more fully, “that same presence may be called a real presence because to the faithful believer there is a real or spiritual body of Christ.”

But because Jesus said about the bread, ‘This is my body,’ Catholics believe in a corporeal, substantial presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The whole Christ is present, body, blood, soul and divinity. It is not just a spiritual presence. Furthermore Catholics believe in an objective presence—not one which is only available to those who receive in faith. This, however, is not what the Anglican reformers meant when they used the phrase ‘real presence.’

Latimer’s colleague Ridley makes the Anglican position about the real presence most clear. Writing in the Oxford Disputations of 1554 he says, “The true Church doth acknowledge a presence of Christ’s body in the Lord’s Supper to be communicated to the godly by grace...spiritually and by a sacramental signification, but not as a corporeal presence of the body of his flesh.”

This seemed to be the root of the phrase. It was a construction of the English Reformation. Latimer and Ridley did their best to come up with a phrase for the Eucharist which would please their Catholic persecutors and yet not compromise their Protestant beliefs. But maybe there was more to it. What if the phrase ‘real presence’ actually originated before the sixteenth century?

In *The History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist* an Oxford scholar called

Darwell Stone traces the Church’s beliefs about the Eucharist from New Testament times through the late nineteenth century. He shows that debates over the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament really blew up with the eleventh century French theologian Berengar of Tours. Berengar denied that there could be a material change at the consecration, and the controversy which raged for the next two hundred years ended in the definition of transubstantiation at the Fourth

Lateran Council in 1215. It is interesting that during this controversy the orthodox phraseology is ‘real body and real blood of Christ.’ The phrase ‘real presence’ doesn’t occur.

I found the first reference to the phrase ‘real presence’ in the writings of the fourteenth century theologian John of Paris. He wrote, “I intend to defend the real and actual presence of the body of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar, and that it is not there only as by way of a sign...” But John of Paris was deprived of his professorship because his specific views on the Sacrament were contrary to that defined by the Fourth Lateran Council and were therefore considered unorthodox. It was in the same century that the pre-cursor of Latimer and Ridley—John Wycliffe—also used the phrase ‘real presence’. Like Ridley and Latimer he used ‘real presence’ as an alternative to transubstantiation. In other words, ‘real presence’ was a compromise phrase used to suggest a high view of the sacrament while allowing the theologian to tiptoe around the uncomfortable doctrine of transubstantiation.

Ridley’s and Latimer’s use of the phrase ‘real presence’ stemmed from this search for a compromise phrase. They denied transubstantiation and held a merely symbolic and spiritual view of the Sacrament. In response to Catholic pressure and to avoid extreme Zwingli-ism they sought a way to express their beliefs in as high a way as possible. Thus Ridley and Latimer said they believed in the real presence; but this was simply their phrase for a kind of

high receptionism.

The phrase ‘real presence’ then has—from the start—been used as an alternative to the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. Not only did Latimer and Ridley use ‘real presence’ to deny transubstantiation, but so did the seventeenth century ‘high church’ Anglican divine Jeremy Taylor who used the phrase ‘real presence’ as a contrast to transubstantiation in his treatise, *The Real and Spiritual Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament* proved

against the Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

The second volume of Darwell Stone shows how the great Victorian Anglican, E.B. Pusey, re-coined the phrase ‘real presence’ in the mid-nineteenth century and promoted it most strongly. It is thanks to Pusey that the phrase entered common usage within the Oxford movement and eventually made its way through the Anglican and other non-Catholic churches to be used so widely today.

But what did Pusey mean by ‘the real presence’? He was at pains to point out that he did not hold to any corporeal presence of Christ in the Eucharist. “In the communion there is a true, real actual though spiritual communication of the body and blood of Christ to the believer through the holy elements.” In another place Pusey denies transubstantiation explicitly and argues for a “mystical, sacramental and spiritual presence of the body of our Lord.” And most explicitly, in 1857 Pusey says, “there is no physical union of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine.”

Pusey in the Oxford of the mid-1850s was not at risk of being burned at the stake like Ridley and Latimer. But in that same university city he felt a similar pressure of trying to reconcile English reformation doctrines with the beliefs of the Catholic Church. Pusey was under pressure because he sincerely wanted the Anglican Church to be as Catholic as possible, but as an Anglican clergyman he had to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles

of Religion, and Article 28 specifically repudiates transubstantiation. So Pusey could not hold to transubstantiation even if he wanted to.

So—like Ridley and Latimer before him—he used the phrase ‘real presence’ to sound as close to Catholicism as possible while, in fact, rejecting Catholic doctrine. Pusey believed that the ‘real presence’ of Christ in the sacrament was only a spiritual and sacramental presence. In this way the Victorian Anglo-Catholic actually agreed with the reformer Ridley who wrote, “The blood of Christ is in the chalice...but by

tant. Catholics should realize that when used alone, the phrase “Real Presence” is not uniquely a Catholic term. Its history is mostly Anglican, and as such it was used as a way to adroitly sidestep the doctrine of transubstantiation. Therefore, we must be careful that whenever we chose to use this phrase our hearers understand clearly the full extent of what we are inferring by it.

When our separated brethren say they believe in the ‘real presence’, Catholics should be glad that they have a fairly high view of the Eucharist, yet realize that

that the Eucharistic presence of the body and blood of Christ is different from these other forms of Christ’s presence. It is a unique presence. So he affirms, “This presence is called ‘real’ by which it is not intended to exclude all other types of presence as if they could not be ‘real’ too, but because it is presence in the fullest sense. That is to say, it is a substantial presence by which Christ the God-Man is wholly and entirely present. It would therefore be wrong to explain this presence by taking resource to the ‘spiritual’ nature, as it is called, of the glorified Body of Christ which is present everywhere, or by reducing it to a kind of symbolism as if this most august sacrament consisted of nothing else than an efficacious sign of the spiritual presence of Christ and of his intimate union with the Faithful members of his mystical body.”

Catholics must continue to use clear language about the Sacrament. We can affirm the ‘real’ presence of Christ which non-Catholics affirm in the fellowship of the church, in the preaching of the gospel and in the celebration of the Eucharist, but we must also affirm that the fullest sense of the ‘real presence’ is that which we worship in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar.

Although Paul VI used the phrase ‘real presence’ in *Mysterium Fidei* the whole thrust of the encyclical is to support and recommend the continued use of the phrase ‘transubstantiation’ as the Catholic phraseology. *Mysterium Fidei* also encourages those devotions which are implied by the Catholic belief in the ‘real body and real blood of Christ.’ That such devotions are encouraged as a support to transubstantiation is nothing new. Just fifty years after the doctrine of transubstantiation was promulgated by the Fourth Lateran Council, Pope Urban IV decreed the Feast of Corpus Christi. The beliefs of the Church are always reflected in her devotions.

The Catholic Church encourages the devotions which accompany belief in Christ’s corporeal presence in the sacrament of the altar. It is the practice of benediction, prayer before the sacrament and veneration of the blessed sacrament which makes clear exactly what Catholics do mean by the phrase ‘real presence’ and that it is not the same thing that other Christians mean when they use the same

grace and in a sacrament...This presence of Christ is wholly spiritual.”

Why does it matter whether or not we believe that the presence is only spiritual? It matters because the whole work of Christ is more than spiritual. It is physical. Ever since St. Irenaeus in the second century, the Catholic Church has been insistent that the Incarnation really is a supernatural union of the spiritual and the physical. As Darwell Stone writes, Irenaeus was countering Gnosticism, “which interposed an insuperable barrier between spiritual beings and material things, between the true God of the universe and the universe of matter.” It is one of the great heresies of our age that Christians attempt to ‘spirit away’ the physical-ness of the Gospel. So the Resurrection, the miracles and the Incarnation itself become mere ‘spiritual events.’

Likewise, the Church has always insisted—despite the difficulties—that the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament is not simply spiritual and subjective. It is objective and corporeal. In some way it is physical. At the Fourth Lateran Council the Church explained this belief with the phrase “transubstantiation.” As the Oxford Dominican, Fr. Herbert McCabe has said, “Transubstantiation is not a complete explanation of the mystery, but it is the best description of what we believe happens at the consecration.”

What then, should Christians do with this confusing phrase ‘real presence’? First of all clarity and honesty are most impor-

tant. transubstantiation is almost never meant. Like my buddy Doug, he may ‘prefer to remain a little bit vague’. And if pressed, the person will admit that by the phrase ‘real presence’ he does not mean he believes the sacrament is the body, blood, soul and divinity of our Lord. Asking the person to clarify the meaning of the phrase as they understand it could be a positive and constructive way to move a theological discussion forward.

In his 1965 encyclical *Mysterium Fidei*, Pope Paul VI encourages the use of clear and unambiguous language about the Eucharist. He says, “Having safeguarded the integrity of the faith it is necessary to safeguard also its proper mode of expression, lest by careless use of words we occasion the rise of false opinions regarding faith in the most sublime of mysteries.”

In the same encyclical Pope Paul actually uses the phrase ‘Real Presence’ but he does so to outline the ways in which Christ is present in his church. Interestingly, Paul VI affirms all the ways non-Catholics might define ‘the real presence.’ He says Christ is really present in the Church when she prays. He is also present when she performs acts of mercy. Christ is present in the Church as she struggles to perfection. He is really present when the Church governs the people of God. Christ is present in the preaching of the gospel and he is present as the Church faithfully celebrates the Eucharist.

