

THE WAY

APRIL 1963

THE EUCHARIST

Eucharistic Piety

JOSEF A. JUNGMAHN

The Wedding-feast of Israel

JAMES QUINN

I am with you always

QUENTIN QUESNELL

The Sacrament of Sacraments

JOHN F. CLARKSON

We give Thee thanks

ALOYSIUS CHURCH

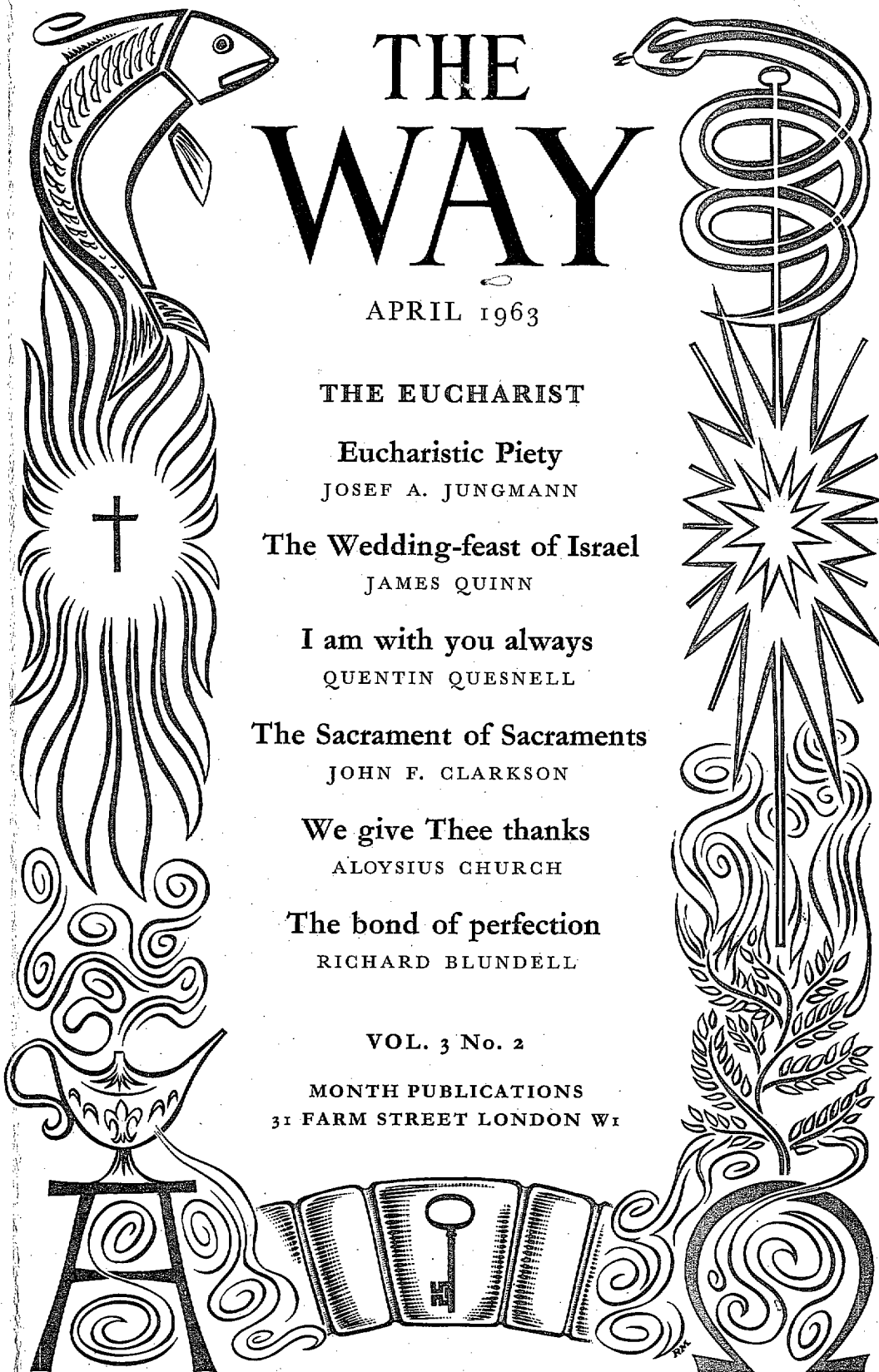
The bond of perfection

RICHARD BLUNDELL

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COVER SYMBOLS

Christ is Alpha and Omega (Apoc 1,8), 'the beginning and the end'. The whole of creation finds in him its coherence, for he is the keystone of the whole structure (Eph 2,21-22); as he is also the holder of 'the key of David' (Apoc 3,7).

God revealed himself to Moses in the burning bush (Exod 3,2), a foreshadowing of the supreme revelation in Christ the light of the world (Jn 8,12) and the lamp of the New Jerusalem (Apoc 21,23).

Christ is the star that rose out of Jacob (Num 24,17), 'the root and stock of David, the bright and morning star' (Apoc 22,16), a symbol expressing power and command. Christ reigns in virtue of his glorious resurrection in which we see the cross transfigured (cf. *Exultet*).

The raising of Christ on the cross was prefigured when Moses raised the brazen serpent in the desert (Num 21,8-9; Jn 3,14).

The brazen serpent saved those who gazed on it. Christ is our salvation, in his name we are saved (Acts 4,12). *Jesus Christ God's Son Saviour*: the initial letters of these words in Greek spell out *ichthus* - fish. The fish became a symbol of Christ, and the early christians sometimes called themselves 'the little fishes of Christ' (Tertullian, *de Baptismo*, PL 1198 A).

THE WAY

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

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EUCCHARISTIC PIETY

By JOSEF A. JUNGSMANN

AN imposing building remains the same though it may look different according to the side from which one views it. The same is true of the holy Eucharist. It is a sacrifice, a memorial, a thanksgiving, a sign of the new and eternal covenant, an epiphany and presence of Christ, a sacred meal. The human mind is too limited to grasp all these aspects simultaneously. Thus at different periods in the history of the Church, different facets of the Eucharist have been emphasised, as they corresponded to the need and atmosphere of each successive age. The veneration of the holy Eucharist has gone through diverse phases which may even seem to be almost contradictory, if viewed only from the outside. Yet it remains essentially the same piety, the same faith and the same reverence, though the expression varies. In the fourth century the communicant received the Lord's body in his hands and was careful that no crumb should fall to the ground since, according to the mystogogical catechesis of Jerusalem, he bore in his hands something more precious than gold and jewels. The same faith and the same reverence are shown when the Daughters of Perpetual Adoration kneel for hours and turn their eyes in prayer towards the monstrance, placed at the centre of the blazing candles.

The fact is that for centuries – one can say, for the first thousand years – the Eucharist, although forming the innermost kernel of christian piety, remained so much in the background that one cannot speak of a distinct eucharistic devotion. The main lines of the great eucharistic liturgies were of course already laid down, in their classical forms, and they conveyed the eternally valid mystery. The Eucharist was celebrated and received, but none of the hagiographers before the twelfth century thought of mentioning how often the saint went to communion or other similar details which would reveal his attitude to the Eucharist. The fact that priests said Mass often or even daily is sometimes noted in passing, but nothing analogous is expressly mentioned in the lives of holy layfolk. The Eucharist was an organic part of their spiritual lives and it was taken for granted. The Eucharist was indeed for them the central act in christian life, but this central act was not clearly singled out and

illuminated. The Eucharist was a kind of radiance around the central point, and other lights gleamed in this halo of light.

For many years the central point in christian life was baptism. Baptism is an illumination, a rebirth to divine life, the pascal resurrection with Christ, an incorporation into Christ and the Church. The Eucharist appeared as the obvious continuation of the life grounded and begun in baptism. This is why we find on the tombstones of the catacombs various pictures which refer to baptism: Noah in the ark, Moses striking the rock, the Samaritan woman by the well. We tend to say of a dead person that he was 'fortified by the rites of the Church', and we have in mind the Eucharist; but in the early period they were inclined to think of baptism. For this reason, the faithful who have died and whom we pray for at Mass, are still described today as those 'who have gone before us in the sign of faith'. They have gone before us marked with the seal of faith, baptism; their faith was confirmed and sealed by baptism. In the early creeds, then, where we do not expect an enumeration of the sacraments, baptism is mentioned, but not the Eucharist.

The early christians turned their minds principally to the starting-point of christian life, but also to its conclusion. Christianity is an invitation to the great marriage feast. It is the proclamation of the kingdom of God, to be realised at the end of time. It is the beginning of the marriage feast of the Lamb, spoken of in the Apocalypse.

In the last hundred years archeologists have discovered in the roman catacombs and elsewhere representations of meals. A few scholars have thought that they depict the Eucharist or at least the last supper or the multiplication of loaves or a love-feast. None of these interpretations is wholly satisfactory. They are certainly not historical representations of the multiplication of loaves or the last supper. The guests sit at a semi-circular table which was called *sigma*; bread and fish are on the table, jugs of wine stand nearby. It is certainly not an historical feast: the Eucharist is only its earthly beginning, and the *agape*, in particular the *agape* of the dead, is only a foreshadowing of it. It is the feast at the end of time. It is the great gift of divine grace alluded to in the postcommunions of the missal where, even after communion has been received, we further pray that we may receive even greater gifts. It is glory, which is why the antiphon *O Sacrum Convivium* describes the Eucharist as an earnest of glory to come. It is the *Maranatha* ('Come, Lord Jesus') of the early Church, conveyed in the language of images.

The early Church had a much stronger sense than we have of the

eschatological fulfilment, even when it no longer counted on the imminent return of the Lord. It prayed 'thy Kingdom come' with much more fervour than we usually do, and in the light of this hope the brightness of the Eucharist was almost overlooked.

Yet the early Church lived out the life of grace and the sacraments in the present too. And from this point of view the Eucharist occupied a central place. Since the eucharistic movement began, and especially since Pius X, the example of the early Church has often been proposed – their daily communions, their devout celebration of the sacred mysteries. The appeal to the example of the early Church is justified. Though there has undoubtedly been some idealisation born of over-enthusiasm, the facts we know are important and sufficiently eloquent.

It is true that they did not in general celebrate the Eucharist daily – for technical reasons this was scarcely practicable – but the Eucharist could be taken home after the Sunday celebration. There is evidence of a widespread custom of receiving daily the holy bread, 'before any other food'. The practice was taken for granted to such an extent that the prayer for daily bread in the Our Father was understood, in the earliest patristic exegesis, to refer primarily to the bread of the Eucharist.

There was no precept of the Church imposing Sunday celebration. But participation seems to have been so general that, as Justin reports, all came together on Sunday, townspeople and country folk; deacons bore the Eucharist to those who were prevented from coming. Further, there was great reluctance to forgo the Sunday liturgy when persecution broke out again and participation spelled mortal danger. For what caused the christians to be persecuted and threatened with death was not their faith – anyone could believe what he liked – but their particular form of divine worship, so early on Sunday morning, and so independent of the official pagan cult. Persecution was directed against the form of worship. Yet the christians held firmly to their eucharistic meetings. And when we read in the *Acts of the Martyrs* the defence of those who were accused during the Diocletian persecution, it expresses the feeling of many others: without the *dominicum* we could not exist. One can perhaps say that the majority of the martyrs of that period died because they held fast to the Eucharist.

And yet relatively little is said about the sacrament or about the presence of the body of Christ. But there is much about what should result from them. The sacred communion of the sacrament is the

force which binds into unity the communion of saints. The *communio* is repeatedly mentioned, but in a way which makes it impossible to know whether the sacrament or the community is meant.

St. Augustine should be mentioned in this connection. He has often been reproached with stressing so much the symbolic side of the sacrament that its particular content, the real presence of Christ's body and blood, was no longer properly expressed. Less has been heard of this complaint in the last few years, as new sermons of the great doctor have been discovered in which he makes his position clear. Nevertheless, it remains true that he scarcely ever speaks of the Eucharist without immediately indicating its social meaning, its power of uniting the community of the faithful: 'The meaning of the sacrament', he says, 'is unity, so that we who are taken up in his body as his limbs, should be what we receive'.¹ Christians receive the body of Christ that they may become the body of Christ.

The Eucharist was not considered in isolation as an object of veneration or as a particular form of christian piety, but rather as an essential part of christian living. Moreover, this view can be seen in the New Testament, where christians are invited to unite themselves with Christ: 'Draw near to him, the living stone . . . you too must be built up on him, stones that live and breathe, into a living temple, to offer up these spiritual offerings which God accepts through Jesus Christ'.² What are these spiritual offerings? Are they merely good works and a genuine christian life? Or is the Eucharist meant? Plainly, both are referred to. The offering of the christian life, that is the day to day work, endurance and suffering, is constantly gathered up and offered to God in the Eucharist, so that it is not so much the individual who achieves something remarkable, but rather that all together form a spiritual temple in which God is glorified.

The Eucharist was the celebration of the community. That is why the plural is used in the official prayers of the priest, and the dialogue between priest and people takes the form of invitation and acclamation. That is why until the late middle ages, at least on Sundays and holydays, the liturgy was the common celebration of all, and the clergy, gathered round a common altar, concelebrated and communicated together.³

Even so, there are traces in the early christian period of a piety that is directed, immediately and expressly, towards the sacrament

¹ Sermo 55, 7.

² 1 Pet 2, 4.

³ M. Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani III* (Louvain, 1951), p. 178.

itself. This is true of Chrysostom, who has been described as the *Doctor Eucharistiae*. He praises the greatness and dignity of the sacrament. It is striking that in him (as already in some earlier christian writings) the sacrament is described as the 'awful' mystery and the altar as the 'fearsome' table. Although he concentrates his attention on the sacrament and loosens it to some extent from its context in the economy of salvation, he makes his hearers aware of the greatness of the divine mystery in its totality, and this is in fact given in the sacrament.¹

In the western Church a similar development came to dominate; and it was much stronger than in the East. The reverence due to the sacrament was increasingly emphasised – the early Church may perhaps have treated it too nonchalantly. But now more and more precepts and rubrics were laid down for the reception of communion; the prescriptions of ritual purity in the Old Testament were invoked; reverence grew, communion became more infrequent. Theological discussion sought to elucidate the nature of the eucharistic presence, and the question of the precise moment at which transubstantiation took place aroused interest.

It is most instructive to trace the development of one small ceremony. In the early middle ages the part of the Mass from the beginning of the preface to the Our Father was still thought of as a whole, as the eucharistic prayer, as thanksgiving to the divine Majesty to whom the sacrifice is offered. This was expressed in the rubric which instructed the congregation, at pontifical Mass, to bow when the celebrating bishop sang *adorant dominationes, tremunt potestates*. From that point onwards they were to remain bowed down throughout the whole canon until the concluding doxology.² When the *Sanctus* began, they had all to kneel down and remain on their knees, praying before God's majesty. Then the attitude changed imperceptibly. The change of posture was delayed. It was no longer placed before but after the *Sanctus*: thus the feeling grew that it is only with the *Te Igitur* that the prayer of consecration begins; and the homage now goes to the sacrament. What precedes, so it is thought, is only an introduction, a 'preface'; only after it do we enter the realm of the sacred mystery. And so people begin to kneel down after the *Sanctus* in honour of the blessed Sacrament. It is certainly a possible and meaningful approach; but it differs from that of early ages.

¹ G. Fittkau, *Der Begriff des Mysteriums bei Johannes Chrysostomus* (Bonn, 1953), pp. 122 ff.

² J. A. Jungmann, *Gewordene Liturgie* (Innsbruck 1941), pp. 120-36.

A second development completes and reinforces the first. Germanic sensibility sought everywhere something visible and tangible. People wanted, for example, to see and venerate holy relics. Thus the desire to see the sacrament grew, and it was all the greater since people so seldom dared to receive it. So, within the Canon, the moment of consecration is singled out by raising the sacred host and letting the people see it. This undoubtedly significant custom began in Paris about the year 1200 and spread to the Rhineland. But towards the end of the middle ages the practice of being present only for the actual moment of consecration had become an abuse; people came in to look at the host and then left the church immediately.

The tendency to emphasise the holy sacrament and make it an object of special veneration remains, even after the reforms of the Council of Trent. The development is certainly justified and is an enrichment of the life of the Church, unless something more important is thereby disturbed and destroyed. The feast of Corpus Christi and Corpus Christi processions begin. The monstrance is introduced to display the blessed Sacrament to the faithful in a worthy setting. Exposition during vespers and during Mass is introduced. Holy hour and Benediction start. *Quarant' ore*, which from the earliest period had been used during Holy Week to recall the forty hours spent by our Lord in the tomb, is now transformed into forty hours of prayer before the blessed Sacrament. In church, the tabernacle takes the central place and outweighs the altar in importance. The idea spreads that a church is primarily the house of God, and only requires reverence when the lamp burns within it. A sacramental piety develops which, even within the Mass, values and understands only the consecration, because at that moment Christ becomes present.