However Paul VI also makes it clear

The Eucharist in the Economy of Salvation

from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994

The Signs of Bread and Wine

1333 At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that, by the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, become Christ's Body and Blood. Faithful to the Lord's command the Church continues to do, in his memory and until his glorious return, what he did on the eve of his Passion: "He took bread...." "He took the cup filled with wine...." The signs of bread and wine become, in a way surpassing understanding, the Body and Blood of Christ; they continue also to signify the goodness of creation. Thus in the Offertory we give thanks to the Creator for bread and wine, fruit of the "work of human hands," but above all as "fruit of the earth" and "of the vine" - gifts of the Creator. The Church sees in the gesture of the king-priest Melchizedek, who "brought out bread and wine," a prefiguring of her own offering.

1334 In the Old Covenant bread and wine were offered in sacrifice among the first fruits of the earth as a sign of grateful acknowledgment to the Creator. But they also received a new significance in the context of the Exodus: the unleavened bread that Israel eats every year at Passover commemorates the haste of the departure that liberated them from Egypt; the remembrance of the manna in the desert will always recall to Israel that it lives by the bread of the Word of God; their daily bread is the fruit of the promised land, the pledge of God's faithfulness to his promises. The "cup of blessing" at the end of the Jewish Passover meal adds to the festive joy of wine an eschatological dimension: the messianic expectation of the rebuilding of Jerusalem. When Jesus instituted the Eucharist, he gave a new and definitive meaning to the blessing of the bread and the cup.

1335 The miracles of the multiplication of the loaves, when the Lord says the blessing, breaks and distributes the loaves through his disciples to feed the multitude, prefigure the superabundance of this unique bread of his Eucharist. The sign of water turned into wine at Cana already announces the Hour of Jesus' glorification. It makes manifest the fulfillment of the wedding feast in the Father's kingdom, where the faithful will drink the new wine that has become the Blood of Christ.

1336 The first announcement of the Eucharist divided the disciples, just as the announcement of the Passion scandalized them: "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" The Eucharist and the Cross are stumbling blocks. It is the same mystery and it never ceases to be an occasion of division. "Will you also go away?": the Lord's question echoes through the ages, as a loving invitation to discover that only he has "the words of eternal life" and that to receive in faith the gift of his Eucharist is to receive the Lord himself.

The institution of the Eucharist

1337 The Lord, having loved those who were his own, loved them to the end. Knowing that the hour had come to leave this world and return to the Father, in the course of a meal he washed their feet and gave them the commandment of love. In order to leave them a pledge of this love, in order never to depart from his own and to make them sharers in his Passover, he instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and Resurrection, and commanded his apostles to celebrate it until his return; "thereby he constituted them priests of the New Testament."

1338 The three synoptic Gospels and St. Paul have handed on to us the account of the institution of the Eucharist; St. John, for his part, reports the words of Jesus in the synagogue of Capernaum that prepare for the institution of the Eucharist: Christ calls himself the bread of life, come down from heaven.

1339 Jesus chose the time of Passover to fulfill what he had announced at Capernaum: giving his disciples his Body and his Blood: Then came the day of Unleavened Bread, on which the passover lamb had to be sacrificed. So Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the passover meal for us, that we may eat it...." They went ... and prepared the passover. And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer; for I tell you I shall not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.".... And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body which is given

for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my blood."

1340 By celebrating the Last Supper with his apostles in the course of the Passover meal, Jesus gave the Jewish Passover its definitive meaning. Jesus' passing over to his father by his death and Resurrection, the new Passover, is anticipated in the Supper and celebrated in the Eucharist, which fulfills the Jewish Passover and anticipates the final Passover of the Church in the glory of the kingdom.

"Do this in memory of me"

1341 The command of Jesus to repeat his actions and words "until he comes" does not only ask us to remember Jesus and what he did. It is directed at the liturgical celebration, by the apostles and their successors, of the memorial of Christ, of his life, of his death, of his Resurrection, and of his intercession in the presence of the Father.

1342 From the beginning the Church has been faithful to the Lord's command. Of the Church of Jerusalem it is written: They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.... Day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts.

1343 It was above all on "the first day of the week," Sunday, the day of Jesus' resurrection, that the Christians met "to break bread." From that time on down to our own day the celebration of the Eucharist has been continued so that today we encounter it everywhere in the Church with the same fundamental structure. It remains the center of the Church's life.

1344 Thus from celebration to celebration, as they proclaim the Paschal mystery of Jesus "until he comes," the pilgrim People of God advances, "following the narrow way of the cross," toward the heavenly banquet, when all the elect will be seated at the table of the kingdom.



St. Augustine's Belief in the Real Presence

By David Armstrong

One of the great theological champions quoted by both Protestants and Catholics to bolster their perspective positions on the meaning of many theological issues is St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. He is best known for two of his writings, his "Confessions" and "The City of God," and also for his devastating defense against the Pelagian heresy.

Because of this universal popularity, it is important to hear his personal testimony about the Real Presence* of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ in the Eucharistic bread and wine.

This great Church Father made many statements which have been traditionally seized upon by Protestant theologians as evidence of his adoption of either a purely symbolic or Calvinistic notion of the Lord's Supper. Ludwig Ott, in his book *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, commented on this use:

The Eucharistic doctrine expounded by St. Augustine is interpreted in a purely spiritual way by most Protestant writers on the history of dogmas. Despite his insistence on the symbolical explanation he does not exclude the Real Presence. In association with the words of institution he concurs with the older Church tradition in expressing belief in the Real Presence . . .

When in the Fathers' writings, esp. those of St. Augustine, side by side with the clear attestations of the Real Presence, many obscure symbolically-sounding utterances are found also, the following points must be noted for the proper understanding of such passages: (1) The Early Fathers were bound by the discipline of the secret, which referred above all to the Eucharist (cf. Origen, *In Lev. hom.* 9, 10); (2) The absence of any heretical

counter-proposition often resulted in a certain carelessness of expression, to which must be added the lack of a developed terminology to distinguish the sacramental mode of existence of Christ's body from its natural mode of existence once on earth; (3) The Fathers were concerned to resist a grossly sensual conception of the Eucharistic Banquet and to stress the necessity of the spiritual reception in Faith and in Charity (in contradistinction to the external, merely sacramental reception); passages often refer to the symbolical character of the Eucharist as 'the sign of unity' (St. Augustine); this in no wise excludes the Real Presence. pp.377-8:

During my own journey to the Catholic Church, I was voraciously studying people like Dollinger, Salmon and Kung, in order to refute Catholic claims to infallibility. I remember my own use of this approach. I claimed that St. Augustine adopted a symbolic view of the Eucharist. I based this on his oft-stated notion of the sacrament as symbol or sign. But I failed to realize, however, that I was arbitrarily creating a false, logically unnecessary dichotomy between the sign and the reality of the Eucharist, for St. Augustine. When all of his remarks on the subject are taken into account, it is very difficult to argue that he didn't accept the Catholic understanding of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. For Augustine, the Eucharist, objectively speaking, is both sign and reality. There simply is no contradiction.

A cursory glance at Scripture confirms this general principle. For instance, Jesus refers to the sign of Jonah, comparing the prophet Jonah's three days and nights in

the belly of the fish to His own burial in the earth (Mt 12:38-40). In this case, both events, although described as signs, were quite real indeed. Jesus also uses the terminology of sign in connection with His Second Coming (Mt 24:30-31), which is believed by all Christians to be a literal event, and not symbolic only.

Given this introduction, consider now the following statements made by St. Augustine which strongly support the opinion that He held to the true presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist:

The bread which you see on the altar is, sanctified by the word of God, the body of Christ; that chalice, or rather what is contained in the chalice, is, sanctified by the word of God, the blood of Christ. {*Sermo* 227; on p.377}

Christ bore Himself in His hands, when He offered His body saying: "this is my body." {*Enarr. in Ps.* 33 *Sermo* 1, 10; on p.377}

Nobody eats this flesh without previously adoring it. {*Enarr. in Ps.* 98, 9; on p.387}

[Referring to the sacrifice of Melchizedek (Gen 14:18 ff.)] The sacrifice appeared for the first time there which is now offered to God by Christians throughout the whole world. {*City of God*, 16, 22; on p.403}

Christ is both the priest, offering Himself, and Himself the Victim. He willed that the sacramental sign of this should be the daily sacrifice of the Church. {*Ibid*, 10,

*Throughout this article the use of the phrase "Real Presence" assumes the Catholic understanding of the true presence of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist as defined by the term, Transubstantiation.