Not all these developments can be approved. For the result of much far-reaching emphasis was to isolate the blessed Sacrament from the original context of its foundation. A static view of the sacrament became all too often predominant; the main interest centred on the abiding presence. The dynamic understanding of the mystery as thanksgiving, sacrifice and communion, as the taking up of human wretchedness into the transforming power of Christ's mystery, was considerably weakened.

Yet the Mass was maintained and continued in its inherited form with great fidelity; the texts and rites were preserved in their entirety. But the remarkable thing is that this admirably preserved

liturgy which harmonises all the important aspects of the eucharistic mystery, had little effect on the piety of the clergy. To the people, the liturgy became remote and alien; but clerics too, in spite of their fidelity to the rubrics, failed to grasp its meaning.

Early christianity, which laid the foundations of the eucharistic liturgy still visible today in all liturgies of East and of West, sought to enshrine two leading ideas: the Mass is the memorial of the Lord and it is the offering of the Church. These two thoughts are expressed, clearly, at a decisive point of the Mass as we know it today: *Unde et memores . . . tam beatae passionis . . . offerimus praeclarae majestati tuae hostiam puram . . .* This twofold prayer is found in the earliest eucharistic prayer which has come down to us, in the liturgy of Hippolytus of Rome. Dating from about 215, the text reads, after the words of consecration: *Memores igitur mortis et resurrectionis eius offerimus tibi panem et calicem.* The idea expressed is this: what we have just done is a memorial of the Lord, in accordance with his command at the last supper. He handed over to us, as a memorial, the offering of his body and the out-pouring of his blood, so that we might never forget who is our hope and our salvation. There is a further idea: that we too should present to the heavenly Father the offering of his body and the out-pouring of his blood, as an expression of our own christian self-giving and worship of the divine Majesty.

This primitive form of eucharistic celebration expresses with clarity – heightened in the course of the celebration, that we are dealing with the body and blood of the God-man, and that the body and blood of the Lord are really here present. The mind did not, however, linger on the fact of presence, but pressed onwards dynamically to the reception of the holy food and the prayer of thanksgiving which concludes the feast.

As the eucharistic cult was self-explanatory and was itself the main form of eucharistic piety, it not unnaturally happened that the memorial and offering receded into the background; they were taken for granted as an inherited possession. In the explanations of the Mass given to the faithful and committed to writing, the memorial of the Lord is strongly emphasised. From the end of the eighth century the Mass was conceived as a dramatic representation of the history of salvation from the fall of Adam to the coming of the Redeemer and beyond that to his second coming at the last day. Later, the scope of the representation was gradually restricted to the sufferings of the Lord. So one can understand how Corpus Christi

mystery plays, which flourished at the start of the modern period, could incorporate extracts from the older passion mysteries. In the Bozen Corpus Christi play, tableaux of the sufferings of Christ were carried in procession, both in the form of Old Testament types and scenes from the New Testament. In this way the thought of the *anamnesis* was kept alive. Neither did the idea of sacrifice disappear. It was kept alive in the minds of the faithful chiefly through the offertory procession. For many years, every Sunday, there was the widespread custom of an offertory procession in which the whole community took part. In the late middle ages, the offertory procession took place at least on great feast days: on the four feast days which corresponded to the 'four seasons' – such was the general rule. There were also offertory processions on special occasions like funerals, weddings, guild and confraternity celebrations. One must admit that this practice, in which money had a certain part to play, was exposed to dangers of misunderstanding and formalism. People thought not so much of sharing in Christ's sacrifice as of sharing in the offertory gifts, about which some highly dubious theories were prevalent.

The offertory practices of the middle ages in decline roused the wrath of the reformers. Not only did they exclude the offertory procession from the Church's traditional liturgy, but they removed all traces of sacrifice from the Mass and left only the commemoration of the last supper; for they held that the Church cannot offer sacrifice; there is only one sacrifice, that made by Christ on the cross.

The Council of Trent and the theology derived from it insisted, in answer to the reformers' positions, that the Mass is not an independent sacrifice, but the re-presentation of Christ's sacrifice. They stress that Christ is the priest of this sacrifice as he was in the sacrifice of the cross, and yet that there is a true offering in the Mass and a true and enduring presence of the body of Christ, not simply *in usu*, at the moment of reception. The eucharistic interest of the last few centuries has thus been directed to the offering of Christ; the fact that the Church and the faithful have a part to play has been obscured. This is a reaction against the medieval view. Interest has also been concentrated on the real presence of the Lord in the Sacrament. The defence of the traditional, inherited, inalienable doctrine led to such an emphasis. It was at this time that the various forms of eucharistic cult we know so well were introduced. Eucharistic piety comes to mean veneration of the Eucharist, prayer before the blessed Sacrament exposed, Benediction, Mass

processions, holy communion – but with all the stress laid on the fervour needed in preparation for communion and thanksgiving after it. For the isolation of the Sacrament and the concentration on the real presence affected the view of communion. The idea of participation in the sacrifice, in the sacrificial food, loses ground – in the 18th and 19th centuries communion was distributed chiefly outside Mass – and communion is regarded as the visit of the Saviour who comes out of the tabernacle. Even when communion was received during Mass, devotion to communion was an independent thing which had hardly anything to do with the Mass.

Perhaps no age showed so much fervour and devotion in preparing children for communion as the 19th century. Tension was great, among the children and their teachers. Excitement reigned for weeks and months. First communion became the most beautiful day of one's life, for it was the child's first encounter with the Saviour. But is it really the first meeting with the Saviour? Some must have raised this question. For the first meeting, the great transforming encounter, has already taken place in baptism where the child is incorporated into the body of Christ, is received into the resurrection of Christ, becomes a christian. But the Eucharist, in which Christ is present, and communion, in which he is personally received, so overshadowed all the other sacraments that almost nothing more remained of them, even of baptism, than a prescribed rite through which certain effects of grace were mediated. Communion was an isolated peak, and therefore the devotion of communion became a separated thing.

The stimulus to frequent communion provided by Pius X did little to change this attitude, however much good it may have done in other respects. If the 19th century had stressed the veneration of the blessed Sacrament, the emphasis was now shifted to its reception, and this was indeed a great step forward. But even in catechisms of our own day, eucharistic doctrine is frequently presented under the following heads: sacrament, Mass, communion. Sometimes the order of presentation is: sacrament, communion, Mass. It is therefore legitimate to speak of the disintegration which has taken place in the conception of the Eucharist. All the elements are there. All the dogmas of faith are maintained and zealously confessed; but unity between them, a sense of the harmony of the whole doctrine, has been lost.

Yet we must admit that even with this form of piety, the blessed Sacrament has been the source of countless blessings – and great

strength. The sacrament is rich enough for people to live on a part of the great mystery: on, so to speak, a fragment of the host. It would not be difficult to draw up a long list of saints whose piety centred on the tabernacle: from St. Paschal Baylon whose relics were specially brought from Spain to the Munich Eucharistic Congress, to Damian de Veuster who said that he would have been unable to bear life among the lepers if the Saviour had not been present in the tabernacle of his chapel. These outstanding figures represent millions of devout faithful and zealous christians who followed the same path and became holy in the same way. We should not dare to criticise their piety or claim to be superior to them. Their devotional forms were good and, in their situation, inevitable and right, even if they were not the best possible.

Yet we can and must grant that the time had come to overcome the separation of the parts. In an age when life is increasingly secularised, when to many people God seems more and more remote, the Church must place before men the full power of her teaching and mysteries.

The liturgical renewal of this century is simply the attempt to restore the parts to the whole, and particularly to bring out the full, integrating meaning of the Eucharist. The historical studies of the preceding generation have enabled us to see more clearly the development of the liturgy and to grasp the process by which the partial aspects of the Eucharist were gradually divorced from each other. They likewise have enabled us to understand the ideal present at the beginning and so badly needed in our time.

The Eucharistic Congress held in Munich three years ago was perhaps the first great opportunity of making the newly discovered ideal known publicly. It was no longer simply the cult of the Eucharist on a vast scale; the celebration of the Eucharist was set in the context of the whole economy of salvation. For there we witnessed the Church, we saw how she celebrates and receives the Eucharist – and thereby we honoured the Eucharist. We witnessed the power the Eucharist has of uniting and holding together the people of God. The *Corpus mysticum* was seen in the full, ancient and complete meaning of the term. It is not by chance that this expression was first used of the Lord's sacramental body. We receive in communion the mysteriously hidden body of the Lord, the *Corpus mysticum* – such was the way writers spoke in the carolingian period. But the mysteriously hidden body can effect a fresh realisation, a new embodiment of itself in the visible human world; it can express itself in the multiple

limbs which make up the body of Christ, the Church. The Church is indeed the body of the Lord, it is the earthly revelation of what is contained in the sacrament and what will one day be perfected and fulfilled in heaven.

The discovery of the Church, the reawakening of the sense of the Church, is one of the most welcome aspects of the contemporary religious renewal. The strength which the sense of the Church has already attained appears most clearly in church architecture. The ecclesiastical architecture of the last decade may not be comparable to baroque architecture or to the great gothic cathedrals in its appeal to the aesthetic sense or its artistic richness; but it can be compared in meaningfulness and depth of religious feeling. In baroque the primary concern was to draw down to this earth the glory of heaven and the rejoicing of the Church triumphant; baroque sought to make the house of God reflect the glory of heaven. Human beings, here on earth, were only marginal figures in the plan, whatever the scale of the building. Modern church architecture has begun, rightly, to express the reality of the *ecclesia*, the sacred assembly, gathered together here on earth, its mind raised towards God and the coming of his kingdom, knowing that though it is called by him, favoured by him and nourished by the holy bread from the altar, yet it remains firmly in this world and gives glory to God in this precise place.

The new-found sense of the Church, one of the most welcome aspects of the contemporary religious revival, carries with it the recognition that the Church, gathered together and held together by the Eucharist, is not a vague, shadowy reality beyond time (though one often gets this impression when people speak of the excellence and divine qualities of the Church), but is the empirical Church here and now, drawn from this world, grouped around this altar, made up of men and women of all classes and ages. And this multitude of people, assembled to celebrate the Eucharist, is not raised above the earthly world into a sphere which has nothing to do with everyday cares; on the contrary, everyday life and the harsh realities of earthly existence are borne to the altar Sunday by Sunday, represented in the gifts of bread and wine, bread from our earthly fields, wine from our earthly vineyards. These gifts, offered in gratitude, are taken up in the all-embracing offering of Christ, spiritualised in him and transformed into a hymn of praise to the divine Majesty. That is precisely what we found at the outset, in the first epistle of St. Peter: the faithful are living stones built up into a holy temple, so as

to offer their whole now transformed lives through Christ to God.

The liturgical movement, it has been said, has reduced the honour paid to the Saviour in the Eucharist. That may be so. The main emphasis is now placed not on a partial aspect, a single truth in the wide range of doctrine, but rather on the specific and central focus of the whole doctrine. Our attention is directed to the central point, and this centre begins to shine with clearer light; but the surrounding areas, hitherto perhaps dull and obscure, are also illuminated. We understand the Church better, the Church which celebrates the Eucharist, and the unity of the Church which the sacrament calls for; we understand better baptism from which the Church is born; and scripture, the other table of God which nourishes us at the start of every eucharistic celebration, has acquired a new and richer relevance.

Enlightened thinking on the Eucharist knows well that salvation cannot lie simply in the frequency of eucharistic celebration, that the total of communions is not the best way to measure the spiritual state of a parish, that sacramental life must not be separated from the personal, spiritual, abiding encounter of the person with his God. A high esteem for the Eucharist suggests that it requires gradual preparation, that prayer in common outside Mass should also have a place in the devotional life of a parish: that there should be a place for the word of God and awareness of the good news which has been proclaimed; that preaching of the word and worthy divine service go hand in hand.

In fact, we need not worry about a special devotion to the Eucharist. If only it could be integrated into the whole of christian life, as it was in the early Church! We must see to it that the faithful understand the full richness of God's love, conveyed to us in Christ and answered by faith, hope and charity. Then they will of their own accord enter into the *Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro*, the great *Eucharistia* which our Lord himself taught us. That is the healthiest and most durable form of eucharistic piety.

THE WEDDING-FEAST OF ISRAEL

By JAMES QUINN

THE time we live in is the sacramental age of the Church. God speaks to us in the sign-language of faith, for vision is yet to come. But already, by means of the Church, we live in the supernatural world of heaven. The sacraments belong to Christ's Easter world of the new creation.

At the very heart of the sacramental world is the foretaste, and the reality, of heaven: the Eucharist. Here is Emmanuel, God with us. Here is the source of joy, God's presence. Here is the fountain of everlasting life.

The History of Salvation

The Eucharist spans the whole history of salvation. It is a great, many-splendoured rainbow overarching the horizon of time. It stretches back in history to the incarnation, and beyond. It is itself the very mystery of redemption. It looks forward to the glorious fulfilment of incarnation and redemption in the great day of Christ at the end of time.

The Eucharist takes us back to the origins of mankind in Eden. It sweeps us forward to the consummation of all things in paradise. It is the guiding star by which the course of the world's history is set. It gathers up into itself the whole of God's revelation, and cradles within its narrow limits the boundless world of divine reality.

There will be a time, an eternity, when the Eucharist will be no more. But the reality that it enshrines will last for ever. It is the reality of God's presence and of his love. The Eucharist speaks to us in simple, human language of God's abiding love for mankind. It tells us that communion between God and man is by a covenant of marriage, celebrated by a wedding-feast and sealed by a new presence of God that brings joy to his bride.

The Divine Community of Love

God is love. In fact, God is a community of love. God's life is an eternal communion: a communion of Being shared inexhaustibly by three divine Persons. This surpassing mystery is the resplendent

sun that lends warmth and colour and radiance to all lesser truths. This is the key to unlock the meaning of the Eucharist.

The eternal community of love chose freely to call into being a second community of love, which was to be linked for ever with the divine Exemplar, the blessed Trinity. God created Adam and Eve to found this community which would unite the whole human family in one supernatural society, made one with the eternal community of love.

The lesser community was to be modelled on the greater. The self-giving love of God was to be its pattern and its life. The way of entry into the community was to be the fruitfulness of marriage, the echo of God's self-giving love. The fruit of marriage was to be not only life but grace. Every conception was, in God's plan, to be immaculate and full of grace.

The Wedding-Feast

The joy of marriage is the recurrent symbol of grace. The wedding theme runs through the history of salvation, from Eden to paradise.¹ Christ is 'the Bridegroom';² grace is a wedding-feast.³ The meaning of the 'sign' of Cana turns on this theme.

The story of Cana⁴ involves the interplay of three concentric dramas: Cana, the fall and the redemption. It begins with the simple village drama of a wedding-feast where the supply of wine fails. 'They have no wine': Mary puts before her Son the distress of bridegroom and bride. For the Jews a wedding-feast without the wine of joy was no feast at all.

The words of his mother strike the imagination of our Lord. His mind's eye ranges over the whole history of salvation. He looks beyond this bridegroom and bride to the first bridegroom and bride of all: Adam and Eve, faced in Eden with the greatest tragedy of all. The wine of grace, the very life-blood of the community of love, has failed, not only for Adam and Eve but for the whole human race. Only God can restore it. 'They have no wine': our Lord chooses to read into these words a meaning perhaps never intended, a spiritual meaning that throws a flood of light on his symbolic gesture at Cana.

Our Lord smiles, the smile that is unrecorded because it is so natural. His mother sees the smile, and knows that a deeper meaning underlies the apparent refusal. 'My hour has not yet come':

¹ Gen 3, 15; 2 Cor 11, 2-3; Eph 5, 22-33; Apoc 19, 6-9; 21, 2-3 & 9-11; 22, 17.

² Ps 44; Mk 2, 18-20; cp. Jn 3, 29. ³ Mt 22, 2-14; 25, 1-13. ⁴ Jn 2, 1-11.

it is the awaited hour of redemption, the hour when he will give to a thirsting world miraculous and abundant wine. The wine he will give is the holy Spirit of joy, and the joy-giving Eucharist.

The 'sign' of Cana is a promise in action that the hour of redemption, the hour of the Eucharist, though 'not yet come', is at hand. It is the promise in action of the best of all wines kept for the best of all wedding-feasts. The mystery of redemption will be celebrated by the wedding-feast of the Eucharist, and sealed by a new presence of God, bringing joy to his bride.

From Eden to Paradise

The bliss of Eden is thus symbolized in our Lord's mind by a joyful wedding-feast. The wedding of Eden, like the wedding of Cana, was hallowed and made joyful by God's presence. But the wine of grace failed in Eden, and God no longer favoured with his presence the garden where he had walked in friendship with the bridegroom and the bride. A new community of love had to be established. A new wedding-feast and a new presence had to be planned. The 'sign' of Cana is God's promise of restoration. The wheel is turning full circle from Eden to paradise.

God is never defeated in his love by man's refusal of it. No sooner had Adam sinned than God revealed his purpose of founding afresh the community of love that he had planned. The new community would be a still more wonderful display of God's power and goodness.

God had in mind nothing less than a wedding between his eternal Son and human nature. Self-giving love had been the pattern of the first, frustrated, human community of love. It was to be the pattern also of this second, everlasting community of love. The wedding between God and human nature was to bear fruit in the new community of love. A new community was to be born of God's self-giving love.

The People of God

As the first step in the unfolding of God's plan a people had to be prepared: the preparatory community that would flower in the new Israel of God. The history of salvation is the saga of two Israels: the Israel of Sinai and 'the Israel of God', which is the Church.¹

Israel as a people was called into being on God's initiative. This was to be no merely human society. What was to create this people

¹ Gal 4, 22-31; cp. 6, 16.

as God's people was not the bond of human kinship, however strong; it was God's overshadowing love and his divine purpose for the future. The Israel born on Sinai was born, like the Israel of God which it prefigured, 'not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man but of God'.¹

Israel's fashioning as a people began with a series of divine wonders, leading up to the dazzling glory of Sinai. On the mountain God entered into a covenant with his new-born people. Israel was to be faithful to God's law; in return she was to experience the protection of God's almighty providence.

The covenant ritual was completed by the blood of sacrifice; that is, by a meal on the sacred mountain in God's presence,² by communion between God and man, by a gift shared between friends. The same framework of sacrifice is the setting for the Passover meal and the sacred meal of the covenant. Passover and covenant are two moments in one divine mystery of love. They fuse into one in the Eucharist, which is at once Passover meal and covenant meal. Passover and covenant bequeath to the Eucharist their sacrificial character and their content of divine love.

The Bridegroom of Israel

The covenant on Sinai was in no way a treaty of peace between two powers, carefully defining their respective spheres of influence. There was but one sphere of influence, identical for both contracting parties. A new society was born on Sinai. A contract of marriage had been signed. Henceforth the interests of Yahweh and Israel were one.

Under the guidance of prophetic insight the covenant of Sinai was later seen in its true splendour as a marriage-covenant between Yahweh and Israel.³ God was now the bridegroom of Israel, and Israel was bound by marriage-vows to be faithful to her divine Lover. To these nuptials God brought the added joy of a never-failing wedding-feast. The new order of sacrifice, ratified on Sinai and continued in the tabernacle and the temple, represents the first stirrings towards the new dispensation of love. Sacrifice in Israel was not only a sacred meal in the presence of Yahweh,⁴ the sign of friendship and of peace; it was also a festival of joy celebrating the wedding between God and Israel. Unfaithful and idolatrous Israel was therefore a wicked and adulterous Israel.⁵

¹ Jn 1, 13.

² Exod 24, 3-11.

³ Hos 2, 14-24; Ezek 16, 8-14.

⁴ Deut 12, 5-7.

⁵ Hos 2, 1-13; Ezek 16, 15-59.

The Glory of God

Like every true lover, God is not satisfied with protestations of his love. A marriage-contract in words must find fulfilment in a more personal relationship. Nor is God satisfied even with a fatherly providence exercised as it were at a distance. He must show his love for his bride by taking up his dwelling in her presence.

God's presence in the Old Testament is always real, even where it is invisible. But for the sake of his people it was by a created symbol of his glory that God manifested his presence among them. God's glory had been expressed, in terms of light: in the burning bush, in the fire on Sinai, in the cloud of glory enveloping the mountain.¹ Light is the first-born of creation, the primeval manifestation of God's glory.² It is the image which least inadequately reflects 'the brightness of His Glory and figure of His substance'³ as God dwells 'in light inaccessible'.⁴ The image of light will be used later in Israel's history to describe Wisdom's glory,⁵ looking forward to the true Light which enlightens the darkness of the world.⁶

It was in a radiant cloud of glory that God dwelt among his people. God took up his dwelling as the *Shekinah* in the curtain-enclosed Holy of Holies in tabernacle and temple, enthroned between 'the cherubim of glory' on the mercy-seat above the ark, containing the marriage-covenant between Yahweh and Israel.⁷ So too the *Shekinah* of the new covenant was to take up his dwelling behind the curtain of his human nature, when God the Son in person became the new alliance between God and man, in a marriage consummated in the flesh.⁸

The City of Peace

With the divine Presence in their midst the pilgrim people journeyed on from Sinai. But wayward Israel forgot the guiding hand of God, refused to trust his providence and demanded food and drink in the wilderness. In answer to Moses' prayer, God provided his people with miraculous and abundant food and drink, notably the manna from heaven and the water from the rock, promises of greater gifts – and a greater Moses – to come.⁹

With God's presence to sustain them, with Jesus (Josue) to lead

¹ Exod 3, 2-6; 19, 18; 24, 16-17. ² Gen 1, 3. ³ Heb 1, 3. ⁴ 1 Tim 6, 16.

⁵ Wis 7, 24-30.

⁶ Jn 1, 4-14; Jn 1, 1-7; Apoc 21, 23.

⁷ Exod 29, 42-46; 40, 32-36; Heb 9, 5.

⁸ Jn 1, 14; Heb 10, 19-22. Cf. *infra*, p. 154.

⁹ Exod 16, 1-36; 17, 1-7.

them, the Israelites passed through Jordan into the land that flowed with milk and honey, and the foretaste of heaven. They were, like Abraham their father, in search of 'a City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God'.¹ Eventually the royal city of Jerusalem was established, the image of 'the holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, prepared as a bride for her husband'.²

The city of peace, especially under King Solomon, was a prophetic symbol of the heavenly city, where Israel was to dwell in peace under the protection of the indwelling Glory.³ This was the golden age of Israel's greatness. Yet the city of peace was to be the capital of a more extensive kingdom than even Solomon knew. Sion was to be the mother-city of all nations, with a peace surpassing that of any earthly kingdom.⁴

The Dwelling-Place of the Glory

The heart of the city of peace was the temple. The central shrine of the whole nation, the focus of its life, was the Holy of Holies, the dwelling-place of the Glory. The presence of God, the Shekinah, was the abiding sign of, the divine seal set on, the covenant and on Israel's fidelity to her bridegroom.⁵ The presence, even more than the covenant, made Israel one.

God's greatest gift to Israel was his own presence in the Glory. This was the true source of Israel's greatness. No nation had its God so near to it as Israel.⁶ Sion was in fact the city of the presence.⁷ Sion without the Glory was a widowed Sion, a city of lamentation. The true Israel was Israel with the Glory.⁸ Israel without the Glory was an Israel of longing and expectation, an Israel of sorrows awaiting her consolation in the return of the Glory.

But if God was present to Israel in the Glory, equally Israel must be present to God in the mutual surrender of love. Israel moved in God's presence by her reverence for the Glory, and by her grateful remembrance of God's wonderful works on her behalf. The recurrent festivals kept in the memory of Israel the signal proofs of God's predilection for his people. The festivals were more than a memorial: they were a celebration of an ever-present reality. Each mighty act of God in history was a reflection in time of the eternal truth of

¹ Heb 11, 10; 12, 22.

³ Ps 47; Joel 3, 16-21; Zech 8, 1-8.

⁵ Ps 131.

⁷ Ps 45; Ps 46; Ps 47; Apoc 21, 10-11.

² Apoc 21, 2.

⁴ Ps 71; Ps 86; Isai 60, 1-22; Mic 4, 1-8.

⁶ Deut 4, 7.

⁸ Rom 9, 4.

God himself. Israel's festivals were too a hope for the future, a longing for fulfilment. In the same way, the great festival of the new Israel makes present one surpassing mystery of redeeming love, embracing within it the past, the present and the future.

The New Temple

The temple of stone was the symbol of a greater temple yet to come. God longed to dwell in Israel's heart of flesh. But Israel's heart had to be broken in order to be made whole. A new heart of flesh had to be formed for Israel. A new covenant was promised by the prophets. It was to be a covenant written not now on tables of stone but in a heart of flesh.¹

The way of purification for Israel was the way of suffering and sacrifice. The temple of stone, the very heart of Israel, was to be cast down. A new and spiritual temple, not made with hands, was to rise on its ruins: the new Israel itself, the body of Christ which was itself to be cast down, to rise more gloriously.²

The Glory was to flee from Israel's temple of stone. But in prophetic vision Ezekiel was to see the return of the Glory from the East, from the captivity in Babylon, to re-enter through the Eastern gate of a new and spiritual temple.³

The Vocation of Israel

Israel was most aware of her unique destiny as she gathered in holiness around the altar of sacrifice, as she shared in the sacred meals with Yahweh in the communion-sacrifices of the temple. The presence of God created and sustained the identity of Israel.⁴

Israel knew no higher vocation than to prepare the dwelling-place of the Glory. The new Israel brought that vocation to fulfilment. Yet the old Israel was more privileged than she knew. Israel was chosen to prepare the living temple, not made with hands, that was the dwelling-place of the Son of God.⁵ It was a maiden of Israel, the virgin daughter of Sion, who fashioned this temple of the new Israel. Within this temple there is a greater presence and a greater sacrifice, for Christ's body is the temple of the new presence and the altar of the perfect sacrifice.⁶ Israel prepared also the structure of the new temple of Christ's mystical body. Israel was a kingly priesthood, a holy nation: to these titles the new Israel falls heir.⁷

¹ Jer 31, 31-34; Ezek 37, 26-27.

² Ezek 43, 1-5. ⁴ 1 Sam 4, 21-22; Ps 67.

⁶ Apoc 21, 10-11 & 22-23.

³ Jn 2, 18-22; Eph 2, 19-22.

⁵ Lk 2, 32; Rom 9, 3-5.

⁷ 2 Pet 2, 4-10.

With these titles the Israel of Sinai handed on to the new Israel her spiritual inheritance. Pre-eminent in this inheritance were a profound reverence for the sovereign majesty of God and the loving consciousness of God's presence to Israel. This was the inheritance of wisdom.

Divine Wisdom

Through suffering, through sacrifice, Israel was to grow in wisdom. Equally, Wisdom was to grow in Israel. The quest of wisdom goes back in history far beyond Israel. But it was Israel's glory to direct man's age-old search for wisdom along highly spiritual pathways. Israel began by seeing that human wisdom was no true wisdom without the divine Wisdom which 'reacheth from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly'.¹ Israel's contemplation of wisdom as it gathered insight was preparing the world for Christ. In the fullness of time wisdom revealed itself in all its splendour to Israel as divine Wisdom in person, entering the world of his own creating.²

For Israel divine Wisdom was God's Word, which 'came forth out of the mouth of the Most High, the firstborn before all creatures'.³ Wisdom was thus the faithful mirror of God's mind. But Wisdom was not only God's Word within his eternity. Wisdom flashed forth as God's creative Word, the expression of God's creative Will.⁴ This Word of God revealed itself to man in the world of creation around him, and in the mighty hand of God's providence which sustained it.⁵

In a special way, however, Wisdom revealed itself to Israel in the Torah, the word and law of God which pointed the way of righteousness to God's presence. Word and presence were for Israel intimately linked.⁶ They were twin aspects of God's all-embracing providence. Where wisdom revealed itself to Israel in the Torah,⁷ wisdom gave itself to Israel in the Presence,⁸ in the cloud of glory which took up its dwelling within the Holy of Holies, above the Ark of the Covenant which enshrined the law. The Presence to Israel was thus the earthly counterpart of Wisdom's dwelling in the sanctuary of Heaven.⁹

¹ Wis 8, 1.

² Jn 1, 14; Heb 1, 1-3.

³ Sir 24, 5.

⁴ Prov 8, 22-31.

⁵ Sir 42, 15-43; 37.

⁶ Sir 17, 9-11.

⁷ Sir 24, 32-33. Cf. THE WAY Vol. 2 (July 1962), pp 219-21.

⁸ Sir 24, 12-16.

⁹ Wis 9, 1-12.

The House of Wisdom

Divine Wisdom sought Israel in a true marriage of mind and heart. Wisdom on Israel's part was her surrender in love to divine Wisdom, offering the homage of her mind by her fidelity to covenant and Torah, and the devotion of her heart by her service of Wisdom in the liturgy of the temple.

Here was the house of Wisdom. This was the place where above all Israel was present to Wisdom: the place of covenant and of presence. Here Israel dwelt continuously in the presence of divine Wisdom. Here Israel kept in grateful remembrance the wonderful works of Wisdom's providence. Here Israel looked forward to 'the consolation of Israel' in the messianic age to come.¹ Here bridegroom and bride met in love. Here in Wisdom's house Israel shared the joy of Wisdom's banquet.²

Wisdom fulfilled

The new house of Wisdom in the messianic age of fulfilment is the temple of Christ's body; for Christ is divine Wisdom in person: word and presence, Torah and Shekinah. Wisdom's creative Word spreads a new banquet of joy in Wisdom's presence. 'Take ye and eat; drink ye all of this':³ the invitation to Wisdom's new banquet echoes the cry of Wisdom to Israel as her messengers sped through the city: 'Come, eat my bread and drink the wine which I have mingled for you'.⁴

From the body of Christ, Wisdom's new temple, springs up the fountain of Wisdom: 'If any man thirsts, let him come to Me and drink';⁵ for Christ is 'the Word of God on high', the very 'Fountain of Wisdom'.⁶ Here too is Wisdom, the teacher of Israel. Wisdom of old had invited Israel to submit her neck to Wisdom's 'yoke'.⁷ Now divine Wisdom in person addresses the new Israel in the self-same language: 'Take My yoke upon you and learn of Me'.⁸ The new school of wisdom is Wisdom's house, the temple of Christ's body.

The Eucharist

Wisdom's presence in the Eucharist makes the new Israel the house of Wisdom where alone true wisdom is found. Here is the Torah. Here is the Shekinah. Here is the banquet of Wisdom. At this wedding-feast the bridegroom breaks for Israel the bread of the Torah, which is the new law of the Gospel, and the bread from heaven,

¹ Lk 2, 25-38.

⁴ Prov 9, 5; Isai 55, 1-3.

⁶ Sir 1, 5.

² Prov 9, 1-5.

⁵ Jn 7, 37; 4, 6-15; Apoc 21, 6; 22, 17.

⁷ Sir 51, 34.

³ Mt 26, 26-27.

⁸ Mt 11, 29-30.

which is the body of Christ. Here in the presence of Wisdom the new Israel grows in wisdom, for the school of wisdom is the presence of creative Wisdom in person.

Wisdom's house is also a temple of sacrifice,¹ of self-giving: love and sacrifice go hand in hand. Here the new Israel brings to the banquet of wisdom her sacrificial gifts: the homage of her mind in faith, her hope of fulfilment and the devotion of her heart. For the Eucharist is not only a sacrament, the covenanted way of communion with Wisdom; it is also a sacrifice. Here is the mutual giving of the greatest of all gifts, the gift of self. The self-giving of Israel is the measure of her communion with divine Wisdom.

The Blessings of Israel

The prayer of thanksgiving that is still offered by the Jewish people after food and drink looks back on Israel's blessings with the hope of restoration. 'Have mercy, O Lord our God, upon Israel thy people, upon Jerusalem thy city, upon Sion the dwelling-place of thy glory, upon the kingdom of the house of David thy Anointed, and upon the great and holy house that was called by thy name'. These words on Jewish lips are a prayer of hope for messianic fulfilment. On the lips of Christ they were no wistful hope for the future but the creative words of divine Wisdom. Each blessing came to fulfilment as divine Wisdom spread for Israel the banquet of the Eucharist, the new banquet of Wisdom.

The Eucharist is Israel, the assembly of the new people of God. The Eucharist is the thronging city of peace, the mother-city of the nations. The Eucharist is Sion, city of the presence, for the name of the city is, in Ezechiel's words, 'The Lord is there'.² The Eucharist is the new kingdom of the house of David, for here the kingdom of the new Israel gathers in the presence of its shepherd-king.³

The Eucharist is the great and holy house where sacrifice is offered to God's name; for it is the temple of Christ's body, the living sanctuary of the new liturgy in spirit and in truth.⁴ This new temple is a greater and holier house than ever Israel knew, for it is the house where Wisdom dwells in person. Here the bridegroom of Israel, divine Wisdom, celebrates his nuptials in a wedding-feast where the joy-giving wine cannot fail, where Israel's love for her bridegroom is sealed with a new and glorious presence, the foretaste and the reality of paradise.