20; on p.99}

He took flesh from the flesh of Mary . . . and gave us the same flesh to be eaten unto salvation . . . we do sin by not adoring. {Explanations of the Psalms, 98, 9; on p.20}

Not all bread, but only that which receives the blessing of Christ, becomes Christ's body. {Ibid., 234, 2; on p.31}

What you see is the bread and the chalice . . . But what your faith obliges you to accept is that the bread is the Body of Christ and the chalice the Blood of Christ. {Ibid., 272; on p.32}

Not only is no one forbidden to take as food the Blood of this Sacrifice, rather, all who wish to possess life are exhorted to drink thereof. {Questions of the Hepateuch, 3, 57; on p.134}

The Sacrifice of our times is the Body and Blood of the Priest Himself . . . Recognize then in the Bread what hung upon the tree; in the chalice what flowed from His side. {Sermo iii. 1-2; on p.62}

The Blood they had previously shed they afterwards drank. {Mai 26, 2; 86, 3; on p.64}

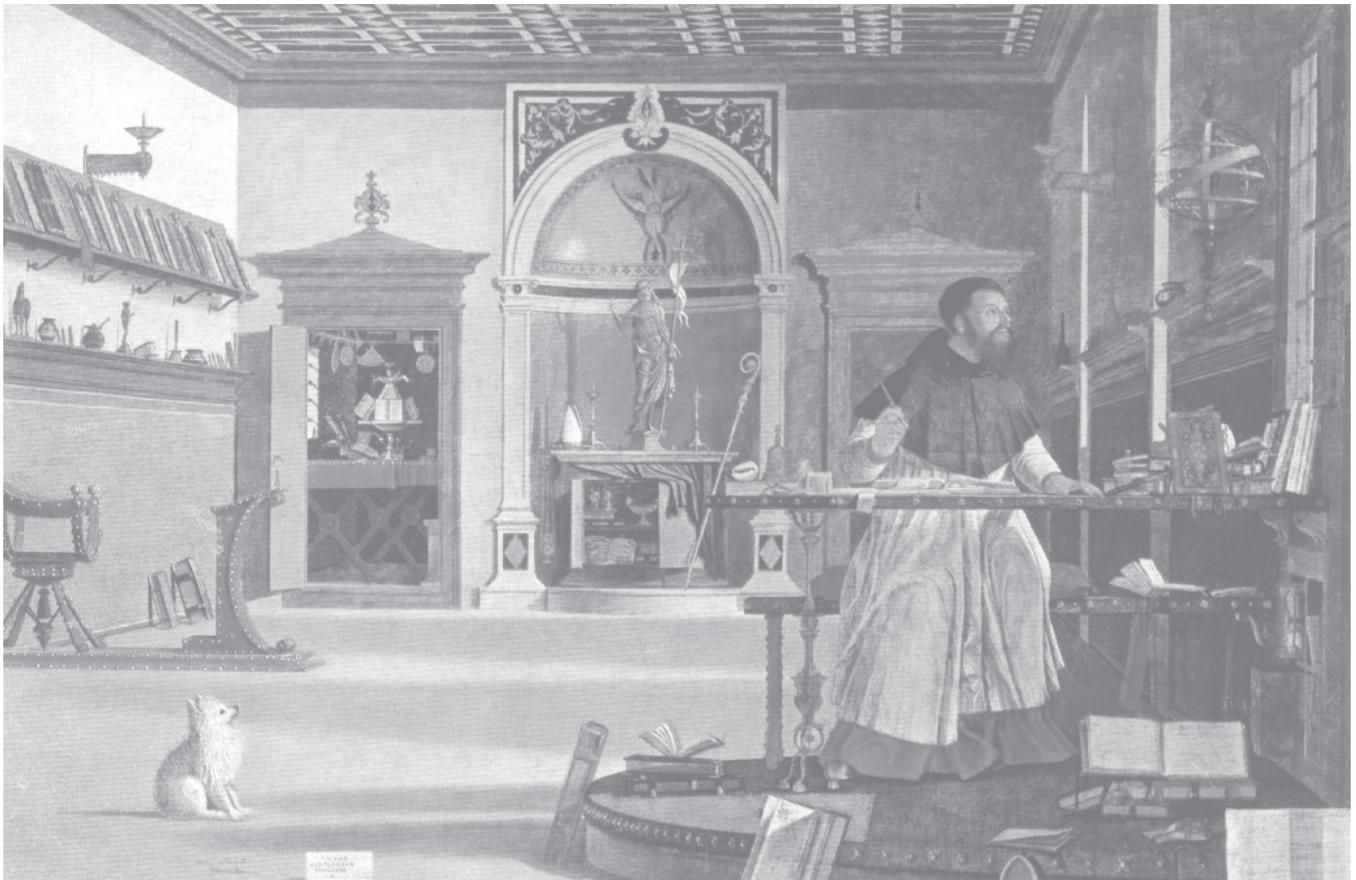
Eat Christ, then; though eaten He yet lives, for when slain He rose from the dead. Nor do we divide Him into parts when we eat Him: though indeed this is done in the Sacrament, as the faithful well know when they eat the Flesh of Christ, for each receives his part, hence are those parts called graces. Yet though thus eaten in parts He remains whole and entire; eaten in parts in the Sacrament, He remains whole and entire in Heaven. {Mai 129, 1; cf. Sermon 131; on p.65}

Out of hatred of Christ the crowd there shed Cyprian's blood, but today a reverential multitude gathers to drink the Blood of Christ . . . this altar . . . whereon a Sacrifice is offered to God . . . {Sermo 310, 2; cf. City of God, 8, 27, 1; on p.65}

He took into His hands what the faithful understand; He in some sort bore Himself when He said: This is My Body. {Enarr. 1, 10 on Ps. 33; on p.65}

The very first heresy was formulated when men said: "this saying is hard and who can bear it [Jn 6:60]?" {Enarr. 1, 23 on Ps. 54; on p.66}

Thou art the Priest, Thou the Victim, Thou the Offerer, Thou the Offering. {Enarr. 1, 6 on Ps. 44; on p.66}



Take, then, and eat the Body of Christ . . . You have read that, or at least heard it read, in the Gospels, but you were unaware that the Son of God was that Eucharist. {Denis, 3, 3; on p.66}

The entire Church observes the tradition delivered to us by the Fathers, namely, that for those who have died in the fellowship of the Body and Blood of Christ, prayer should be offered when they

are commemorated at the actual Sacrifice in its proper place, and that we should call to mind that for them, too, that Sacrifice is offered. {Sermo, 172, 2; 173, 1; De Cura pro mortuis, 6; De Anima et ejus Origine, 2, 21; on p.69}

We do pray for the other dead of whom commemoration is made. Nor are the souls of the faithful departed cut off from the Church . . . Were it so, we should not make commemoration of them at the altar of God when we receive the Body of Christ. {Sermo 159,1; cf. 284, 5; 285, 5; 297, 3; City of God, 20, 9, 2; cf. 21,24; 22, 8; on p.69}

It was the will of the Holy Spirit that out of reverence for such a Sacrament the Body of the Lord should enter the mouth of a Christian previous to any other food. {Ep. 54, 8; on p.71}

I find it difficult to conceive of anyone denying that St. Augustine believed that Christ is truly present in the Eucharistic Bread and Wine, or in the Sacrifice of the Mass for that matter, after perusing all of this compelling evidence. His other symbolic utterances are easily able to be synthesized with his “realistic” language, because realism can co-exist with symbol while retaining its realism, as I illustrated from the undeniable biblical examples of

the “sign of Jonah” and the “sign of the coming of the Son of man.” The symbolic language can also (and indeed often does in Augustine) refer to other, more communal aspects of the Eucharist which complement (but are not contrary to) the “Real Presence” aspect of it.

The simple fact of the matter is that Augustine spoke in both ways. But we can harmonize them as complementary, not contradictory, because Catholics, like Augustine himself, tend to think in terms of “both/and” rather than the dichotomous

“either/or” prevalent in Protestantism.

The communal (“symbolic” if you will) aspects of the Sacrifice of the Mass, to which Augustine referred, are totally consonant with Catholic theology, and are discussed, e.g., in the following passages from the new Catechism of the Catholic Church (Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 1994):

The Eucharist, the sacrament of our salvation accomplished by Christ on the cross, is also a sacrifice of praise in thanksgiving for the work of creation. In the Eucharistic sacrifice the whole of creation loved by God is presented to the Father through the death and the resurrection of Christ. Through Christ the Church can offer the sacrifice of praise in thanksgiving for all that God has made good, beautiful, and just in creation and in humanity. (#1359, pp.342-3)

The Eucharist is a sacrifice of thanksgiving to the Father, a blessing by which the Church expresses her gratitude to God for all his benefits, for all that he has accomplished through creation, redemption, and sanctification. Eucharist means first of all ‘thanksgiving.’ (#1360, p.343)

The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of praise by which the Church sings the glory of God in the name of all

creation. This sacrifice of praise is possible only through Christ: he unites the faithful to his person, to his praise, and to his intercession, so that the sacrifice of praise to the Father is offered through Christ and with him, to be accepted in him. {emphasis in original} (#1361, p.343)

St. Augustine admirably summed up this doctrine that moves us to an ever more complete participation in our Redeemer’s sacrifice which we celebrate in the Eucharist:

This wholly redeemed city, the assembly and society of the saints, is offered to God as a universal sacrifice by the high priest who in the form of a slave went so far as to offer himself for us in his Passion, to make us the Body of so great a head . . . Such is the sacrifice of Christians: “we who are many are one Body in Christ.” The Church continues to reproduce this sacrifice in the sacrament of the altar so well-known to believers wherein it is evident to them that in what she offers she herself is offered. {City of God, 10,6: PL 41, 283; cf. Rom 12:5} (#1372, p.346)

The Eucharist contains and expresses all forms of prayer: it is ‘the pure offering’ of the whole Body of Christ to the glory of God’s name [Note: cf. Mal 1:11] and, according to the traditions of East and West, it is the ‘sacrifice of praise.’ {emphasis in original} (#2643, p.636)

Obviously, then, since this aspect of the Eucharist is presented openly and repeatedly in the Catechism (even quoting St. Augustine), it can not be seen to be at all contradictory to the Catholic view of the “Real Presence” essence of the Eucharist.

Therefore, I encourage you to ponder carefully the words of this faithful witness—St. Augustine—to whom both Protestants and Catholics look as a Father in the Faith.



References:

The Holy Eucharist

By James Cardinal Gibbons

The following chapter is reprinted from Cardinal Gibbons famous book, "the Faith of Our Fathers" (TAN Books, Rockford, IL 61105) which sold over 1.4 million copies in the first forty years after its first publication in 1876, and has been reprinted many times. This book delves into the historical background of virtually everything people find hard to understand about the Catholic faith, and it has been a great help to many converts. Much of what follows has already been said by other authors in this edition of the CHJournal, but I hope you'll agree that in the clear manner in which Cardinal Gibbons say it, it is well worth hearing again.

Among the various dogmas of the Catholic Church there is none which rests on stronger Scriptural authority than the doctrine of the Real Presence of Jesus Christ on the Holy Eucharist.* So copious, indeed, and so clear are the passages of the new Testament which treat of this subject that I am at a loss to determine which to select, and find it difficult to compress them all within the compass of this short chapter.

The Evangelists do not always dwell upon the same mysteries of religion. Their practice is rather to supplement each other, so that one of them will mention what the others have omitted or have touched in a cursory way. But in regard to the Blessed Eucharist the sacred writers exhibit a marked deviation from this rule. We find that the four Evangelists, together with St. Paul, have written so explicitly and abundantly on this subject that one of them alone would be amply sufficient to prove the dogma without taking them collectively.

These five inspired writers gave the weight of their individual testimony to the doctrine of the Eucharist because they foresaw—or rather the Holy Ghost, speaking through them, foresaw—that this great mystery, which exacts so strong an exercise of our faith, and which bids us bow down our "understanding unto the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10.5), would meet with opposition in the course of time from those who would measure the infallible Word of God by the erring standard of their own judgement.

I shall select three classes of arguments from the New Testament which satisfactorily demonstrate the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The first of these texts speaks of the

promise of the Eucharist, the second of its institution, and the third of its use among the faithful.

To begin with the words of the promise. While Jesus was once preaching near the coast of the Sea of Galilee He was followed, as usual, by an immense multitude of persons, who were attracted to Him by the miracles which He wrought and the words of salvation which he spoke. Seeing that the people had no food, he multiplied five loaves and two fishes to such an extent as to supply the wants of five thousand men, besides women and children.

Our Lord considered the present a favorable occasion for speaking of the Sacrament of his Body and blood, which was to be distributed, not to a few thousands, but to millions of souls; not in one place, but everywhere; not at one time, but for all days, to the end of the world. "I am," He says to His hearers, "the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert and died.... I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore, disputed among themselves, saying: How can this man give us His Flesh to eat? Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say to you: Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye shall not have life in you. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." (John 6.48-56)

If these words had fallen on your ears for the first time, and if you had been among the number of your Savior's hearers on that occasion, would you not

have been irresistibly led, by the noble simplicity of His words, to understand Him as speaking truly of His body and blood? For His language is not susceptible of any other interpretation.

When our Savior says to the Jews: "Your fathers did eat manna and died,... but he that eateth this (Eucharist) bread shall live forever," He evidently wishes to affirm the superiority of the food which He would give, over the manna by which the children of Israel were nourished.

Now, if the Eucharist were merely commemorative bread and wine, instead of being superior, it would be really inferior to the manna; for the manna was supernatural, heavenly, miraculous food, while bread and wine are a natural, earthly food.

But the best and the most reliable interpreters of our Savior's words are certainly the multitude and the disciples who are listening to Him. They all understood the import of his language precisely as it is explained by the Catholic Church. They believed that our Lord spoke literally of his body and blood. The Evangelist tells us that the Jews "disputed among themselves, saying: How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" Even his disciples, though avoiding the disrespectful language of the multitude, gave expression to their doubt in this milder form: "This saying is hard, and who can hear it?" (John 6.61) So much were they shocked at our Savior's promise that "after this many of his disciples went back and walked no more with Him." (John 6.67) They evidently implied, by their words and conduct, that they understood Jesus to have spoken literally of His flesh; for, had they interpreted His words in a figurative sense, it would not have been a hard saying, not have led them to

abandon their Master.

But, perhaps, I shall be told that the disciples and the Jews who heard our Savior may have misinterpreted his meaning by taking His words in the literal acceptation, while He may have spoken in a figurative sense. This objection is easily disposed of. It sometimes happened, indeed, that our Savior was misunderstood by His hearers. On such occasions He always took care to remove from their mind

dear reader, must also take your choice. Will you reply with the Jews, or with the disciples of little faith, or with Peter? Ah! Let some say with the unbelieving Jews: "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" Let others say with the unfaithful disciples: "This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?" But do you say with Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."

So far I have dwelt on the words of

to be declared impossible because we cannot see its possibility?

Has not God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing by the fiat of His word? What a mystery is this! Does he not hold this world in the midst of space? Does he not transform the tiny blade into nutritious grain? Did He not feed upwards of five thousand persons with five loaves and two fishes? What a mystery! Did He not rain down manna from heaven for forty years to feed the children of Israel in the desert? Did He not change rivers into blood in Egypt, and water into wine at the wedding of Cana? Does he not daily make devout souls the tabernacles of the Holy Ghost? And shall we have the hardihood to deny, in spite of our Lord's plain declaration, that God, who works these wonders, is able to change bread and wine into His body and blood for the food of our souls?

You tell me it is a mystery above your comprehension. A mystery, indeed. A religion that rejects a revealed truth because it is incomprehensible contains in itself the seeds of dissolution and will end in rationalism. Is not everything around us a mystery? Are we not a mystery to ourselves? Explain to me how the blood circulates in your veins, how the soul animates and permeates the whole body, how the hand moves at the will of the soul. Explain to me the mystery of life and death.

Is not the Scripture full of incomprehensible mysteries? Do you not believe in the Trinity—a mystery not only above, but apparently contrary to reason? Do you not admit the Incarnation—that the helpless infant in Bethlehem was God? I understand why Rationalists, who admit nothing above their reason, reject the Real Presence; but that Bible Christians should reject it is to me incomprehensible.

But do those who reject the Catholic interpretation explain this text to their own satisfaction: "This is My Body, etc?" Alas! Here their burden begins. Only a few years after the early Reformers had rejected the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist no fewer than one hundred meanings were given to these words: "This is My body." It is far easier to destroy than to rebuild.

Let me now offer you some additional reasons in favor of the Catholic or literal sense. According to a common rule observed in the interpretation of the

the wrong impression they had formed by stating His meaning in simpler language. Thus, for instance, having told Nicodemus that unless a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, and having observed that his meaning was not correctly apprehended by this disciple our Savior added: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." (John 3) And again, when He warned His disciples against the leaven of the Pharisees, and finding that they had taken an erroneous meaning from his word, He immediately subjoined that they should beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees. (Matt. 16)

But in the present instance does our Savior alter his language when He finds His words taken in the literal sense? Does He tell his hearers that He has spoken figuratively? Does He soften the tone of His expression? Far from weakening the force of His words He repeats what He said before, and in language more emphatic: "Amen, amen, I say unto you, Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye shall not have life in you."

When our Savior beheld the Jews and many of His disciples abandoning Him, turning to the chosen twelve, He said feelingly to them: "Will ye also go away? And Simon Peter answered Him: Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." (John 6.68,69) You, my

the Promise. I shall now proceed to the words of the Institution, which are given in almost the same expressions by St. Matthew, St. Mark and St. Luke. In the Gospel according to St. Matthew we read the following narrative: "And while they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke and gave to His disciples and said: Take ye and eat. This is My body. And taking the chalice, He gave thanks and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this; for this is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.'" (Matt. 26.26-28)

I beg you to recall to mind the former text relative to the Promise and to compare it with this. How admirably they fit together, like two links in a chain! How faithfully has Jesus fulfilled the Promise which he made! Could any idea be expressed in clearer terms than these: This is My body; this is My blood?

Why is the Catholic interpretation of these words rejected by Protestants? Is it because the text is in itself obscure and ambiguous? By no means; but simply because they do not comprehend how God could perform so stupendous a miracle as to give his body and blood for our spiritual nourishment.

Is, then, the power of the mercy of God to be measured by the narrow rule of the human understanding? Is the Almighty not permitted to do anything except what we can sanction by our reason? Is a thing

Holy Scripture, we must always take the words in their literal signification, unless we have some special reason which obliges us to accept them in a figurative meaning. Now, in the present instance, far from being forced to employ the words above quoted in a figurative sense, every circumstance connected with the delivery of them obliges us to interpret them in their plain and literal acceptance.

To whom did our Savior address these words? At what time and under what circumstances did He speak? He was addressing his few chosen disciples, to whom He promised to speak in future, not in parables nor in obscure language, but in the words of simple truth. He uttered these words the night before His Passion. And when will a person use plainer speech than at the point of death?

These words: "This is My body; this is My blood," embodied a new dogma of faith which all were obliged to believe, and a new law which all were obliged to practice. They were the last will and testament of our blessed Savior. What language should be plainer than that which contains an article of faith? What words should be more free from tropes and figures than those which enforce a Divine law? But, above all, where will you find any words more plain and unvarnished than those contained in a last will?