¹ Prov 9, 1-2.

² Ezek 48, 35.

³ Ps 22.

⁴ Jn 2, 19-21; 4, 21-26.

I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS

By QUENTIN QUESNELL

THE abiding presence of Christ in our midst is presented under two main forms in the New Testament. First, there is the fact of the eucharistic presence, known to us also from dogmatic definition. Jesus said, 'This is my body';¹ it is almost another way of saying the same thing to affirm that Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is present in the sacrament of the altar.

There is another presence of Jesus, more appreciated in recent years than it had been in the last few centuries, which is equally well grounded in the New Testament texts. If mere counting of texts were a satisfactory method of exegesis, one would call it even better founded than the first, for the vast majority of the 'presence' texts refer to it. They tell us that Christ is with us always, even to the consummation of the world.² Where two or three are gathered together in his name, there is he in the midst of them.³ Who receives his preachers receives him.⁴ We are all members of his one body.⁵ Christ in us is our hope of glory.⁶ He does not leave us orphans, but comes to us,⁷ makes his abode with us,⁸ dwells in our hearts through faith.⁹ In the midst of the New Jerusalem, his Church, he, the Lamb, is always found,¹⁰ etc.

In traditional Catholic exegesis, these texts all refer to a presence beyond the sacramental, a spiritual presence, a 'mystical' presence: the identification of Christ with the individual christian and with the body of the Church. They refer to a real presence of Christ as companion, friend, guide, teacher to the individual and to the social group of christians. This century's interest in the bible, in the liturgy, in patristics, and in a piety with deep dogmatic roots in all of these, has led to a greater appreciation in our own day of this other, this spiritual, mystical presence. With this appreciation has come a new and stronger link with some of the best elements in an abiding Christian tradition, familiar already from such classic texts as the *Imitation of Christ*.¹¹

¹ Lk 22, 19.

² Mt 28, 20.

³ Mt 18, 20.

⁴ Mt 25, 40.

⁵ Cor 12, 27.

⁶ Col 1, 27.

⁷ Jn 14, 18.

⁸ Jn 14, 23.

⁹ Eph 3, 17.

¹⁰ Apoc 21, 22-23.

¹¹ Cf. Book II, cc. 1, 8.

At the same time, the consistent attempt to live this doctrine out in practice, to build a daily spiritual life around it, can lead to some difficulties. For example, there is the problem of how in practice the different presences actually fit together. If one takes seriously the scriptural and traditional truth about the continual presence of Christ with the christian, what is the place of the eucharistic presence in our spiritual life? Very simply, very practically stated, the question comes down to this: If I can talk to Jesus in my heart or at my side at all hours of the day and night, why should I stop to visit him in the blessed Sacrament in a church? Perhaps even: Why should I receive him – or at least, what happens when I do receive him – in holy communion?

The question is naive. A child who had grown up in the reality of the constant presence of Jesus might ask it when first brought into contact with the Eucharist. But naive questions bring us most quickly of all to the heart of deep truths. Let us take the question seriously and try to re-think the 'presence' doctrine in the light of its immediate source in the New Testament.

First of all, some try to answer it by dismissing the non-sacramental presences as symbolic, figurative, imaginary. But this seems in flat contradiction with the direct statements of the New Testament, statements at least as direct and formal as those used of the Eucharist itself. Again, how can this answer be reconciled with the long practical testimony of tradition which we touched on above? And does it not moreover contradict the general teaching of theologians about sanctifying grace? They have always insisted on the reality of Christ's presence in all souls in the state of grace. The conscious perception of this presence may be a mystical gift not necessarily granted to all, but the underlying reality itself, and the deliberate active cultivation of a prayerful attention to that reality is not mysticism nor imagination, but christianity.

A second answer is to point out that we are simply dealing with two different kinds of presence. In the christian heart, Christ is present only as God; in the Eucharist, he is present also as man. This is true; but it is an inadequate answer for several reasons. To begin with, the problem under discussion is a problem of psychological attitude, of how to reconcile two realities in day-to-day conscious living; whereas the proposed solution is not on a psychological but on a purely speculative level. Our question was a practical one: If Jesus is present here and now in my heart, and if I can talk to him, pray to him, feel close to him, receive his help and advice, contem-

plate him and imitate his example, what more do I gain by going to visit him in a church? What more can be had? How will that bring the two of us closer?

Presence, though it escapes our categories of definition, at least psychologically and experientially centres around a person. We can distinguish between the real and the imaginary presence of the same person. But if a person is once really present – can be seriously ‘talked to’, ‘felt near’ – then it is hard to see or in practice to experience what that person’s becoming present ‘also in another way’ can add.

This is precisely the case with the mystical Jesus. He is really present and can be experienced as such. He is a person, a person we know and know well. ‘As God’ and ‘as man’ are, in scholastic terminology, real but incomplete distinctions; but presence has to do with person, and the person in both cases is the same. If it is the same person who is in my heart and in the tabernacle, then the fact that in the church he is present also as man does not really answer the psychological problem.

Moreover it is not perfectly exact to say that the mystical presence is a presence simply ‘as God’. It is the presence of that Jesus into whom we are incorporated and with whom we are mystically identified. The evening before he dies, our Lord speaks of that presence, saying simply, ‘I will come’. That ‘I’ is the key word. He spoke it without distinctions to the group who had come to know him most intimately as a man who was one with the Father: incarnate Word.

A third proposed solution is more satisfying psychologically. It points to the ‘concreteness’ of the Eucharistic presence. In the church our Lord is localized. I know he is there in the tabernacle; I can fix my gaze on the golden door and in solemn Exposition on the host itself. Not that psychologically the body adds presence to the personality; but that the body enables us to fix the presence in time and space. When we can point, touch, look at, localize in space and define in time, we feel – creatures of flesh that we are – that we possess more fully.

But here the theologians step in to challenge our apparent advantage and gain. The eucharistic body of Christ is not in space in the ordinary sense of the word: it is not moved from one place to another when the priest moves the eucharistic species; it is not touched when the host is touched, not broken or separated when the hosts are separated or broken. The body of Christ is not looked at etc., in the Eucharist. The object of our looking, touching, moving, localizing,

are precisely the sensible appearances. 'According to the natural mode of existence, our Saviour is always at the right hand of the Father', says the Council of Trent. His sacramental presence does not fit the normal human categories of space and time; in spite of the fact that this is his body, truly present.

But then, to return to our question, what is left? What has the eucharistic presence of Christ to offer us distinctively its own? Why did Christ institute this eucharistic presence at all?

Let us turn to the account of the inauguration of the sacrament, the gospel account of the last supper.

And when the time came, he took his place, and the apostles with him. And he said to them, 'With yearning have I yearned to eat this pasch with you before my suffering; for I say to you that no more at all am I to eat of it until it has been fulfilled in the kingdom of God.'

And taking a cup, giving thanks he said, 'Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say to you, not at all will I drink from now on of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.'¹

Here our Lord announces that this is his last meal with his apostles; that he is about to suffer and, as he has foretold earlier in the same gospel, suffer unto death.² These verses also tell us that he had eagerly looked forward to this last pasch with them, and that the kingdom of God in a new and fuller sense was now really at hand, beginning with his suffering.

There follows the actual, solemn, traditional christian ceremony, performed here for the first time:

And taking bread, blessing, he broke, and gave to them saying, 'This is my body, given up for your sake. Do this for my remembering'.

And the cup, in just the same way, after having eaten, saying 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, poured out for your sake'.³

What is the point of this ceremony which he asks to be repeated in remembrance of him? What is Jesus doing? Many answers are possible. He is eating a meal. He is saying goodbye to his friends.

¹ Lk 22, 14-18.

² Cf. Lk 9, 22; 9, 31; 9, 44; 13, 33; 18, 31-33.

³ Lk 22, 19-20.

These answers are true, but they are obviously insufficient and inadequate. Yet even as we search for a better answer, we must bear in mind that answers always depend upon questions, and that inadequate questions on our part will lead only to further inadequate answers.

'Was Jesus instituting a ceremony of remembrance?', a reform theologian might ask. The answer is undoubtedly, Yes, he was; for the words are clear: 'Do this for my remembrance.' But Jesus instituted at the last supper something more: a ceremony of remembrance which also involved changing bread and wine into his body and blood. We must continue to ask questions.

If we ask: Did Jesus really change bread and wine into his own body and blood?, the answer is undoubtedly, Yes, he did. For the words are clear: 'This is my body'. Perhaps there are further questions to be asked. It is possible that Jesus changed bread and wine into his body and blood in such a way that he did something more.

Catholic tradition says that he did: that Jesus at the last supper offered a sacrifice. The full answer to the question, What is Jesus doing?, is not merely, 'instituting a ceremony of remembrance', not merely 'changing bread and wine into his body and blood', but (and this is an answer which includes the other two) 'Jesus is offering a sacrifice'.

Catholic tradition and the New Testament specify what sacrifice Jesus offered at the last supper. It is the same sacrifice he was going to offer on the cross the next day, the same sacrifice which is offered at every altar in the world since then, the one and only sacrifice which exists in the new law – the sacrifice of the cross, his offering of himself as redemption for the sins of the world.

What is there in the words which indicates this truth? First, the context: 'with yearning have I yearned to perform this paschal rite with you before I suffer' – I who, as the Christ, must suffer and so enter into my glory.¹ This is the sacrifice which establishes the kingdom of God. And so I go to it willingly. See how willingly: I now enact before your eyes in symbolic fashion what will happen to me tomorrow. I take bread, break it, and say, This is my body, given for your sake. This cup is the new God-man treaty, sealed in my blood, poured out for your sake.

Body and blood, separate before their eyes – sign of death. Body broken, blood poured out – sign of death and suffering. And why

¹ Lk 24, 26.

this mystic act? Why such symbolism? Was it merely to show that he foresaw what would happen? Merely a prophecy, like Ezechiel's lying on his side,¹ Jeremiah's waistcloth,² Hosea's marriage?³ No, not just a prophecy. For he handed them the bread. 'Take and eat'. He gave them the cup. 'Take it. Drink it'. They were to share, to take their part in, what he was about to accomplish.

They would remember: 'Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you'.⁴ 'My flesh is real food; my blood is real drink.' 'Who eats of me, that man will live by me.'⁵ They would interpret their eating in the light of the Jewish tradition in which they had been raised: 'those who eat that which is offered are sharers in the sacrifice'.⁶ This theme is elaborated in the last discourse, where Christ's prayer 'that where I am you also may be'⁷ is finally shown to mean: as I, suffering, dying, crucified, so you, persecuted, hated, martyred for my sake, will bring forth fruit unto eternal life.⁸ So St. Paul, when he repeats the Lord's phrase 'Do this in remembrance of me,' adds: 'As often as you shall do this, you will recall the suffering of the Lord until he come'.⁹

We are at the heart of the christian message. Jesus offers a sacrifice, himself, for the whole world, willingly taking upon himself undeserved suffering and finally death; he, the sinless, the pure. He does it willingly because the Father wills it and because we have need of it – that is, he acts out of obedience and love. This is the sacrifice of the cross.

But the night before he suffers, he preaches what he is doing effectively in a series of symbolic actions. In those actions and in the accompanying words he shows that he is accepting his suffering and death out of obedience and love. Here, at the supper, he makes willing offering of himself as victim, as sacrifice. And that self-offering he will carry through the next day on the cross. At the supper he offers, without any physical shedding of blood, the internal acts of obedience and love which in the last analysis give any sacrifice its meaning and value, and the external symbolic action. And there is one thing more.

If he had done no more than lay before the apostles bread and wine as symbols of his own separated body and blood; if he had asked his followers to eat and drink as symbolic actions showing

¹ Ezek 4.

² Jer 13.

³ Hos 1 and 3.

⁴ Jn 6, 53.

⁵ Jn 6, 55-56.

⁶ 1 Cor 10, 18.

⁷ Jn 14, 3.

⁸ Jn 15, 18-16, 33.

⁹ 1 Cor 11, 23-26.

forth their own acceptance of a personal share in the perfect sacrifice and offering, a share which they would live out in their own lives and deaths, that would have been a wonderful and beautiful ceremony indeed. It would have been in later christian times a commemoration of what Jesus did on the cross and a regularly repeated stimulus and encouragement to all to imitate his example.

But Jesus would do more. The objects he used to make his passion present would not be bread and wine, standing for his flesh and his blood, but his real flesh and blood, under the appearances of bread and wine. The symbolic action would be performed with objects which were real. His followers would share in his will and act of sacrifice, in his perfect self-offering, by actually eating the real victim of the sacrifice: not bread and wine to remind us of his body and his blood, but his very body and blood, made present in a way which would remind us of his passion and his death.

It is not false to say that Jesus changed bread and wine into his body and blood in order that he might always remain with us under these sensible appearances. But it is more true to say, as the Council of Trent teaches,¹ that he changed bread and wine into his body and blood so that we, through the repetition with our own hands and hearts and voices of the full offering of his sacrifice, might join him on Calvary; that we might, by our use of the bread and wine, come to be with him, doing what he did.

Everything about this sacrament is ordered to sacrifice. Not a single statement in the New Testament refers to it under any other sign but that of sacrifice: his offering and our share in it. But in the full christian story sacrifice does not stand alone either; it is in no sense the end of the road. Sacrifice is redemption, which means resurrection and glory.² This sacrifice makes us one with Jesus in the complete redemptive mystery, gives us the presence of the now glorified Lord, and fuses us with one another in love into the one body of Christ.

Eucharist is sacrament and sacrifice both, but sacrament ordered to sacrifice or to our participation in sacrifice. Every mass is a doing this in commemoration of him, a carrying out of his command. Every mass is our attempt, in him, to share perfectly his sacrifice. Every offering of the mass is an expression of our continual striving to share more and more fully, to put on the sacrificial mind which is in Christ Jesus; every communion an attempt to approach more and

¹ Cf. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum* (Ed. 32) 938.

² Jn 12, 23; Phil 2, 8-9.

more closely the perfection of this sacrifice, a sacrifice possible and effective for us only with and in the Church. And to this end, he is really present, really comes to us, gives us his body and blood to eat and drink: not so much to be with us as to bring us to himself.

What then is the meaning of the Church's keeping the consecrated species in the tabernacle for our reverence, adoration and visits? The custom began, we know, with keeping them to make possible communion outside mass, communion of the sick, the dying, etc. This gives the clue. The sacrament is preserved in order to widen possible participation, active participation, in the sacrifice of the mass. This has reference, first, to those who were not present at the mass offered that day. They can, under the proper conditions, by receiving the body of Christ, presented as victim in that mass, have their share in that same sacrifice.

Secondly, the species are also for those who have no occasion to receive them in communion. For them too, the species have a meaning and a use which is still primarily sacrificial. Jesus is there in the sacrament as a result of the words of the sacrifice, the words which in the mass symbolically separated body and blood, thus re-presenting his offering of himself on the cross to our sight and our hearing. He is there in the sacrament because the Church has continued to make his sacrifice her own, because she renewed it and declared her allegiance to it this morning, as every morning. Christ is here because the sacrificial sign of the cross still dominates and characterizes the Church. He is here in his glorified body because through his holy cross he has redeemed the world, and the peculiar union of cross-resurrection, suffering-triumph and glory is here vivid in him. He is here in the Church as the crucified and risen Saviour, that we may be reminded of what it means to be saved and to be saved in him: that is, to take up our cross with him so that through him we may enter into glory.

A visit to him, then, in the blessed Sacrament will be a vivid remembrance of the Mass which we or the Church in the name of us all has offered that day. It will be our renewed acceptance of the way of salvation which is the cross. And it will be a looking forward to, an excellent preparation for, the Mass of the morrow.

We spoke above of the concreteness of the sacramental species, of how they appeal to our senses and imagination. Through them he who was Saviour through his cross and resurrection can be approached under a form which proclaims him simultaneously as sacrificed and glorified, one which makes it more easy for us to remember

the full christian message of salvation, as always summed up in him.

Hence, our approach to him in the blessed Sacrament will not dare take as its aim the mere enjoyment of his physical presence any more than one could have rested content with that in the days when he walked on earth. Who approaches Jesus now as then receives from him a sacrificial challenge: 'Today, tomorrow, every day, I am sacrificed. Are you? I am here to be eaten and to transform the eater into myself. Are you ready to let yourself be transformed?'

To return then to our question: What precisely does this presence in the Eucharist add to the other presences mentioned in the New Testament? Most properly speaking, it does not add to them. It leads to them. It is not a goal; it is a means. The presence of Christ in the heart, in the life, is an end of christian living. Paul speaks of this goal, for example, when he speaks of our growing up in Christ¹, of his labouring till Christ be formed in us², till we put on perfectly the man within,³ that Christ may dwell by faith in our hearts. For Christ in us is our hope of glory.