Now, if we understand these words in their plain and obvious, that is, in the Catholic, sense, no language can be more simple and intelligible. But if we depart from the Catholic interpretation, then it is impossible to attach to them any reasonable meaning.

We now arrive at the third class of Scripture texts which have reference to the use or reception of the Sacrament among the faithful.

When Jesus, as you remember, instituted the Eucharist at His last Supper He commanded His disciples and their successors to renew, till the end of time, in remembrance of him, the ceremony which He performed. What I have done, do ye also "for a commemoration of Me." (Luke 22.19)

We have a very satisfactory means of ascertaining the Apostolic belief in the doctrine of the Eucharist by examining what the Apostles did in commemoration of our Lord. Did they bless and distribute mere bread and wine to the faithful, or did

they consecrate as they believed, the body and blood of Jesus Christ? If they professed to give only bread and wine in memory of our Lord's Supper, then the Catholic interpretation falls to the ground. If, on the contrary, we find the Apostles and their successors, from the first to the nineteenth century, professing to consecrate and dispense the body and blood of Christ, and doing so by virtue of the command of their Savior, then the Catholic interpretation alone is admissible.

Let St. Paul be our first witness. Represent yourself as a member of the primitive Christian congregation assembled in Corinth. About eighteen years after St. Matthew wrote his Gospel, a letter is read from the Apostle Paul, in which the following words occur: "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, it is not the partaking of the body of the Lord?...For, I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, brake it, and said: Take and eat: this is My body which shall be delivered for you. This do for the commemoration of Me. In like manner also the chalice, after the supper, saying: This cup is the New Covenant in My blood. This do ye, as often as ye shall drink, for the commemoration of me. For, as often as ye shall eat this bread, and

drink the cup, ye shall show the death of the Lord until He come. Therefore, whoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself; and so let him eat of that bread and drink of the chalice. For, he who eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body

of the Lord." (1 Cor. 10.16, 11.23-29)

Could St. Paul express more clearly his belief in the Real presence than he has done here? The Apostle distinctly affirms that the chalice and bread which he and his fellow Apostles bless is a participation of the body and blood of Christ. And surely no one could be said to partake of that divine food by eating ordinary bread. Mark these words of the Apostle: whosoever shall take the Sacrament unworthily "shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." What a heinous crime! For these words signify that he who receives the Sacrament unworthily shall be guilty of the sin of high treason, and of shedding the blood of his Lord in vain. But how could he be guilty of a crime so enormous, if he had taken in the Eucharist only a particle of bread and wine. Would a man be accused of homicide, in this commonwealth, if he were to offer violence to the statue or painting of the governor? Certainly not. In like manner, St. Paul would not be so unreasonable as to declare a man guilty tramping on the blood of his Savior by drinking in an unworthy manner a little wine in memory of Him.

Study also these words: "He who eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord." The unworthy receiver is condemned for not recognizing or discerning in the Eucharist the body of the Lord. How could he be

blamed for not discerning the body of the Lord, if there were only bread and wine before him? Hence, if the words of St. Paul are figuratively understood, they are distorted, forced and exaggerated terms, without meaning or truth. But, if they are taken literally, they are full of sense and of awful significance, and an eloquent commentary on the words I have quoted from the Evangelist.

The Fathers of the Church, without an exception, re-echo the language of the Apostle of the gentiles by proclaiming the Real Presence of our Lord in the Eucharist. I have counted the names of sixty-three Fathers and eminent Ecclesiastical writers flourishing between the first and sixth century all of whom proclaim the Real Presence—some by explaining the mystery, others by thanking God for his inestimable gift, and others by exhorting the faithful to its worthy reception. From such a host of witnesses I can select here only a few at random.

St. Ignatius, a disciple of St. Peter, speaking of a sect called Gnostics, says: “They abstain from the Eucharist and prayer, because they confess not that the Eucharist and prayer is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ.”

St. Justin Martyr, in an apology to the Emperor Antoninus, writes in the second century: “We do not receive these things as common bread and drink; but as Jesus Christ our Savior was made flesh by the word of God, even so we have been taught

that the Eucharist is both the flesh and the blood of the same incarnate Jesus.”

Origin (third century) writes: “If thou wilt go up with Christ to celebrate the Passover, He will give to thee that bread of benediction. His own body, and will vouchsafe to thee His own blood.”

St. Cyril, of Jerusalem (fourth century), instructing the Catechumens, observes: “He Himself having declared, This is My body, who shall dare to doubt henceforward? And He having said, This is My blood, who shall ever doubt, saying: This is not His blood? He once at Cana turned water into wine, which is akin to blood; and is He undeserving of belief when He turned wine into blood?” He seems to be arguing with modern unbelief.

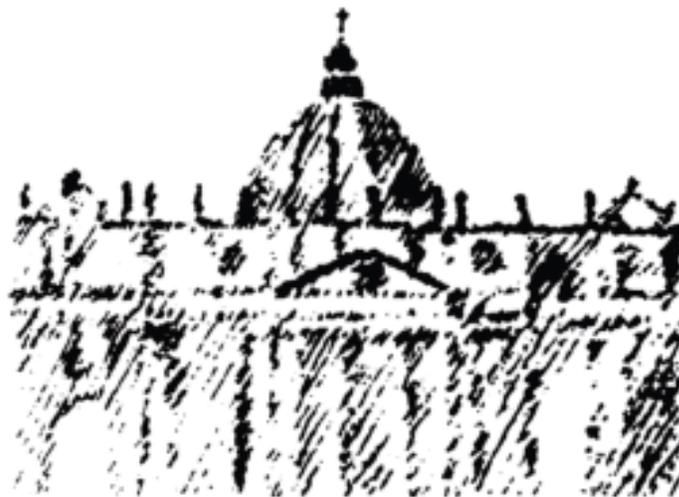
St. John Chrysostom, who died in the beginning of the fifth century, preaching on the Eucharist, says: “If thou wert indeed incorporeal, He would have delivered to thee those same incorporeal gifts without covering. But since the soul is united to the body, He delivers to thee in things perceptible to the senses the things to be

apprehended by the understanding. How many nowadays say: ‘Would that they could look upon His (Jesus’) form, His figure, His raiment, His shoes.’ Lo! Thou seest Him, touchest Him, eatest Him.”

St. Augustine (fifth century), addressing the newly-baptized, says: “I promised you a discourse wherein I would explain the sacrament of the Lord’s table, which sacrament you even now behold, and of which you were last night made partakers. You ought to know what you have received. The bread which you see on the altar, after being sanctified by the word of God, is the body of Christ. That chalice, after being sanctified by the word of God, is the blood of Christ.”

But why multiply authorities? At the present day every Christian communion throughout the world, with the sole exception of Protestants, proclaims its belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Sacrament.

The Nestorians and Eutychians, who separated from the Catholic Church in the fifth century, admit the corporeal presence



The Meal of Melchizedek

By Scott Hahn, Ph. D.

Appearing only briefly in both the Old and New Testaments is a mysterious figure named Melchizedek.

The identity of this first priest mentioned in the bible is as strange as his name. Yet his importance, particularly as emphasized by the writer of Hebrews, warrants our attention, especially if we're trying to understand the true meaning of Christ's words, "This is my body ... this is my blood of the new covenant."

Before we examine the texts in Hebrews, however, I would like to call your attention to some words from the first Eucharistic Prayer, the Roman Canon. The priest with hands raised, prays: "Father, we celebrate the memory of Christ, your Son ... Look with favor on these offerings and accept them as once you accepted the gift of your servant Abel who offered himself as an oblation." Abel's sacrifice was a perfect sacrifice of his own body and blood in an act of martyrdom, a very substantial image of Christ, but not perfect because it wasn't voluntary; it was involuntary; it was murder. "The sacrifice of Abraham, our father in faith, who offered his only beloved son on Moriah." Another powerful symbol of our Lord, Jesus Christ—but Abraham didn't really kill Isaac, so once again this is an inadequate image. Then the priest continues, "and the bread and wine offered by your priest Melchizedek."

This refers to Genesis 14.17-20, which says:

After his return from the defeat of Chedorlaomer and the kings who were with them, the king of Sodom went out to meet him at the Valley of Shaveh, (that is the King's Valley). And Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was priest of God Most High. And he blessed him and said, "Blessed be Abram by God Most High,

maker of heaven and earth;
and blessed be God Most High,
who has delivered your enemies into your hand!"

This is the first time in the Bible that anyone is addressed by the word coen,

the Hebrew word for priest. As a "priest of God Most High," Melchizedek "brought out bread and wine." What is the connection between his priesthood and those two offerings?

During the days of Genesis 14, the priest did not need to offer the bloody sacrifices, for these only became necessary later, when Israel became enslaved and addicted to the gods of Egypt (see Exodus and Ezekiel 20). God's strategy to break Israel from these idolatrous customs was to make the people sacrifice ceremonially on Mount Sinai the very animals they had worshiped as gods in Egypt. Before this, before the Golden Calf, the pre-Israelites practiced a patriarchal family religion rooted in nature, in which fathers were high priests and their firstborn sons were priests under their authority. What was the sacrifice then that pleased God? Well, here we see it: bread and wine offered by God's premier priest, Melchizedek. He offered bread and wine to Abraham who had come and paid his tithes. Abraham received bread and wine and then received a blessing. This would become the pattern of the Eucharistic liturgy: worshipers give their offerings; then Christ, working through the human priest, gives his body and blood under the appearance of bread and wine; and then the priest gives the blessing.

Turning to Hebrews 6.13-14, we see that God had made a promise to Abraham and then he changed the promise into an oath:

For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by Himself, saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you."

In many places in scripture, we find "oath" and "covenant" used almost interchangeably (e.g., Ezekiel 16.60f). When God swears an oath to Abraham, he makes a covenant. In Genesis 22.18, right after Abraham went to Moriah to sacrifice his firstborn through Sarah, God prevented it and then swore an oath saying, "Surely all the nations of the earth will be blessed through your seed."

The New Testament begins, "This is Jesus Christ, the seed of the son of Abraham, the Son of David." Jesus Christ is the one through whom God fulfills the oath he swore to Abraham. Where did he swear it? On Moriah, the hill where the temple was later built and where Christ, the New Temple was later destroyed and rebuilt three days afterwards.

Hebrews 6 continues to talk about this oath, flowing into a discussion of the priesthood of Melchizedek:

We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner shrine behind the curtain, where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

The first ten verses of chapter 7 describe how Abraham met Melchizedek. The author explains that this strange Hebrew name means "king of righteousness." He is the King of Salem, which means "peace" (shalom); we know from Psalm 76.2 that Salem would later become Jerusalem, the City of Peace. Melchizedek is the priest of God Most High, and he blessed Abraham; thus, he was superior to Abraham.

In these passages from Hebrews, everything is mentioned about the meet-

ing between Abraham and Melchizedek except one thing — the bread and the wine. Is this because the bread and the wine were the only unimportant details? Or is it because their importance is so great, but so obvious, that it goes without saying?

Let's study briefly the next few chapters to see whether the writer understands Melchizedek's priesthood in relationship to the bread and the wine that he gave to Abraham.

First, going back to Hebrews 5. 5-6 we hear that God has sworn an oath to Jesus Christ. He says,

“Thou art my Son, today I have begotten thee;”

as he says also in another place,

“Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.”

The parallelism of these phrases indicates that the author considers status as “God's Son” the same as priesthood “after the order of Melchizedek.” As I mentioned earlier, in the years before the Golden Calf, fathers were high priests, and firstborn sons were priests under their authority. This, then, would be

it to the Levites temporarily. The writer of Hebrews is suggesting that Jesus Christ, God's Son, is righteous enough to restore the original pattern of the father-son family priesthood — the “order of Melchizedek” — because God, through Christ's sacrifice, is adopting us into a divine family.

He is a “priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.” The word “order” here does not mean a religious order like the Dominicans or the Franciscans. It means “after the manner” of Melchizedek's priesthood. The writer goes on to draw a sharp contrast between the Levitical priests, who continued to offer animals in sacrifice, and priesthood in the order of Melchizedek. Levites had to kill. They had to sacrifice millions of sheep, millions of goats and millions of cattle, with millions of gallons of blood running down through the temple. Why? It was all because of the Golden Calf; whereas, before all that, priestly fathers and their priestly firstborn sons constituted a clean priesthood, represented by Melchizedek. “After the order of Melchizedek” suggests that Melchizedek's manner of priestly sacrifice—bread and wine—was the manner in which the early Christians understood Christ's priesthood as well.

In Hebrews 7.18-28 we read the following very important description of

Christ's priesthood:

On the one hand, a former commandment is set aside because of its weakness and uselessness (for the law made nothing perfect); on the other hand, a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God .

And it was not without an oath. Those who formerly became priests took their office without an oath, but this one was addressed with an oath, “The Lord has sworn

and will not change his mind, ‘Thou art a priest for ever.’” This makes Jesus the surety of a better covenant.

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office; but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently he is able for all times to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, unstained, separated from sinners, exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people; he did this once for all when he offered up himself. Indeed, the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever.

There's plenty to feed our souls, if we pay close attention; we can only cover a few details in this short article. The crucial point to recognize is that we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven. In the book of Revelation, we discover that the Lamb is the one enthroned (Revelation 5). The Lamb — who is the firstborn Son of the Passover — is the priest who ministers in the heavenly sanctuary. He is ministering in the true tabernacle, which is set up not by man but by the Lord. Yet every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices. Hence it is necessary for this priest to have something to offer.

I read this passage a hundred times before the obvious meaning hit me. Jesus Christ is a priest in heaven, ministering now in the sanctuary; and, as our High priest, he's continually offering. What, though, is he offering? He's not bleeding and dying and suffering any more. He's not killing any animals—but he's continually offering the once and for all sacrifice which is himself. It's a continual sacrifice, a perpetual offering. This mystery is exactly what the Catholic Church has always

the family pattern of Melchizedek; and this is how the ancient Jews, as well as the ancient Church Fathers, understood Melchizedek's priesthood.

In Israel, only a Levite could be a priest; yet Jesus was not a Levite. So Old Testament Jews might be tempted to say that he couldn't be a priest. The book of Hebrews, however, alludes to the wilderness generation under Moses, which committed idolatry and rebelled against God. Their rebellion was the Golden Calf, and God's punishment was to take away the priesthood from the firstborn and give

taught about the meaning of the Mass.

For many years, I didn't understand this. Then, after reading some basic catechisms, I understood it, but still didn't believe it. Finally, after prayerfully studying and re-studying Hebrews, it became clear that Jesus Christ, the firstborn Son—which is the theme in the Book of Hebrews—is a much greater priest than the Levites. They had merely took the place of the sinful firstborn sons until the true and righteous firstborn Son of God would come.

Before, we had an Old Covenant family on earth. Now, we have a New Covenant family in heaven—our divine family. The Trinity's life is our family life, and it comes to us through God's firstborn Son, who was like Melchizedek in being a son-priest. But the bread and the wine that Christ offers is not earthly bread and wine, but heavenly bread, heavenly wine—his own body and blood. He is still, today and forever, a minister in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle in heaven. Since every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices, God has appointed his own Son to be High Priest. What are his gifts and sacrifices? Himself—and all of us in union with him!

Moreover, the sacrifice isn't finished. No, it's just begun, and we're going to be offering it forever with Christ. Not bloody animal sacrifices, but our hearts and our souls and our bodies in union with the One whose body and blood, soul and divinity are perfect and pure—the only acceptable sacrifice, which makes our otherwise unacceptable sacrifices perfectly acceptable: "Holy and righteous," as Paul says (Romans 12.1).

In Hebrews 8, the author proceeds to talk about the superiority of the New Covenant that Christ established. Now it's unfortunate, but our over-familiarity with that phrase, "new covenant," may cause us to miss its uniqueness. We've heard this phrase so many times that we may have become insulated from its spectacular meaning, almost as if filters have been planted in our ears so that we don't hear it any more.

Though it's common to us, the phrase "new covenant" is actually used only once in the entire Old Testament, in Jeremiah 31, which the writer of Hebrews (in 8.8-9) quotes at length:

The days will come, says the Lord,

when I will establish a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the house of Judah; not like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in my covenant.

When did Israel break the covenant? At the time of the Golden Calf.

Yet the New Covenant will not be like the Mosaic Covenant, which was broken because of the failure of the firstborn sons. The New Covenant will not be broken because this firstborn Son won't break it—and that's what makes it new.

This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." ... In speaking of the New Covenant he treats the first as obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away. (Hebrews 8.10, 13)

The Old Testament uses the phrase "New Covenant" only once, and Jesus uses it only once. When does he use it? At Passover. Where? In the Upper Room. Why? To institute the Eucharist.

Still, the writer of Hebrews has placed a singular focus upon this phrase. If you're judging only by numerical usage, he's made a mountain out of a scriptural molehill. However, it's not the frequency of a phrase that makes it important. Jesus used "New Covenant" only once, when he transformed the Old Testament covenant of Moses, the Passover Covenant, by offering himself as the unblemished Lamb, the firstborn Son, the Priest, the King, and the Victim all wrapped up in one. That is the New Covenant.

Hebrews 9 then goes on to speak of the superiority of this New Covenant. In verse 9 we read, "According to this [Old Testament] arrangement, gifts and sacrifices were offered which cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper." What contrast is the author implying? Back then, Israel's sacrifices couldn't perfect the worshiper's conscience; but the implication is that the New Covenant sacrifice do perfect

the conscience of the worshiper.

That, in fact, is what the Eucharist does. It cleanses our soul. It wipes away all venial sin. These Old Testament sacrifices (verse 10) "deal only with food and drink and various ablutions [baptismos in the Greek], regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation." Do you know when the real reformation came? The real reformation came in the Upper Room, when Jesus instituted the Eucharist, and when he established the Catholic Church. The true reformation wiped away the weak, ineffective Old Testament sacrifices. Would it do away with sacrifices altogether? No. The true reformation would initiate a new sacrifice, which has intrinsic power to cleanse our consciences.

Then in verse 11: "But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the good things that have come, then through the greater and more perfect tent [or tabernacle] (not made with hands, that is, not of this creation) he entered once for all into the Holy Place [that is, heaven], taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption." He took his own blood to heaven. He's not bleeding in the sense that he's suffering and dying, but he's up there as a Lamb looking as though he's been slain, offering his own blood. That's a Eucharistic Passover sacrifice and that's why the entire structure of the book of Revelation is a Passover liturgy.