Even those saints who have centred their whole lives around the contemplation of the sacrament of the altar, living, even physically, as near as possible to their sacramental Lord, did so ultimately not just to be with him, but in order, by being with him, to grow in grace and to increase his life within them.

Our original question, then, was poorly phrased. We should not have asked: If Christ is present in the christian heart, why should he also add a presence in the tabernacle? For the truth is that Christ is present in the christian heart according to the degree of our love of him and likeness to him. In order to make easier the increase of that love and likeness in us, Christ has made himself present also in the tabernacle. Our visits, our other eucharistic devotions, remind us at all times that Jesus is Saviour, remind us of his sacrifice and of his glory, and of his call to us to take our share in both.

Christ is present in my heart because I am a believing christian in the state of grace. His growth in me, his love and life in me is my christian life. This growth means that I come to share more and more perfectly his own dispositions towards God and man. These dispositions are most perfectly summed up on the cross. The perfect sharing of them in the trials of my own life results in my resurrection and glorification. Here is the constant striving of my christian living, its tone and direction.

¹ Eph 4, 13.

² Gal 4, 19.

³ Eph 3, 16.

I achieve this growth not primarily as an individual, but as a member of the whole body of Christ on earth, the Church. The whole Church together is constantly achieving this same growth towards the fulness of Christ.¹ This growing up into Christ is experienced most intensely when the Church, united in her cult, solemnly enters into the Christ-experience, goes through the death-resurrection ritual, repeats with him his sacrifice, offers the Mass. I take my place in that. With the Church I too offer as a symbolic re-enactment of his suffering and death the real body and blood which he makes present to us all in that great act. As symbol of my full participation in the sacrifice and as a means to that participation (for these signs work what they signify) I eat his flesh and blood. And according to the measure of my deliberate participation, I grow in him, in his grace. His presence to me and to others through me in all my daily living becomes more intense, real, perceptible, effective.

After the sacrifice there is kept in the church his sacramental body, which was made present to effect the sacrifice and to make possible our sharing in it. It is kept in the church to make the all-day-long sharing of that sacrifice easier for people who will come to the church or will think of his presence there or will receive that body at some other time of day apart from Mass.

And to all those who approach to share in the sacrifice, the glorified Jesus in the tabernacle repeats the full gospel message that our future eternal glorified life will come to us in the measure in which we share with him in the dispositions of his passion. His glorified body, present here for us, pledges that eternal glory to our own flesh.

And, finally, by the very way he has chosen to perpetuate this sacrifice in our midst, he proclaims that other truth, so much at the heart of christianity, that we are all in this together; that salvation is a community affair. I eat of him, so does my neighbour; both of the one Christ. I strive in the eating to be closer, to be one with him; so does my neighbour, so does the entire Church. I say yes, *Amen*, to his way of salvation, so does my neighbour; we say it in the Church. We are given the occasion to do so and the ability to do so because of the Church. Communion is communion not only with the glorified Jesus, but, like all true contact with Jesus, with the whole of his mystical body, with all the Church. It was to the Church that he made his promise: 'I am with you always.'

¹ Cf. Eph 4, 15-16.

THE SACRAMENT OF SACRAMENTS

By JOHN F. CLARKSON

IN the early days of August, 1960, hundreds of thousands of the faithful converged upon Bavaria's capital city of Munich for the thirty-seventh Eucharistic World Congress. The Church at Munich became the *Statio Orbis*, that is, the scene of a stational celebration of the whole Catholic world. At the stational celebrations of the ancient Roman churches, some of the faithful from each of the city's churches would come together to celebrate the Eucharist, with the bishop of Rome presiding over the assembly in order to give visible expression to the unity of all the faithful in the one eucharistic bread. In the same way the Congress at Munich, and especially its closing pontifical Mass, was conceived as the stational celebration not just of the city but of the whole Catholic world. A million representatives of the faithful of every land and continent and tongue, bishops, priests, and laity, the whole Church in miniature as it were, gathered around its Head to offer with him the same sacrifice that he offered when, in his own flesh, he reconciled man to God on the cross. The sublime lesson of the centrality of the holy Eucharist in christian life and worship could hardly have been more effectively expressed than it was on that summer morning at Munich.

Let us consider more closely how the holy Eucharist, the sacrament of sacraments, is not only the centre of the sacramental system, but also that of all the Church's activity and of all the lives of each of the faithful.

Christ: Sacrament of God

God's whole way of dealing with men in the working out of his economy of salvation has been characterised by the appearance of God's saving reality presenting itself to us men in the course of history through concrete, tangible events and things. This divine way of acting reached its climax in the incarnation of the Son. Here God had found the means of accomplishing the salvation of men by uniting divinity and humanity in the person of Jesus Christ in such a way that divine Life itself, that eternal Life which ever abode with

the Father¹ appeared before our eyes in human flesh, to introduce us thereby into the knowledge of the Father² and to offer the same flesh in sacrifice for the life of the world.³ Not only could we see and hear our salvation; we could even touch it with our hands and would be able to partake of it by eating and drinking.⁴

Surely we may call this divine way of dealing with men 'sacramental'. We give the name of sacrament to that which is the symbol of a sacred reality and the visible form of invisible grace.⁵ Many indeed, are the symbol-ways in which God has clothed his saving grace and presented it to men in sensible forms. Not all of these ways, to be sure, are characterised by the peculiar grace-causing efficacy that distinguishes the seven sacraments. Nevertheless, these seven do not stand in sheer isolation. They form part of a great pattern, a sacramental pattern of God's dealings with men. The cloud and pillar of fire that accompanied the Israelites in the desert were symbols of Yahweh himself and the visible form of his invisible gracious favour; the rites of the mosaic law were symbols of the redemption that would be realised in Christ, and the tangible forms through which pious Jews could direct their faith and hope towards the grace of the Saviour; and we ourselves speak of certain rites and things as 'sacramentals' because they represent the graces we hope to receive through their use and through the Church's prayer in our behalf.

If we look for the apex of this 'sacramentality', we find it in the person of Jesus Christ. In him the personal meeting of man with God, in which salvation consists, takes place in the most perfect way. In him alone did the likeness of sinful flesh,⁶ the human nature which we share in common with him, respond with perfect fidelity to the loving invitation of God to men. Here was the perfect communion of man with God, the salvation towards which all authentic religious striving aspires. Since this union took place uniquely in Christ, other men cannot hope to achieve it except by their personal relationship with the man Jesus Christ, who is the head of all humanity.

Christ our Lord, then, is himself the first of the sacraments. He is the visible, human embodiment of God's love for men, the sign and cause of man's redemption. He is the Way, the one Mediator. After

¹ 1 Jn 1, 2.

² Cf. Jn 14, 8ff.

³ Cf. Jn 6, 52.

⁴ Cf. 1 Jn, 1, 1; Jn 6, 52, 55.

⁵ Cf. Council of Trent, Denzinger 876.

⁶ Rom 8, 3; cf. 6, 6.

his death and resurrection, he remains forever the meeting-place of God with men, the sacrament of God.

The Church: Sacrament of Christ

The disappearance of Christ, by his resurrection and ascension, from our visible world and daily experience did not mean the termination of our need for him as the sacrament of our encounter with God. The glorified Christ remains the unique Way of our going to the Father. But we encounter him now in the Church, which he has instituted as the continuation or prolongation of his own person: the Church which Holy Scripture calls the body of Christ.¹ A traditional view of the symbolism of the piercing of our Lord's side on the cross sees the Church as being born there from that sacred side to be the custodian and dispenser of the precious, redeeming blood through the sacraments. Her function is to apply to men the same redemptive work that Christ initiated with the Incarnation and crowned with the paschal mysteries. If Christ is the sacrament of God, the Church is the sacrament of Christ. Yet these two are really one, because the Church on earth is the sacramental Christ, is Christ sacramentally. As the body of which he is the head, the Church constitutes the historical presence among men of the glorified Lord who lives and acts through her, above all through her liturgy of sacrifice and sacrament.

The sacramental nature of the Church is the reason therefore, why the life of a christian on this earth is necessarily a sacramental life. Our destiny is to be and to become sons of God, 'moulded into the image of his Son'² by a progressive identification with Christ. And the sacraments are the chief means which God has given to the Church to bring about this moulding. They are, in fact, the seven-fold activity of the sacrament of Christ; in each of them the Church brings to realisation in the individual recipient the general union of men with God in Christ.

With these perspectives of the Church as sacrament of Christ, and of the person of our glorified Saviour as the sacrament of our communion with God, we are in a better position to appreciate the centrality of the holy Eucharist; first of all in the sacramental system of the Church, then in all the Church's activity, and finally in the lives of the faithful.

¹ Col 1, 24.

² Rom 8, 29.

The centrality of the Eucharist in the sacramental system

When we read the promise of our Lord to be with his Church all days even to the consummation of the world, we spontaneously think of the fulfillment of it by his abiding presence in the blessed Sacrament under the appearances of bread and wine. In a veritable miracle of sacramentality we find that Love has here stretched the principle of self-emptying beyond all imaginable possibilities in order to enable men to make contact with God in an intelligible human way. Still, it is not so much the hiddenness and self-abasement of the Son of God under the eucharistic veils that commands our attention here. It is more the fact of the real, substantial presence itself of the glorified Lord in the midst of the temporal reality of the Church's day to day history. The first sacrament is no farther from any one of us than the nearest tabernacle. If we regard all the sacraments as ways in which we efficaciously meet and come under the saving influence of the first sacrament, Christ himself, it is evident that the blessed Sacrament, as it is so appropriately termed, in which the first sacrament himself permanently abides, is the greatest of all the sacraments.

It would not be enough, however, to rest content with this somewhat static view which would see the centrality of the Eucharist only in the fact that the very Author of that sanctity which the other sacraments are ordained to impart is himself contained in it. In addition to this, there is an organic, dynamic connection between the Eucharist and the other sacraments. The sanctifying function that each one performs ultimately looks to the Eucharist and especially to the sacrifice of the Mass in which, as St. Thomas says, 'divine worship principally consists'. In this sense, he interprets the dictum that the Eucharist is the 'end and consummation of all the sacraments.'¹

A few examples will make this clear. The sacrament of Holy Orders is ordained to the holy Eucharist. For the *raison d'être* of the christian priesthood is to assure the continuation in the Church, today and in every age, of that sanctifying and vivifying presence of Christ which the apostolic Church has possessed from the beginning. The other two character-conferring sacraments, baptism and confirmation, have always been closely associated with the Eucharist. Together with it they formed one, triple rite of initiation in the primitive Church. Baptism introduces the neophyte into the body

¹ Cf. *Summa Theologica*, III, 63, 6.

of Christ, makes him one of the people of God, whose function is to worship God in spirit and in truth. Thus, baptism is directed towards the Eucharist as the principal act of worship of the christian religion, and it qualifies the baptized person not only to receive the bread of life but to take an active part in the offering of the Eucharist as well. Since confirmation is, in general, a sacrament of the plenitude of grace, it perfects the new christian as a member of 'the royal priesthood, the holy people,'¹ so that he may by every right share in the act *par excellence* of the general priesthood of the faithful, which is the celebration of the Eucharist. Somewhat less direct, though no less real, is the Eucharistic reference of penance and of Extreme Unction which prepare the recipient for receiving the Eucharist worthily; while matrimony is the sacred symbol of the union of the Church with Christ in perfective charity, which is the proper effect of the Eucharist. Every one of the sacramental rites of Christ's body which is the Church is like a gesture by which he reaches out to us to draw us to himself, the centre, and to sanctify us by joining us to himself in his perfect worship of the Father.

The centrality of the Eucharist in the activity of the Church

The high point of Christ's life-work of sanctifying men, and of offering to the Father a perfect sacrifice of thanksgiving, was the paschal mystery of his death and resurrection. Now the whole purpose of the Church, which is the mystical prolongation of the Redeemer, is to continue and bring to completion in the lives of men of subsequent ages the work of sanctification and of worship which Christ then accomplished. But nowhere does the Church actually bring this about more directly and more perfectly than in the sacrifice of the Mass. 'The Eucharist is the perfect sacrament of the Lord's passion, in that it contains Christ himself who underwent the passion.'² The supreme event of Christ's life here becomes sacramentally actualized in and for the Church in such a way that one theologian has called the Mass 'the sacrifice of the Cross in the [sacramental] form of a sacrifice of the Church.'³ It is clear, then, that in this most perfect sacramental union with her Head, the Church exercises her very greatest activity. Here she herself is most perfectly sanctified; here she offers the most perfect worship with her spouse to the heavenly Father.

¹ 1 Pet 2, 9.

² Summa Theologica, III, 75, 2 ad 2.

³ G. Soehngen, *Das sakramentale Wesen des Messopfers* (Essen: Wubbelt, 1946), p. 24.

In a profound sense all the manifold activities of the Church are directed towards these fleeting, sacred eucharistic moments when, as the spouse of Christ and mother of the faithful, she gathers with her children around the glorified Lord, really present in their midst, offers with him the sacrifice of thanksgiving and partakes of the bread of life. All her apostolate of teaching looks to these eucharistic gatherings as to its goal. As Pius XII wrote in *Mediator Dei*, 'when the Church teaches us our Catholic faith and exhorts us to obey the commandments of Christ, she is preparing and paving the way for her priestly, sanctifying action in its highest sense . . .' When the Church sows the seed of faith through her missionaries and then nurtures it in her neophytes with the milk of sound doctrine, it is not merely in order that her children may believe the truth, but that believing they may not walk in darkness but possess the light that is life. For the Church's still-pilgrimaging children, it is the holy Eucharist that affords the highest possible realisation of union with eternal life, our goal and destiny: 'He who eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, lives continually in me and I in him'.¹ First catechism is traditionally preparation for first communion. Further doctrinal instruction, ordinary preaching, retreats and missions, all culminate in the more conscious and fervent participation of the faithful in the holy Eucharist. Even the teaching of sacred theology is orientated towards preparing priests to offer the holy Sacrifice and feed the flock by word and sacrament, above all by the sacrament of the Eucharist.

It is the same with the Church's activity of guiding and governing her children. Her laws are not an end in themselves. Their end is the common good of the Church, which is charity. This they foster by removing obstacles to the supernatural life and providing the necessary climate in which it can grow and flourish. Whatever the Church does for the purpose of sanctifying men, she does in order to draw men into the eucharistic sacrifice and make them partakers of God in Christ in holy communion. Whatever efficacy the efforts of the Church have in them, she draws from her union with her spouse in the eucharistic sacrifice.

As the Church looks to the Eucharist in all that she does, so does she find her perfect unity in the Eucharist, and particularly in the celebration of Mass. The eucharistic sacrifice constitutes the Church. For the nature of the Church is to be the assembly of those who

¹ Jn 6, 57.

have been called out from the world (*ekklesia*) to become the people of God, his worshippers in spirit and in truth.¹ When these holy ones gather to commemorate in a real-symbolic way the perfect sacrifice of redemption and praise offered on the cross, then they are truly and fully the worshipping community of God. Their unity is not the mere moral unity of an audience in a hall, nor even of sharers of the same table; it is the supernatural unity of those who are each identified mystically with the one body of Christ which they receive, each vivified by his Spirit. In the offering of the Mass the Church becomes a real image of Christ as he gave himself unto death out of love, and when the participation of the faithful in the Mass takes its most perfect form in the real reception of holy communion, the partakers are ever more perfectly brought into unity in Christ.

The centrality of the Eucharist in the lives of the faithful

Every christian is designated by his baptism for union with and in Christ: a unity that is to be realised in its perfect form here on earth in the reception of the Eucharist. By this essential designation of his baptismal character, the christian is wholly orientated towards the holy Eucharist. This orientation should give a eucharistic meaning and purpose to all of his actions, to his whole life. This does not mean that he is merely drawn passively, as though by the magnetic force of the Eucharist, there to be sanctified and perfected. It would be a great mistake to think of those called to be moulded into the image of Christ² merely as inert objects in which the action of the sacraments (even of the blessed Sacrament) will automatically produce Christ-likeness, if only the sacraments are validly received. The work of moulding must be a vital process in which the christian himself not only receives but lives the sacraments. When an adult christian encounters God in Christ in a sacramental experience, he cannot but assume in loving faith something of the same filial attitude that marked every one of the actions of our Saviour's life. Thus, even as he receives God's sanctifying action in the sacrament, he consciously and freely acknowledges the divine excellence and his own human submission to God. Here we have the very essence of divine worship. And we see that this worship, in the sacraments, is a certain imitation, sacramentally expressed, of our Saviour's own perfect worship on the cross. Hence every sacrament, besides being

¹ Jn 4, 23-4.