This scripture passage goes on to contrast the Old Testament's weakness with the New Testament's power. "For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls or with the ashes of a heifer sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (verses 13-14) The body was cleansed externally in the Old Testament sacrifices; but with Christ's Passover Sacrifice, which he continues to administer in the heavenly sanctuary, our consciences are cleansed internally as we offer and receive the Eucharist here on earth.

"Therefore," says verse 15, "he is the mediator of a New Covenant." Again, Jesus only used the word "covenant" one time—when he instituted the Eucharist; when he fulfilled Jeremiah 31; when he

offered what appeared to be bread and wine—and that’s when he became the new Melchizedek, feeding and blessing the new children of Abraham, so that through Abraham’s seed—Jesus—all the nations of the world, all the families of the earth shall be blessed. This is the oath God had sworn to Abraham on Moriah, but which would not be fulfilled until Christ, the son of Abraham, was sacrificed on Calvary, a hillock on Moriah’s range.

Jesus began his sacrifice in the Upper Room when he instituted the Eucharist, and it is this Eucharist which continues, here on earth and in heaven above, forever and ever. Jesus is the mediator of the new and everlasting covenant, so that those who are called may receive the eternal inheritance that God promised to Abraham. In verses 24-25: “For Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the High Priest enters the Holy Place yearly with blood not his own.” Jesus offers himself repeatedly, not like the Old Testament priest who shed blood that wasn’t his own. Instead, he offers himself repeatedly, without any death and suffering, an unbloody sacrifice. “For then He would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, He appeared once for all at the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (verse 26).

So what can we conclude? Christ has abolished the Old Testament, and he’s established the New Testament. We have a sacrifice in heaven that is perpetual and effectual. Read Hebrews 10.19: “Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus.” It’s because of the Eucharist and because of Christ the High Priest offering himself that we have confidence to draw near to the presence of God. That’s how the apostle John could be drawn up in Revelation. That’s why the scroll’s seals could be broken open. “[W]e have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through His flesh” (verses 19-20), his body and blood. When were they offered? His body and blood were offered when He instituted the New Covenant in the Upper Room.

And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean [a reference to Baptism] from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works. (verses 21-24)

If Jesus Christ, who is our master, gave himself up for us, we too have to learn how to treat others as though they are more important than we are. Let’s figure out new ways to stir each other up to love and good works. “Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (verse 25).

Verse 26 is often misunderstood. “For if we sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire which will consume the adversaries.” What does the author mean? Does he mean, in some generic sense, that if we deliberately sin, there’s no longer a sacrifice for us? We’re dead; we’re going to be burned alive? If we interpret it in this generic sense, I’m afraid that’s what it must mean. Yet that meaning disappears when we read the text in context. What sin is the author referring to? Look in the preceding verse? “Don’t neglect to meet together, as has become the habit of some.”

The Lord’s Day, from the earliest time of the Church, was the regular meeting for the people of God. From both pagan and Christian testimonies, we know that, early on Sunday morning, the faithful would gather together. They would sing hymns worshiping Christ as God, and then—we are told by a pagan historian—they would take an oath. The Latin word is sacramentum. They would take an oath—a sacrament—and swear not to sin.

What does this mean? It means that if we sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth—the truth of Christ’s sacrifice, which is represented in the Eucharist on Sunday—we are repudiating the only sacrifice that will work for our sins. This is what people do when

they neglect to meet with the Church on the Lord’s Day, when they fail to go to Mass, “as has become the habit of some.” When we neglect this obligation, we sin against the most beautiful laws God has delivered to humanity and against the all-powerful sacrifice.

The author continues (verse 29), “How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the Son of God, and [notice!] profaned the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace?” Again, that phrase, only used once by Jesus, can only mean one thing: “the blood of the New Covenant.” So a person profanes the blood of the covenant when he neglects the Eucharist, when he misses Mass, when he says, “It’s not that important. I’ve got better things to do.”

We are called go there. We’ve got to be there, but we’ve got to prepare to be there with all our heart and mind, soul and body. We’ve got to be there with the help of the Holy Spirit. We’ve got to offer ourselves in union with Christ, because we are members of his mystical body, and that body is what’s being sacrificed continually. If we don’t, we profane the blood of the covenant; but if we do, what will happen?

Turn to Hebrews 13.9-11, “Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings; for it is well that the heart be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited their adherents. We have an altar...” If there’s no sacrifice, there’s no need for an altar. Yet we have an altar; therefore, we have a sacrifice, Christ himself. “We have an altar from which those who serve the tent (or sanctuary) have no right to eat. For the bodies of those animals whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest as a sacrifice for sin are burned outside the camp.” Hebrews goes on to talk about how Jesus left the camp and suffered. So we should, too, for in verse 14 we read, “For here we have no lasting city.” The earthly Jerusalem is not our city, the heavenly Jerusalem is. We read on:

Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, [We still sacrifice] that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name. Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead

One Step Enough

A Short History of the St. Barnabas Society

When the Coming Home Network International was founded in 1993, we became immediately aware of a sister apostolate in England which has a long history of helping primarily Anglican clergy converts on their journey home to the Catholic Church. With the inclusion of Dwight Longnecker's conversion story and article in this edition of the CHJournal, it seemed appropriate to explain more about the work of the St. Barnabas Society in England. The following is an extract from the complete history of the society written by Keith Jarrett.

Throughout Cardinal Newman's pilgrimage of faith he did not ask to see the distant scene, but prayed only for sufficient grace to take one step at a time. The St. Barnabas Society continues the work begun by the Converts' Aid Society more than a century ago, to give pastoral and financial help to those courageous men and women who sacrificed much to take that single, but important step of being received into the Catholic Church.

The immediate background to the foundation of the Converts' Aid Society was that of the Papal Bull 'Apostolicae Curiae' which declared Anglican orders 'null and void'. Cardinal Vaughan believed that as a consequence a large number of Anglican clergy would ask to be received into the Catholic Church.

It was with this possibility in mind that on 23 August 1896, just prior to the publication of the bull, Pope Leo XIII sent a letter to Cardinal Vaughan expressing his concern at the plight of Anglican clergy who might want to be received. He wrote: "We would wish to come to the aid of those who have taken this step or are ready to take it. For this purpose what we ourselves have thought of, and now propose to you, would be the formation of a considerable fund for the help of converted Anglican clergymen." Within two months of receiving the letter Cardinal Vaughan had set up the Converts' Aid Society.

In the period following the war of

1914-1918 the Society developed its role in several ways. Initially funding had come mainly from a small but generous group of established Catholic families. This however was not sufficient to provide resources on a long term basis. The provision of a full time Secretary in 1922 opened the way to seeking support from the whole Catholic community.

The range of eligible beneficiaries was also enlarged. In addition to support for convert Anglican clergy, help was now offered to former Anglican religious and to convert clergy from any denomination.

The society was managed by a committee which included some notable converts, such as Mgr. Ronald Knox and it appointed patrons among whom were G.K.Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc.

It would be impossible to produce even the briefest history of this charity without paying tribute to the late F. W. Chambers who became Secretary in 1922 and held this position for forty five years until his death in 1967. Freddie Chambers was ordained in the Church of England in 1907 and served as Vicar of St. Stephen's, New Town Row, Birmingham. He was received into the Catholic Church on 25 November 1919 by Fr. John Ratcliffe SJ.

Freddie Chambers genius was in personal relationships and during the forty-five years he worked as Secretary he was given a great deal of freedom to exercise this particular talent. He also had the reputation of being able to enthuse others with his own personal commitment to the Society's work. In addition to his administrative and pastoral role, he traveled widely throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland.

Another development in the Society's work was the provision of grants to help convert clergy who had been accepted for training for the Catholic priesthood at both the Venerabile and the Beda College in Rome. Seminarian grants continue to be an important part of the Society's work.

Everyone wants to know how many clergy from other Christian communities are known to have 'come over'. The fact is

that it is extremely difficult to give precise figures. The Society only deals with those who come forward for help. There is also a certain ebb and flow in the numbers applying for help in any given year.

An estimate based on the minutes and archives of the Society suggests that since 1896 something like 3,200 actual applications for help have been received. The number of applications however, implies a much larger total of people helped because many of those who seek the Society's support have families. So if we are looking at the total number involved the true figure is likely to be at least 12,000-14,000 and may be as high as 15,500. These of course, are only the ones who have applied to us for help. The numbers of those who have 'come over' but not applied for help cannot be reckoned.

The constitution of the Society had remained more or less the same from 1896 to 1991. By then the many changes in charity legislation which had taken place made it necessary to provide a new constitution. It was decided to keep the old charity in shell form to enable existing legacies to be received while a new charity was formed with the identical aims and objects as the Converts' Aid Society.

Considerable time and ingenuity was expended on what to call the successor charity. The proposal to name the charity the St. Barnabas Society in honor of the apostle Barnabas was made because one of the most far reaching effects of his many good deeds was to welcome the newly converted Saul of Tarsus and stand as surety for him at a time when he had few friends within the Church. Barnabas then went on to encourage Paul to begin a new life—the results of which were to be of overwhelming importance to the expanding church of the first century.

The Society saw itself as having a similar ministry of providing a generous welcome and encouragement for those newly received into the Church and those lives would have to take a new direction. Thus the St. Barnabas Society was formed

Before you object...