² Cf. Rom 8, 29.

a sanctification of men, is also at the same time an act by which man worships God in union with Christ's perfect worship.

Of their very nature, then, the sacraments do effect a configuration of man to Christ, an ontological configuration effected by Christ but not without man's own free aspiration towards it. In receiving his sanctifying Christ-conformity in the sacrament, a man simultaneously commits himself to the moral demands which his new being in Christ implies. To receive holiness from God means to pledge oneself in worship to his service. Here we see the working out of the conditions of the sacramental economy of our salvation: it would not have profited us anything if God had become man in Christ without carrying out his redemptive work in very reality in his passion and resurrection. Likewise, it is of no avail for us to express our devotion to God in Christ through the sacraments and the sacrifice of the Mass, unless we effectively conform our lives to Christ's in all our daily actions by doing the will of his Father. Only then will he call us his brothers. 'If anyone does the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother.'¹

The consequences of this doctrine for the centrality of the Eucharist in the christian's life become evident. The Mass, among all the sacramental rites of the Church, is *par excellence* the act of worship; and in holy communion we meet the very author of our sanctification in a most personal encounter. But participation in the Mass implies offering ourselves there with Christ in a spiritual sacrifice: we must pledge ourselves to a faith that is operative in charity, to a zeal for the divine glory, and particularly to the due submission of ourselves to the divine will. And when we partake of the body of Christ that has been offered in sacrifice – his sacrifice that has sacramentally become ours – we receive it as a sacrificial banquet: that is, as the sign of the divine acceptance of the offering, a sign of our union with God. All this, however, is fully realised for the individual christian only to the extent that the self-oblation expressed in his participation in the Eucharist is genuine. St. Cyprian expressed this forcefully when he said: 'It is evident that the blood of Christ is not offered, if there should be no wine in the chalice; likewise the sacrifice of the Lord is not celebrated as the sanctifying rite that it should be according to his institution, if our own offering and sacrifice should fail to correspond to his passion'.² Every Mass and every holy communion thus become for the christian both a challenge

¹ Mt 12, 50.

² PL 4, 380.

to his loyalty to Christ in the future and the crowning expression in which past good actions are offered up in an odour of sweetness.

The holy Eucharist should stand at the centre of the everyday life of each of the faithful. Much more true is it of the fervent christian, for whom 'to live is Christ,'¹ that he spontaneously gravitates towards the ever-present Lord in the blessed Sacrament as to the true centre of his being. Faith will recognize Christ there in the sign and memorial of his greatest act of love for men. Hope will seek him out as the sure pledge here on earth of the glorious face-to-face union with God that the sacramental union with Christ prefigures. Love will unite itself to him in the holy banquet and prove itself true by faithful imitation of him in christian life. Here in the holy Eucharist no tension is possible between the spiritual life as liturgy and as personal prayer and mortification. Personal piety would indeed be sterile were it completely to neglect the altar and the communion table. But when the personal spiritual life is ordained to achieving an ever better disposition of mind and heart with which to offer oneself in sacrifice in the Mass, or when it proceeds in charity from the intensity of love realised in the personal eucharistic encounter with Christ, then these efforts are sanctified by the holy Eucharist and taken up into its liturgy.

With his genius for putting the most profound truths simply, St. Thomas says that 'in this sacrament the whole mystery of our salvation is contained'; and that 'this sacrament produces in the individual the effect that the passion of Christ produced in the world.'² At each Mass the christian enters into a holy precinct in which all of God's loving works for him throughout the course of sacred history are concentrated, and all his loving intentions of bestowing grace and glory in the future are prefigured in the rich, sacramental reality that is given to him in the Eucharist. He can do nothing else than take it, made his own in Christ, and offer this same Eucharist as the only adequate thanksgiving and perfect worship of the Father. From his full participation in the Eucharist, the christian will draw the streams of divine life which will then transform all of his life here below into a sacrifice of thanksgiving in the liturgy of christian living that overflows from the liturgy of worship and has its centre there. 'Whatever you are about, in word and action alike, invoke always the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, offering your thanks to God the Father through him.'³

¹ Phil 1, 21.

² *Summa Theologica*, III, 84, 4.

³ Col 3, 17.

WE GIVE THEE THANKS

By ALOYSIUS CHURCH

At the end of the Offertory of the Mass, the people are invited to offer thanks: *gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro*. In the offering of bread and wine, we have already affirmed our readiness to offer thanks at this time and in this place. Yet our offering cannot be confined solely to what is done within the four walls of the building. The bread and wine are themselves symbols of our daily labour. If we wish to enter fully into the solemn liturgical act of thanksgiving, then we must bring to the altar hearts that thank God not only in church, but at all times and in all places.

St. Paul tells his christians: 'Let your contentment be in the Holy Spirit; your tongues unloosed in psalms and spiritual music, as you sing and give praise to the Lord in your hearts. Give thanks continually to God, who is our Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ'.¹ Thanksgiving is to be an habitual attitude of the christian. With the coming of Christ, a totally new power of offering thanks to God is given to men. 'It is through him, then, that we must offer to God a continual sacrifice of praise, the tribute of lips that give thanks to his name'.² Our Lord himself sets the example in his own prayer. When his disciples return from their first mission, he prays: 'Father, who art Lord of heaven and earth, I give thee praise that thou hast hidden all this from the wise and prudent and revealed it to little children'.³ When Lazarus was raised from the dead, 'Jesus lifted his eyes to heaven and said: Father I thank Thee for hearing my prayer'.⁴ The solemn sacerdotal prayer at the last supper opens with the words: 'Father . . . give glory to thy Son, that the Son may give glory to thee'.⁵ And only a day or two previously he had said: 'Father, glorify thy name'.⁶ Apart from the few phrases that occur in the story of his passion, these are the only recorded prayers of our Lord. It is not surprising, then, that he should teach his disciples to begin their prayer: 'Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name'.

It is easy to have a superficial notion of what it means to thank God. Religious thanksgiving passes far beyond modern conventions

¹ Eph 5, 19-20.

⁴ Jn 11, 41.

² Heb 13, 15.

⁵ Jn 17, 1.

³ Mt 11, 25.

⁶ Jn 12, 28.

of politeness or etiquette. It is a function of our faith, not a spiritual touching of the cap. The cap is detachable, but the attitude of thanksgiving makes or mars our relationship to God. Without it we cannot grasp the reality of our existence – our dependence on the free gift of God. The freedom and the generosity and the untainted goodness of God's giving is unique, and when a man's faith reveals to him what he owes God, he is filled with reverence, astonished, and moved to utter praise. He is deeply aware that he is in the presence of his Creator and Father; and this fundamental recognition, itself a gift, is thanksgiving. Holy Scripture struggles to give expression to this many-sided attitude of the creature before his Creator. The phrases 'give thanks', 'give glory', 'praise', 'bless', 'honour' and even 'confess' God, are synonymous. The pagans of whom Paul speaks to his Romans are condemned because they lack this salutary attitude: 'There is no excuse for them; although they had knowledge of God, they did not honour him or give thanks to him as God . . . they who claimed to be so wise, turned fools and exchanged the glory of the imperishable God for representations of perishable man, of bird, beast, and reptile'.¹

If the pagan, when confronted with the works of God's material creation, is considered to have motive enough and to spare for constant thanksgiving, what of the christian? To him is revealed 'the unfathomable riches of Christ'.² Born into messianic times, he can see what God has done to build the new creation. He can acknowledge his own personal share in the mystery that is revealed in Christ. This vision gives a new dimension, an unsuspected depth to his motives for thanksgiving. He now sees that the power and efficacy of his every act of thanksgiving is drawn from the eucharistic thanksgiving of Christ, who gives himself to the christian continually in the representation of his passion, death and resurrection. The pauline epistles faithfully reflect the ideal christian attitude: the wondering, admiring spirit of gratitude at the unfolding in human history of God's mysterious plan, by which all men are enabled to give glory to him through Christ. The opening words of Ephesians, 'Blessed be that God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing, higher than heaven itself',³ are a typical example.

It is, however, possible to be a christian and yet fail to appreciate the continued intervention of God in human affairs. To recognise

¹ Rom 1, 21.

² Eph 3, 9.

³ Eph 1, 3-14.

the Lord at work in his Church, and to greet him generously, demands mature faith. We are to learn from the example of those who were first privileged to meet him on earth. To them, the manifestation of his presence was an object of wonder and joy, issuing in praise and thanksgiving. When Zachary's dumbness was removed, 'he broke into speech, giving praise to God; so that fear came on all their neighbourhood';¹ and he celebrated the birth of Christ's forerunner with the *Benedictus*, the canticle of praise which is still the morning prayer of the Church: 'Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel: he has visited his people and wrought their redemption'.² This same term 'visitation' is used in the book of Exodus to describe God's deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Egypt: 'And God said again to Moses . . . Go gather together the ancients of Israel, and thou shalt say to them: the Lord God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, hath appeared to me saying: visiting I have visited you, and I have seen all that hath befallen you in Egypt. And I have said the word to bring you forth out of the affliction of Egypt. . .'³ Zachary sees in the birth of John the Baptist the beginnings of the further visitation of God, the unique visitation. Amongst those who recognise this visitation in the New Testament, the effect is always the same: they experience a sense of awe and reverence before the special presence of God, they are filled with wonder and amazement and joy, and their response is to praise and thank God. So the angels herald the coming events on Christmas eve with a hymn of praise, 'Glory to God in the highest'; and the shepherds go home from Bethlehem 'giving praise and glory to God at seeing and hearing that all was as it had been told them'.⁴ Already at Mary's greeting the child in the womb of Elizabeth had leapt for joy; and Elizabeth in her wonder and astonishment had asked 'how have I deserved to be thus visited by the mother of my Lord?'⁵

The christian who gives thanks continually is the one who continues to recognise his Lord's visitation. He retains something of the sense of wonder that the witnesses of the New Testament possessed in full measure. For what the apostles and disciples saw wrought before their very eyes we are now enabled to see by faith, assisted by symbol and sign. The manner of seeing is different, but the reality is the same. It was Peter's privilege to step from his fishing boat to greet the Son of God by the lakeside; it is our privilege to encounter his saving presence in our ordinary lives in the Church. On earth

¹ Lk 1, 64.² Lk 1, 68.³ Exod 3, 16.⁴ Lk 2, 20.⁵ Lk 2, 43.

he used to cure a blindness or heal a leprosy with the words 'thy faith hath made thee whole'; he would feed the hungry by miraculously multiplying the loaves. He now does the same at a deeper level, in Baptism and the holy Eucharist. There is no startling effect on the surface but the interior change is no less real. Here is again the special visitation of God at which we can marvel and wonder and give thanks. The effect of the miraculous catch of fish on Peter was that he fell to his knees, suddenly aware that he was in the presence of the majestic power of God: 'depart from me, for I am a sinful man'.¹ Yet the continued and daily action of God is no less immediate, present and identifiable in our own lives. His action, and its quality, is made known in the sacramental sign. Through these sacred rites the Word speaks, informs, utters perennially the words that are words of life; and amongst the bystanders those that have ears to hear, listen to his word, keep it and give thanks.

Yet it is only because we have received Christ's Spirit that we are able to recognise him in his visitations. Without his help we would remain blind and uncomprehending, like the condemned pagans or the resisting pharisees. 'What we have received is no spirit of worldly wisdom: it is the spirit that has come from God, to make us understand God's gifts to us; gifts which we make known not in such words as human wisdom teaches, but in words taught us by the spirit, matching what is spiritual with what is spiritual'.²

'The children of God are led by the Spirit of God'.³ Our experience, in faith, of the prompting of the Holy Spirit in all our work should move us continually to awe and wonder. Our awareness of God's action should make us say continually 'who am I?'. Our move forward to meet our Lord must begin always with this step backwards, otherwise there will be no meeting. But with the deepening of reverence we shall become more sensitive to the spiritual reality of God's direction of our lives, and we shall make more grateful response to God's daily prompting. So our thanksgiving is to grow until our every act gives glory to God.

There is a gradual growth in the spirit of thanksgiving. There is first the stage of thanking God for his gifts in the sense that we see his gifts as gifts. It is possible to do this rather in the way in which we thank people whom we do not know very well. But even on this unofficial level the parallel is not perfect, because when we acknowledge the gifts of God we are already in the realm of faith, and faith

¹ Lk 5, 8.

² 1 Cor 2, 12.

³ Rom 8, 14.

of its nature tends to fructify and deepen its hold. Here we acknowledge the gifts of God, of creation, of salvation, of his particular providence that has guided our life and continues to do so in the Church through the sacraments and through the special characteristics of our station or vocation in life and its work. There follows a second stage, where we no longer see these gifts in themselves, in isolation as it were, but as acts of the giver. It is the giver who holds our attention, not the gifts. It was in this way that the miracles of the Gospels were seen as signs of God's special visitation. They were wonders, not so much because they had the qualities of a stunt or magic trick, but because in them the divine goodness and wisdom were seen in action. Only the believer could see this; miracles were not performed indiscriminately for all. Our Lord was silent before Herod; but when he raised to life the son of the widow of Naim 'there came a great fear on them all. And they glorified God saying: a great prophet is risen up amongst us; and God has visited his people'. God continues to 'visit' his Church daily. The Word is made flesh, the Holy Spirit is sent into our hearts. What he has to give, he continues to give, and it is a further gift of his that enables us to recognise him in his giving.

There is yet a further stage. When we recognise the action of God, we must have the courage to recognise it as directed towards ourselves. When Zachaeus climbed the tree to see his Lord, he did not at first suspect the gift that was to be given him. Yet the Lord was to come that day right into his house. When the bystanders saw the wonderful works of God in the Gospel miracles, they were not necessarily miracles worked on themselves. They could, in a sense, remain spectators watching from the side-lines. To grasp the reality of God's action in the world as completely transforming our own personal destiny: that is a further insight. So St. Peter was given the gift to say 'depart from me for I am a sinful man'. He saw the catch of fish as an action aimed at himself. So too the Centurion could recognise the healing of his servant as an invitation to the personal surrender of faith. The shining example of this third stage in the perfection of christian thanksgiving is the attitude of our Lady, as she sang her canticle of praise, the '*Magnificat*'. She was struck with wonder and amazement that all the promises to Israel should be fulfilled in her person. It was not only that the day of God's visitation of his people was at hand, but that she herself was to be the focus and centre of the whole action. She could look back and see all the great souls that had waited for this day, their eyes all fixed on her. She

could also look forward and see how the events of her life were to be the turning-point for all the race that was to follow. She would mother not only the Son of God, but all others who were to be called the children of God. Seeing all this accomplished in and through herself, she could, in true humility, give God the glory and sing her song of praise.

Our thanksgiving to God should have the same personal emphasis. We are not members of a crowd that lose their individuality in the rush. In the same individual way we are privileged to take part in the work of redemption, to share intimately in the purposes and activity of God's visitation of his people, by our lives as baptised christians in the Church. All nations and generations can look upon us also and call us blessed. The ordinary actions of our lives have become the scattered fragments which are gathered together in the eucharistic thanksgiving of God's Son. In these he raises his eyes towards heaven and gives thanks. In these his blood is shed again and again for the redemption of many.

So the movement of thanksgiving reaches its full term. When by faith we realise and recognise the continued 'visitation' of God as it affects us personally, our response is to give ourselves over wholly to his influence and direction. God acts in human history now; our grateful response is to act with him, to give ourselves to the work he is doing, to 'meet' him in such a way that we co-operate fully with his prompting and busy ourselves, with all our powers, in the work which he has given us to do: his will for us. This will of God is the sanctification of men, and all christians are called upon to assist in some way with this work. The 'will of God' will be found by each one in his own particular vocation; but it will mean that all his powers and faculties are co-ordinated, integrated, and concentrated on the re-creating work of God on earth. We do not merely honour him then with our lips, but in deed, with everything we have. 'Not every one that sayeth to me Lord, Lord, shall enter into heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father'. The shepherds adored at the manger and made their way back to their flocks giving praise and glory to God, both they were indeed returning to the job they had left. We shall remain poor christians if we cannot find the way of meeting God in the daily duties of life. It is here that we have to learn to recognise his visitation.

THE BOND OF PERFECTION

by RICHARD BLUNDELL

THE last supper stands at the watershed of human history. In it the old and the new orders meet, for it is at the same time the central rite both of judaism and christianity. It is not surprising that the Lord should have chosen this occasion to utter words which were to transform the future history of men: 'I have a new commandment to give you, that you are to love one another; that your love for one another is to be like the love I have borne you'.¹ Under the Old Law, men were bidden love their neighbours as themselves. Now more was asked of them. They must love as the Lord loved. What this meant was told them a little later: 'This is the greatest love a man can show, that he should lay down his life for his friends'.²

This love which christians must bear towards each other, *agape*, charity, differs in kind as well as degree from any other form of love. By baptism the spirit of God enters into the christian, giving him power to cry 'Abba, Father'. The love of a child for its parent is qualitatively different from any other kind of love. By his baptism the christian is able to offer this love to God, because he has become God's son. St. Paul says that the christian is 'adopted' in order to show the difference that exists between Christ's relationship to the Father and ours. Yet we must not confuse divine with human adoption. In ordinary human life a person cannot become blood relation to another, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, if he did not enjoy such relationship before. In the world of grace, however, that is precisely what happens. Because he is God's son, God's likeness is imprinted on the christian, even as the parents' likeness is imprinted upon their children.

If power is given to the christian to love God as children love their father, then power is given to him to love his fellow christians with the love of brothers and sisters for one another. The Lord has ordained that the love we bear for one another must be like the love he bears for us. That love is a real brotherly love, since he is the 'first-born of many brethren', Son of God by nature as we are by favour.

¹ Jn 13, 34.

² Jn 15, 13.

This declaration of the new commandment was made at the first celebration of the Eucharist. The first christians were told that they formed a new family, and, by a tradition which is as old as the human race, a family finds itself in the sharing of a meal. The idea that food and drink shared in common binds men together runs through the whole complex history of human relations. The signing of an international treaty is consummated by a state banquet, while two peasants who have successfully concluded a deal over a pig ratify their agreement by repairing to the nearest inn and clinking glasses. The love which binds the members of a family together is often most warmly felt in the meal which joins them together at the end of the day; when the tension and stress of their work is no more and all can relax. There are occasions, like first communions and weddings, when for a good Catholic family the fraternal meal is truly an *agape*, a continuation of what has been begun in the church. The Jews, living in an age more leisured and less complex than our own, were extremely conscious of the meaning behind the breaking of bread which preceded their meals, and the shared cup which terminated them. The actual words of institution of the Eucharist gave a new richness to the ancient rite of breaking the bread and blessing the cup; but so too do the phrases which announce the new commandment.

To speak of solidarity between peoples and brotherly love is very much the order of the day. A great catastrophe will evoke what is called a 'crusade of charity'. Marxist humanism can find volunteers ready to work themselves literally to death in order that future generations may find a problematical beatitude in a problematical new world. The new aristocracy of the cinema and the sporting arena will mingle with the old at charity balls and charity performances. All this will be confused with christianity or accepted as a worth-while substitute for it. 'To be a christian is to go about doing good' is often heard as the prelude to an attack on 'institutional' or 'denominational' religion. The statement cannot be denied, because it has evangelical foundations. Yet it needs careful qualification. It is true that devotion to a purely human and natural ideal will inspire great sacrifices. Sheer generosity, with which some characters are naturally endowed, will produce lives which verge on the heroic. Nevertheless it may be asked whether such activities are not inspired and given their direction by traces of religious sentiment obstinately surviving in a world where humanist and secular ethics officially prevail. From what we know of primitive societies their notions of

morality would seem to have been too rough and ready to have been able to give any worth-while direction to the generous impulses of the human race. Be that as it may, devoted service inspired by compassion for the suffering, by professional pride and integrity, or by sheer goodness of heart, is not charity. Still less worthy of the name charity is the perfunctory dashing off of a cheque, the slightly condescending attendance at a social function in support of a worthy cause, which often passes for charity in those lands where English is spoken.

In terms of hospitals and schools efficiently and devotedly run where human suffering and ignorance is eliminated the difference between philanthropy and real charity may seem negligible; though even here the direction given to such work by the christian ideal will preserve it from many harmful aberrations. But any set of values, in order to be really human, must be based upon something more fundamental than visible results. The human race has benefited most notably from the results of a natural spirit of pride and emulation which could well have taken a different and less beneficent turning. It is the motive which makes the difference. It is far more excellent to toil for others than for oneself. It is more excellent to toil for a *person*, with all the complex richness which that word contains, than for an abstraction. To have charity is to love Christ, to love men because Christ loves men, and to serve them on that account. It involves the effort 'to put on the mind of Christ Jesus', and, if necessary, 'to lower one's dignity, accepting an obedience which brings one to death, even death on a cross'.¹ This is impossible for unaided, human nature; but man has received God's power, and charity is one of three basic or theological virtues which accompany that gift. A virtue is a power, and power is given us to practise charity, which means that all our acts are transformed and have a new value in God's sight. They are transformed because they become henceforth the acts of a member of a family, of a family that is so closely knit that it may be compared to the members of a living body; so closely knit that the splendour of its head gives added lustre to all that its members do.

True charity gives point and meaning to situations which the humanist ethic ignores or condemns. The man of the world would with difficulty be persuaded that the aged and the invalid, who apparently can no longer serve their fellow men, are practising

¹ Phil 2, 5-8.

charity. Yet the words and gestures of the last supper, which illuminate and transform the tragic events of Calvary, give equal meaning to the toil and hardship of which the lives of christians are made up. When physical strength fails and it is no longer possible to go about doing good, it is still possible to offer up life, to accept whatever kind of death God has ordained. This, by virtue of the mysterious solidarity between Christ and the christian, described at the last supper in terms of the vine and the branches, will be 'in ransom for many, unto remission of sins'.

Before the celebration of the first Eucharist began, Christ washed the feet of his disciples. This gesture is as much a commentary on the words 'This is My Body which is given for you, this My Blood which is shed for you', as Calvary itself. To practise charity we must all accept death, but first we must be ready to serve, for Christ's sake, without making conditions or reserves; for 'charity is patient and kind; charity feels no envy; charity is never perverse or proud, never insolent, does not claim its rights, cannot be provoked, does not brood over an injury'.¹ All this the Lord expressed when he washed the disciples feet: 'I have been setting you an example which will teach you in your turn to do what I have done for you. If I, who am the Master and the Lord, have washed your feet, you in your turn ought to wash each other's feet'.² Paradoxically, it is often easier to accept heavy blows, and death at the end, than the normal failures and annoyances which make up the daily life of a man. But to show that the practice of charity has to do with the normal, the Lord laid his garments aside and girded himself as a servant, he who came from God and would return thither.

The sharing of a meal in common by a group of friends is the expression of their love for each other; but it is more than that. It serves to increase the intensity of that love. This is universally recognised by the way in which families gather themselves together from the ends of the earth. What is true in the natural order is true in the divine. The mere fact of assembling together to eat the supper of the Lord should have a powerful effect upon the solidarity and cohesion of any group, be it parish, religious community or human family. The Eucharist is destined by its very nature to bind men together. 'As this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and then, when gathered, became one mass, so may Thy Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into Thy Kingdom'.³ The symbolism of the

¹ 1 Cor 13, 4-5.

² Jn 13, 13-14.

³ The Didache. *Ancient Christian Writers*, no 6 (1948), p. 20.

separate grains of wheat and the grapes which crushed together come to form bread and wine tells us exactly what the Eucharist is intended to achieve. The Lord chose them for that very reason.

At the last supper and in those forms of the eucharistic celebration, now confined to the East, where the bread is actually broken so that 'the one bread makes us one body, though we are many in number, the same bread is shared by all',¹ this symbolism is easily perceived. But although, for reasons of a practical order, things are done differently in the Latin West, it is still the one body of the Lord of which all partake; and it is important that this should be recognised. It is true that the sacrament of the Eucharist will achieve its effect, through the power which Christ enshrines in it, *ex opere operato* as the theologian says. But its efficacy is none the less enhanced if the rites which surround its administration and the symbolism which belong to its very nature are properly understood. The Church has consistently taught that the Eucharist is a meal shared. She loses no opportunity to remind us of this and in her prayers and instructions explains its significance. There is a meaning, for instance, even in the ciborium, the cup the contents of which all share. We are to see it as the equivalent of the whole loaf which was broken up and passed round at the earlier eucharistic celebrations.

It is not beyond the ingenuity of any modern organisation for the practice of philanthropy to compose a kind of secular meal-rite to express brotherly solidarity. In fact many of them do, Masons, Rotarians etc. But their notion of brotherhood lacks foundation, because they recognise no common father. The christian reunion takes place in the presence of such a Father. The 'president of the assembly' is the Son, Christ Jesus, through whom every christian can claim God as Father; for Christ is the elder brother, the first born of many brethren. The love generated by every celebration of the Eucharist differs from that which could be the outcome of any reunion of people sympathetically inclined one to another, because of the presence of Christ.

The love which christians bear for one another must be like the love which Christ bears for them; and this love will be communicated to them at the Eucharist. There is a human analogy to this. The presence of some powerful and sympathetic character can have the effect of making men of strong wills and conflicting interests live and

¹ 1 Cor 10, 17.

work together in harmony. The grace of Christ can, of course, work more powerfully than the most radiant human personality and without its support; but Christ's presence is sacramentally veiled.

It is a paradox that human defects and weaknesses, such as ignorance, selfishness and sloth, can hamper and even block completely the workings of grace. Every effort must be made, by prayer and recollection, to pierce the veil, so that Christ's presence may be the more compelling. The christian must constantly remind himself that by assisting at the Eucharist he is not merely fulfilling another regulation but responding to a personal invitation by Jesus Christ to enjoy his company.

Post-Reformation piety, it is often said, made the reception of communion the meeting of Christ and the individual christian to the exclusion of its social implications. However true this may be, there is a danger that piety might go to the other extreme. Assistance at Mass and the reception of holy communion could become a matter of routine with all emphasis on personal preparation and thanksgiving omitted. We are brought closer to our brethren in the measure that we are brought closer to Christ. Presence at the eucharistic celebration should have the same effect as a meeting with some much loved friend, a contact which leaves the friendship deeper, stronger and more vivid. There is place, however, for an examination of the way in which reception of the Eucharist and assistance at the sacred mysteries has its effect upon relations between individual christians. In the early days the way in which christians loved one another was the admiration of the pagans. We are told in the Gospels that we must first be reconciled to our brother before we lay our gift upon the altar. In some of the eastern liturgies it is represented that if the priest remember that he is at enmity with anyone, he must first be reconciled before he go to celebrate the sacred mysteries. A state of bitterness existing between two people who frequently approach the holy table together as the Lord's guests to share the supper he offers is one of the greatest scandals in the Church. There are moments when memories of the eucharistic meal shared should act as an effective brake upon harsh words and deeds and as a powerful solvent of bitter thoughts.

The eucharistic gathering is the mark by which the community of charity may be recognised. We describe Catholics as practising or non-practising, depending upon whether or not they are faithful in their attendance at Mass. This is as it should be. By responding to the Lord's invitation and seeking him out in the Eucharist we

express clearly our belonging to his community. Every Mass presents to the world a cross section of the Church, gathered in from every clime and race and colour. The outsider, standing by the roadside watching the crowds pouring out of Mass, is seeing the Catholic Church in all its richness and variety. Conversely the enemies of christianity have always, with unerring instinct, sought to prevent Mass from being celebrated, because without the eucharistic assembly the Church cannot find herself. Nor, without great difficulty, can she find her Master.

Christ is present in the Eucharist through transubstantiation. He is present in other ways too. His voice is heard in the Gospel. It is heard, too, in whatever instruction may be given, whether from the sacred books or through the intermediary of the priesthood. He is present in the words and gestures of the priest-celebrant. It is customary to call a priest *alter Christus*, another Christ. The word 'apostle' signifies one who is sent having behind him the authority of the sender. 'As the Father sends Me so send I you'. The acts of the envoy are no longer his own, but those of the principal. Thus when the priest-celebrant 'takes bread in his hands, blesses it, raises his eyes to heaven and says, this is my Body', it is the Lord who thus speaks and acts, using the voice and the hands of his minister. The Apostles, assisting at the first celebrations of the Eucharist by one of their number, and seeing him perform acts which they had so often beheld Christ perform when he blessed the bread before the meals they shared in common, would easily have seen in the figure of his minister, that of the Master himself. The christian, desirous of assisting devoutly at the Eucharist, would do well to strive to put himself in the place of one of the earliest christians and see, behind the well-known figure of one of his clergy, Christ our Lord.

The Eucharist is a common meal. But it is something else besides. It is a sacrifice. Christ the Son offers his peerless life to his Father, for the remission of sins. Our Lord offers his life for his friends, and there is no greater love than this. He made the offering at the last supper and it was rendered authentic on Calvary. Thus the Eucharist enshrines for ever the example of obedience to the new commandment which our Lord gives us. The Mass is the sacrifice of the Church, because in it each individual christian should make the offering of his own life, associating it with the oblation of Christ. This sacrificial union is symbolised by the mingling of a drop of water in the wine and its absorption at the offertory. The christian who assists at the eucharistic sacrifice must authenticate the offering

he has made when he goes back into the world again. This authentication, the acceptance, that is, of whatever sacrifice the Lord may desire, is the gage of the christian's sincerity when he makes his offering. Saints have been literally overjoyed at the hardships which came their way, blessing the Lord and giving thanks at each fresh blow. To be able to do this is to have received an extraordinary grace; but it is a grace which every christian must pray for. The passion and crucifixion have sense only by reference to the last supper; and the tribulations of a christian man, borne in a christlike manner, can be understood only in relation to the Eucharist. In the eyes of the world the activities of the christian's daily life may be valueless. He may be an aged person pottering around painfully and aimlessly. Or he may spend himself in serving the sick and housing the homeless, in which case the world will say that he practises charity. But the criterion by which charity is to be distinguished from philanthropy is always the Eucharist.

'We who have feasted on Thy saving sacramental gift humbly beseech Thee, Lord, that we may be gladdened by tasting it and also made new by its working', runs a prayer in Advent time.¹ To analyse our motives, to try and decide whether we serve our neighbours because we love the God who made them or because they please us, or even because doing good gives us a feeling of satisfaction, is wearisome and will probably end by driving us mad. Much better pray for the gift of charity, so that the love of God in us may become so strong that all other affections are burned away. The careful reception of the Eucharist, day after day, means that the love of God will develop from within and guide our ways of thinking and acting. We shall slowly be transformed, in such a way that the Christ whom we receive in the Eucharist may be perceived through our words and actions by those among whom we live.

They will recognise him in us, in so far as we recognise him in them, however difficult and unpromising they may be. We shall never achieve this unless we begin by learning to be aware of Christ in his children when we meet them at the eucharistic assembly. Under the influence of his presence we will develop an attitude of love, respect and mutual forbearance towards those who share his company with us. By dint of seeing them in his presence we shall recognise him in them, and our conduct towards them and the way we regard them will become more and more Christ's way of doing these things.

¹ Postcommunion prayer; Wednesday in Ember Week.

SCRIPTURE READING

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

ORIGINALLY the Way of the Cross was a pilgrimage in spirit designed for those unable to visit the holy land. The devotion was popularised by the Franciscans and became widespread in the 18th century through the preaching of St. Leonard of Port Maurice (1676–1751). Another great propagator was St. Alphonsus Liguori, whose *Exercise of the Way of the Cross* is still in use. The spread of the devotion was helped by the special indulgences attached to it.

Most of the incidents in the fourteen stations are taken directly from the Gospel narratives. Jesus' falling on his way to Calvary is a legitimate deduction from his state of extreme weakness. Similarly his meeting with his mother is a graphic way of meditating on Mary's presence to her Son's passion. The wiping of Jesus's face by Veronica is legendary, but the gesture and its inspiration are typical of a fundamental christian attitude to the suffering Saviour.

The texts used in this biblical way of the Cross have been chosen to harmonise with the spirit of triumphant suffering which inspires the Good Friday liturgy. They are intended as themes for meditation rather than as texts to be read in public.

1. *Jesus is condemned to death*

Pilate said to them, Shall I crucify your king? We have no king, the chief priests answered, except Caesar. Thereupon he gave Jesus up into their hands, to be crucified; and they, once he was in their hands, led him away. Jn 19, 15–16.

He did no wrong, no treachery was found on his lips; he was ill-spoken of and spoke no evil in return, suffered and did not threaten vengeance, gave himself up into the hands of Him who judges with justice. 1 Pet 2, 23.

He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on the cross. Phil 2, 8.

He boasts that God is his Father. Let us see if what he says is true. Let us try him with outrage and torment. Let us sentence him to a shameful death, since according to him, aid will be sent to him. Wis 2, 16–20.

If you had found out what the words mean, It is mercy, not sacrifice, that wins favour with me, you would not have passed judgement on the guiltless. Mt 12, 7.

They attack the life of the just man, they condemn the innocent to death. But still the Lord is my stronghold, and my God the rock where I find refuge. Ps 93, 21–22.

2. *Jesus takes up his cross*

So Jesus went out, carrying his own cross to the place named after a skull, its hebrew name is Golgotha. Jn 19, 17.

Look, there is the lamb of God; it is he who takes away the sin of the world.