By Marcus C. Grodi

In my own journey of faith, the Lord has brought me through a wide range of Christian traditions which each had a different view of the Lord's Supper. I was baptized, catechized and confirmed a Lutheran, so was basically weaned on the Lutheran view of Consubstantiation.

The first Sunday of every month, we came forward and knelt at the front altar to receive a piece of cubed bread and drink wine from individual small cups. I vaguely remember being taught that this was truly Jesus, but I honestly don't remember taking the Sacrament very seriously. It was more a Rite of Passage for me—I became a full-fledged member of the church, an adult. But I don't think it ever hit me that it was truly Jesus that I was receiving.

After leaving the Lutheran church for several years in college, I had an adult conversion experience as a Congregationalist, where, again once a month we celebrated the Lord's supper, but here we passed plates of cubed bread and small cups of juice. This was merely a memorial meal in which we celebrated Christ's sacrifice for our sins. There was no implication whatsoever that Jesus was truly present in the bread and juice but he was there in our hearts through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

At the inter-denominational, Evangelical seminary

I attended, our classes taught the various views as essentially equal rather than putting weight on any particular one, primarily because there were so many different positions held by the more than 30 different denominations represented.

Later as an ordained Presbyterian minister we celebrated the Table of the Lord much like we had as Congregationalists, except that Jesus was there in a very unique way because of our faith, and communicants received him in a unique way when they partook of the cubed bread and juice through their faith.

As I reread these articles featured in this edition of the CHJournal, trying to

hear them again as those of you from other traditions might be hearing them, several things crossed my mind. First, that it is much more clear to me now than it was before how confusing and contradictory the great variety of views are that have arisen since the Reformation. Before the Reformation there was really only one view which had been quasi-unanimously accepted for fifteen hundred years by Christians in all ages, in all languages, in all cultures, at all times. Since the Reformation there have arisen so many different views that the end result is that amongst non-Catholic Christians, the Lord's Supper is really not all that important. My challenge to any non-Catholic Christians reading this journal is to examine closely the history of this Sacrament. Read a book like "The Hidden Manna" by James T.

O'Connor¹, which gives a detailed history of how the Eucharist has been understood from the beginning. Examine the primary sources of the first fifteen hundred years of Christianity. What you will find among many things, is that the Eucharist has always been considered an essential center of Christian worship and life.

Secondly, in trying to remember the gist of some of the arguments I used to believe and teach against the Catholic view of Transubstantiation, I checked a few of my old Systematic Theology books. In each case the authors gave similar arguments, but one in particular which they presumed made the Catholic literal view

a mute point. For instance, here is the brief argument given by L. Berkhof, the preferred Systematic Theology text from my Evangelical seminary:

The Church of Rome makes the copula 'is' emphatic. Jesus meant to say that what He held in His hands was really His body, though it looked and tasted like bread. But this is a thoroughly untenable position. In all probability Jesus spoke Aramaic and used no copula at all. And while He stood before the disciples in the body, He could not very well say to His disciples in all seriousness that He held His body in His hand. Moreover, even on the Roman Catholic view, He could not truthfully say, "This is my body," but could only say, "This is now becoming my body." (Systematic Theology, Wm.

.B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI., 1939; pg. 649).

Thou I once hung on every word written by Professor Berkhof, it is now interesting to recognize how quickly

and matter-of-factly he wrote off nearly 2000 years of consistent Catholic testimony as "thoroughly untenable" in but three sentences. First, it is true that both the Hebrew and Aramaic languages do not use a word for the present tense "to be," or in this case "is." However, giving Professor Berkhof the benefit of the doubt and presuming he was much too busy and pressed to check his sources, anyone who has taken Hebrew knows that though this is true, it doesn't mean what Berkhof and others conclude. The truth is that in clauses, such as "David is King," or "This is my body," where the present tense only uses juxtaposed nouns or demonstrative

pronouns, the “is” is very strongly presumed; it is only with other tenses, such as past or future, where a specific form of the “to be” verb is added. Berkhof and others have made a false theological conclusion out of a grammatical construct. We find a similar presumption in certain English constructions, such as when we say, “Butch is my dog, and Rover, too.” We don’t need to say “is” in the second clause to know it is there; the same was true in the Hebrew and Aramaic constructions.

I find it also interesting, and again I give them the benefit of busyness and pressed deadlines, but some of the same anti-Catholic authors who make the above claim, also hang their hat on the distinctions in the Greek of Matthew 16.18, failing to mention that the same Aramaic that Jesus would have spoken had only one word for “rock” = “kepha.” Therefore, their emphasis on “Thou art Peter (Petros, masculine = small pebble) and on this rock (Petra, feminine = rock)” is really “thoroughly untenable.”

In the second two sentences of Pro-

fessor Berkhof’s disclaimer, he is really basing his argument on a weak form of rationalism, which carries no particular weight or authority; it is merely his opinion. A similar argument could be made for lots of miraculous things: “This can’t be God standing before me,” A first century Jew may have exclaimed. “God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, yet you say this dirty, sweaty Galilean man standing before me, who bleeds and weeps and doesn’t know the time of his Second Coming is God? You can not be serious!”

I hope you’ve been open to hearing from the previous articles that the Roman Catholic belief in the Real Presence of the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, is a reasonable conclusion from the most literal interpretation of Sacred Scripture, from the witness of the Apostles and the Early Church Fathers, and the Faithful Catholic teachers throughout the centuries. And that it is a dogma of Faith that we accept by Faith, not because we have faith in

philosophy and reason, but because we believe in the words of Jesus: that He gave His Holy Spirit to the Church to lead Her into all truth, and that the gates of Hell would not prevail against Her. We believe it is possible because we simply believe that all things are possible with God. And we also believe, as it states in Proverbs 3.5,6, that we cannot “lean unto our own understanding,” for we may find, that through our busyness and our pressed deadlines, that we have merely accepted the opinions of other busy people, and been wrong.

I pray that this journal has been an encouragement to your faith. If it has raised any questions or concerns, please contact us, or the person who gave you this journal. Our desire is not to proselytize but to help you grow closer to Christ and to discover the rich fullness of Christian Truth in the Catholic Christ, and in the process, become more like Christ in holiness.

Armstrong, continued from page 13...

all;” . . . And, in like manner: . . . the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity. What do I know of the Essence of the Divine Being? In know that my abstract idea of three is simply incompatible with my idea of one; but when I come to question the concrete fact, I have no means of proving that there is not a sense in which one and three can equally be predicated of the Incommunicable God. (23)

Once one realizes that transubstantiation is a miracle of God, any notion of impossibility vanishes, since God is omnipotent (all-powerful) and the sovereign Lord over all creation (Matthew 19:26, Philippians 3:20-21, Hebrews 1:3). If mere men can change accidental properties without changing substance (for example, turning iron into molten liquid or even vapor), then God is certainly able to change substance without outward transmutation.

Therefore, after these weak philosophical objections are disposed of, we can proceed to objectively and fairly ex-

amine the clear and indisputable biblical data which reveals to us that God does in fact perform (through the agency of priests) the supernatural act of transubstantiation.



FOOTNOTES

1. Chapter 1: On the Real Presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. All Trent citations from Dogmatic Canons and Decrees, Rockford, IL: TAN Books and Publishers, 1977 (orig. 1912). See also: Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), Liguori, MO: Liguori Publications, 1994, #1373-1374, 1378-1381; Hardon, John A., Pocket Catholic Dictionary, NY: Doubleday Image, 1980, pp.132-3, 360.

2. Chapter 3: On the Excellency of the Most Holy Eucharist Over the Rest of the Sacraments. See also: CCC, #1377, 1390. This belief is derived largely from 1 Corinthians 11:27: “Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord.” Most NT translations include the crucial word or (e.g., NIV, NASB, NEB, NKJV, Phillips). The KJV is a notable exception, but many Protestant scholars admit that its and was a non-literal, polemical mistranslation.

3. Chapter 4: On Transubstantiation. See also: CCC, #1375-1376, 1413; Hardon, John A., The Catholic Catechism, Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975, p.161.

4. See Pope Paul VI, Encyclical *Mysterium Fidei* (On Eucharistic Doctrine and Worship), Glen Rock, NJ: Paulist Press, September 3, 1965, p.42.

5. Adam, Karl, *The Spirit of Catholicism*, tr. Dom Justin McCann, Garden City, NY: Doubleday Image, 1954 (orig. 1924 in German), p.18.

6. CCC, #1385-1387, 1415. See particularly 1 Corinthians 11:27-29; Vatican II: Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, nos. 9, 11.

7. Vatican II: *Lumen Gentium*, 11; CCC, #1324, 1327.

8. CCC, #1322-1323, 1325-1326, 1331, 1348, 1353, 1369-1370, 1396, 1398, 1416.

9. CCC, #1329.

10. CCC, #1328, 1352, 1358-1361.

11. CCC, #1330, 1333, 1341, 1350, 1356-1357, 1362-1368, 1371-1372, 1382-1383, 1410.

12. CCC, #1330, 1343, 1345-1346, 1407.

13. CCC, #1332.

14. CCC, #1334-1335.

15. CCC, #1329, 1344, 1402.

16. CCC, #1347.

17. CCC, #1354, 1403-1404, 1409.

18. CCC, #1355, 1405.

19. CCC, #1378-1379, 1408, 1418.

20. CCC, #1391, 1416, 1419.

21. CCC, #1392-1395, 1416.