Jn 1, 29.

Our weakness and it was he who carried the weight of it, our miseries and it was he who bore them. Isai 53, 4.

For our sakes a child is born, to our race a son is given, whose shoulder will bear the sceptre of princely power. Isai 9, 6. Only we must share his sufferings if we are to share his glory. Rom 8, 17.

For Jesus said to his disciples, If any man has a mind to come my way, let him renounce self and take up his cross and follow me. Mt 16, 24.

He is not worthy of me that does not take up his cross and follow me. Mt 10, 38.

Take my yoke upon yourselves and learn from me: I am gentle and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your souls. Mt 11, 29.

3. *Jesus falls the first time*

Beaten down, prostrate, I go mourning all day long. My whole frame afire, my whole body diseased; broken, crushed, I groan aloud at the tumult in my heart. Ps 37, 7.

Still, when my foothold seems lost, thy steadfast love Lord holds me up; when too many cares overwhelm me thy consolations comfort my soul. Ps 93, 18-19.

The Lord is truth in all his words, love in all his deeds. The Lord steadies those who are falling, he lifts up those who are bowed down. Ps 144, 13-14.

Come to me all you that labour and are burdened and I will refresh you. Mt 11, 28.

4. *Jesus meets his mother*

And the mother of Jesus was there. Jn 2, 1.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to thy word. Lk 1, 38.

Simeon said to his mother Mary, As for thy soul it shall have a sword to pierce it. Lk 2, 34-35.

Seeing him they were full of wonder and his mother said to him, My Son why has thou treated us so? Think what anguish of mind thy Father and I have endured searching for thee. Lk 2, 48.

He is not worthy of me who cares more for father or mother than for me. Mt 10, 7.

Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, my sister, my mother. Mt 12, 50.

His mother treasured up all these things in her heart. Lk 2, 51.

5. *Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry his cross*

As they led him off they caught hold of a man called Simon, from Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, put the cross on his back, and made him walk behind Jesus carrying it. Lk 23, 26.

Take my yoke upon yourselves and learn from me. Mt 11, 29.

Let us too go out to him outside the camp bearing the ignominy that he bore. For here we have no permanent home, but we are seekers after the city which is to come. Heb 13, 13-14.

The Lord is my shepherd . . . by sure paths he leads me. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I fear no evil for thou art with me. Ps 22.

It is the fortitude of the innocent sufferer that wins credit in God's sight. To that you were called because Christ suffered on your behalf and thereby left you an example; it is for you to follow in his steps. I Pet 2, 20-21.

6. *Veronica wipes the face of Jesus*

So many there be that stand gazing in horror; was ever human form so mishandled, human beauty ever so defaced. Isai 52, 14.

But seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually. Ps 104, 4.

It is thy face, Lord, that I seek. Do not hide thy face from me. Ps 26, 8-9.

Lord God of Hosts, let thy face shine upon us and we shall be saved. Ps 79.

My God bring a clean heart to birth in me, for the clean of heart shall see God. Do not banish me far from thy face, do not take thy holy spirit away from me. Ps 50, 12-13 and Mt 5, 8.

Indeed the same God who said, Out of darkness let light shine, has kindled his light in our hearts, whose shining is to make known his glory as he has revealed it in the face of Christ Jesus. 2 Cor 4, 6.

7. *Jesus falls the second time*

Save me O God! See how the waters close about me shoulder high. I sink in deep mire where there is no foothold. To thee Lord I make my prayer; at an acceptable time, O God, in thy great love answer me, with thy faithful help rescue me. Save me from sinking in the mire, rescue me from my enemies, from the deep waters that surround me. Let not the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up, or the pit close its mouth over me. Answer me, O God, for thy steadfast love is all goodness. In thy tender mercy turn towards me. Hide not thy face from thy servant in this time of my distress, give a speedy answer to my prayer. Draw near in my distress and grant deliverance, redeem me because of my enemies. I am bowed down, wounded, let thy salvation, Lord, raise me up. The Lord listens to the prayers of the helpless, he does not forget his servants who are prisoners. To him be praise from sky, earth and sea and from all creatures that move about them. Ps 58, 1-3, 15-19, 30, 34-35.

8. Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem

Jesus was followed by a great multitude of people, many women among them, who mourned and lamented over him. Jesus turned to them and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem do not weep for me; you should weep for yourselves and your children. For the time is surely coming when men will say, It is well for the barren, for the wombs that never bore children and the breasts that never suckled them. Then they will begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, and to the hills, Cover us. For if these things are done when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry? Lk 23, 27 ff.

O daughter of my people, put on sackcloth and roll in ashes, mourn as for an only son most bitter lamentation, for suddenly the destroyer will come upon us. Jer 6, 26.

Cry out to the Lord O daughter of Sion. Let tears stream down like a torrent day and night! Pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord! Lift your hands to him for the lives of your children. Lam 2, 18-19. A woman of the multitude said to Jesus aloud, Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the breasts that suckled thee. He answered, Shall we not say, Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it. Lk 11, 27.

Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted. Mt 5, 4.

9. Jesus falls the third time

Listen hard to my prayer, give my plea a hearing as thou art ever faithful. Listen, thou who lovest what is right. See how my enemies plot against my life, how they have abased me in the dust. Hasten Lord to answer my prayer. Do not turn thy face away from me and leave me like one sunk in the abyss. To thee I lift up my heart, show me the path I must follow. Thou art my God, teach me to do thy will; let thy gracious spirit lead me, safe ground under my feet. Ps 142, 1-9.

Patiently I waited for the Lord's help and at last he turned his eyes towards me; he listened to my cry, drew me up out of the deadly pit and gave me a foothold on the rock. Disappointment and shame be theirs who lay plots against my life; may they slink away covered with confusion, who now rejoice over my downfall. Ps 39, 1, 2, 14.

If the Lord had not been my help, my soul would soon have dwelt in the land of silence. When I thought, My foot stumbles, thy steadfast love, Lord, held me up. Ps 93, 17, 18.

10. Jesus is stripped of his garments

They divided his garments among them by casting lots to decide which should fall to each. This was in fulfilment of the passage in scripture which says, They divided my garments among them, cast lots for my clothing. Mt 27, 35; Jn 19, 24; Ps 21, 19.

Naked he came when he left his mother's womb, naked still death finds him. Qoh 5, 14.

A worm and no man, an object of shame to men, rejected by the people. All who see me make a mockery of me; they grimace at me and shake their heads – He committed his cause to the Lord, let him deliver him, let him rescue him since he is his friend. What hand drew me out from my mother's womb, entrusted me to my mother's breasts? Who else but thou my God, my guardian from the hour of my birth. Do not leave me now, when trouble is close at hand; stand near when I have none to help me. Ps 21, 7-12. He made himself nothing, assuming the condition of a slave. Phil 2, 7. Because he loved me and gave himself for me. Gal 2, 20.

You know how generous our Lord Jesus Christ has been; he was rich yet for your sake he became poor, so that through his poverty you might become rich. 2 Cor 8, 9.

11. Jesus is nailed to the cross

And when they reached the place which is named after the skull they crucified him there; and also the two criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Jesus meanwhile was saying, Father forgive them, they do not know what they are doing. Lk 23, 33-34.

And Pilate wrote out a proclamation which he put on the cross; it read – Jesus of Nazareth king of the Jews. Jn 19, 19.

With Christ I hang on the Cross, and yet I am alive, or rather not I; it is Christ that lives in me. Gal 2, 19-20.

For in the Son of God, in his blood, we find the redemption that sets us free from our sins. Eph 1, 7.

It was God's good pleasure to let all completeness dwell in him, and through him to win back all things whether on earth or in heaven, into union with himself, making peace with them through his blood, shed on the cross. Col 1, 19. Christ's mortal nature, then, has been crucified and you must arm yourselves with this thought. He whose mortal nature has been crucified is finished with sin and spends his days living, not according to human passions, but according to God's will. 1 Pet 4, 1-2.

12. Jesus dies on the cross

It was about the sixth hour and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. The sun was darkened and the veil of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus gave a loud cry and said, Father into thy hands I commend my spirit; and with these words he died. The centurion saw it all and gave praise to God, Beyond all doubt, he said, this was a just man. Lk 23, 44-47. To thee O Lord I look for refuge, never let me be ashamed of my trust. Protected by thee I shall escape from the snare that lies hidden in my path. Into thy hands I commend my spirit; thou, God ever faithful, wilt claim me for thyself, I will triumph and exult in thy mercy. Ps 30, 1, 5-7.

God forbid that I should boast of anything but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world is crucified to me and I to the world. Gal 6, 14.

Him I would learn to know and the power of his resurrection and what it means to share his sufferings, moulded into the pattern of his death, in the hope of achieving resurrection from the dead. Phil 3, 10-11.

For me life means Christ, and death is a prize to be won. Phil 1, 21.

Believe me, when I tell you this; a grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die, or else it remains nothing more than a grain of wheat, but if it dies then it yields rich fruit. If anyone is to be my servant he must follow my way.

Jn 12, 24-26. This is the greatest love a man can show, that he should lay down his life for his friends. Jn 15, 13.

13. Jesus is taken down from the cross and laid in Mary's arms

His mother had taken her stand beside the cross of Jesus. Jn 19, 25.

Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Lk 1, 38.

Now it happened that he was going into a town called Naim. As he approached the gate of the town a dead man was being carried out for burial. He was the only son of his widowed mother. When the Lord saw her his heart went out to her and he said, Weep no more. Lk 7, 11-13.

Mary treasured up all these things in her heart and pondered over them. Lk 2, 19, 51.

Blessed are those who mourn, they shall be comforted. Mt 5, 5.

My soul magnifies the Lord. Behold from this day forward all generations will count me blessed, because he who is mighty, he whose name is holy has wrought for me his wonders. Lk 1, 46 ff.

Yes, no waters can quench love's fire, no floods can drown it. For love is as strong as death. Cant 8, 7. 6.

14. Jesus is laid in the tomb

Joseph, of Arimathea, took possession of the body, wrapped it in a clean winding-sheet and laid it in a new tomb which he himself had cut out of the rock; he then rolled a great stone against the entrance. Mt 27, 59-60.

You know well enough that we who were baptised in Christ Jesus, have all been baptised in his death. In our baptism we have been buried with him, died like him, so that, just as Christ was raised up by his Father's power from the dead, we too might live and move in a new kind of existence. Rom 6, 3-4. By baptism you have been united with his burial, united too with his resurrection, through your faith in that exercise of power by which God raised him from the dead Col. 2, 12-13.

Indeed all you who have been baptized in Christ's name have put on the person of Christ, Gal 3, 27.

There must then be a renewal in the inner life of your minds; you must be clothed in the new self which is created in God's image justified and sanctified through the truth. Eph 4, 24.

TEXTS

I. Communion

Is not the bread which we break a participation in Christ's body?' Why did St. Paul not say 'a partaking'? Because he wished to express something more than this, to show the intimacy of the connection. For participation involves not merely sharing and partaking, but uniting. Just as that body is made one with Christ, so through this bread we become one with him.

Why did he add the words 'which we break'? We can see this occurring in the Eucharist. Not indeed on the cross – in fact the very opposite there: 'His bones', says Scripture, 'shall not be broken.' But for you he suffers in the Sacrifice what he did not suffer on the cross, enduring to be broken that he may bring all of us to fulfilment.

Then, after he had spoken of 'a participation in Christ's body', it struck him that the participant and the thing participated in are separate objects, so he removed even this difference, trifling though it seemed. For after speaking of 'a participation in his body', he sought to express something more intimate, and so he added: 'We, though many, are one bread and one body.' He is in fact saying: Why do I call it a participation? We *are* that body. For what is the bread? The body of Christ. And what do those who partake of it become? The body of Christ: not many bodies, but one. Just as the bread compounded of many grains is made one, and the grains exist but are nowhere to be seen, and because they are joined together cannot be observed in separate existence, in the same way we are joined both to each other and to Christ. For you and the next man are nurtured not from separate bodies but all from the same body. Accordingly he added: 'For we all partake of the one bread.' But if we are all from the same body and become the same body, why do we not show a common love, becoming one also in this? For this was what happened in the time of our ancestors. Scripture says: 'The heart and the soul of the host of believers are one.' But nowadays it is just the opposite. There are wars, many and varied, between us all. We treat our neighbours' limbs more savagely than wild beasts would. Christ made you, a creature so utterly different, one with him, and yet you do not deign to unite yourself even with your brother by showing a proper regard for him. You cut yourself off, you who have enjoyed all that love and life from the Master.

It was not merely his body that he gave us. When that earlier nature of our flesh, moulded from the earth, rushed into death and destruction, he brought to it what we might call a new bread and leaven – his own flesh. His flesh was in nature the same as ours, but free of sin and teeming with life. To all of us he gave his flesh to partake of, so that we might be nourished by it. Then, stripping ourselves of our former dead flesh, we might by means of this table be fashioned for eternal life.

From St. John Chrysostom's 24th homily on 1 Corinthians. PG 61, 200–201.

2. 'Come Sanctifier'

SINCE Christ died for us out of love, in commemorating his death at the time of the Sacrifice we ask that his love be bestowed on us by the coming of the Holy Spirit. We humbly beg that through the love by which Christ stooped to be crucified for us, we may receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, so that we too may count the world as crucified, and be ourselves crucified to the world. We pray that we may imitate the death of our Lord, and that we too may walk in the newness of life, just as Christ died once in that he died to sin, but in that he lives he lives for God, (Rom 6, 10). We pray that when we have received the gift of love, we may die to sin and live in God. 'For the love of God is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us' (Rom 5, 5).

For when we eat his bread and drink of his chalice, this very partaking of the body and blood of the Lord has such an effect on us that we die to the world and live a hidden life with Christ in God, crucifying our flesh with its vices and desires. In this way all the faithful who love God and their neighbour drink the chalice of the Lord's love even if they do not drink the chalice of bodily suffering. Drunk with this draught, they mortify their earthly limbs. Clothed in the Lord Jesus Christ, they do not seek the desires of the flesh. They think not of things seen but of things unseen. For in this way the Lord's chalice is drunk whilst his holy love is guarded; without that love it avails a man nothing to surrender his body even for burning. But by the gift of love we are enabled to become in very truth that which we celebrate in a mysterious manner in the sacrifice. Certainly this is what the Apostle says: 'For we, though many, are one bread and one body: all of us (he added) who share in the one bread' (I Cor 10, 17).

To encourage us to pray for this at the time of the Sacrifice we have the most invigorating example of our Saviour. He wanted us to request, at the commemoration of his death, the same blessing as he, the true priest, sought for us when he was close to death. Amongst other things he said: 'Holy Father, in your name preserve those whom you have given to me, that they may be one as we are one' (Jn 17, 11). And a little later: 'But I ask not merely for these, but also for those who will by their words place trust in me: that all may be one as you, Father, are in me and I in you, so that they may all be one in us, and the world may know that you have sent me. I have given them the glory which you gave to me, so that they may be one as we are one. I shall be in them as you are in me, so that they may be made one' (*Ibid* 20).

So when we offer up the body and blood of Christ, we make the same request on our own behalf as Christ made for us when he deigned to sacrifice himself for us. Turn your eyes to the Gospel, and you will find that after completing this prayer our Redeemer himself entered the garden, and was immediately seized by the hands of the Jews. It was in fact after the supper at which he gave to his disciples the Sacrament of his body and blood that the

Saviour uttered this prayer for those who believe in him. So he shows us that especially at the time of the sacrifice ought we to seek that which the High Priest deigned to pray for when he constituted the rite of this sacrifice.

It is through the unity of grace of the Spirit that we receive our request to be made one in Father and Son. The blessed Apostle bids us carefully to preserve that unity when he says: 'Supporting each other in love, be careful to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace'. We ask, then, that the Holy Spirit come not in the substance of his Divinity by which he pervades all things, but as the gift of undivided love. For if you believe that the Holy Spirit comes from place to place, you confess also the coming of the Father and the Son from one place to another. For the Son of God says: 'If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our dwelling in him' (Jn 14, 23). So Father and Son come to him who loves them, and they are loved only by him in whom they deign to dwell. For 'God is love' (I Jn 4, 8).

Yet it is by love that God is loved and therefore God is loved only when he is possessed. Our eyes will not fully observe the light except by admitting it; in the same way a man only begins to love God when he begins to be visited by him. How then do Father and Son come to him who loves them, since they can be loved only by him in whom they are already present? The answer is that they are properly said to come when they accumulate their gift of grace by increasing a man's progress in virtue. So they come to him who loves them, not by approaching him in whom they already dwell, but by increasing in him the gifts already conferred. In the same way the Holy Spirit is said to come at the request of the faithful when he deigns to bestow or increase his gift of love and harmony. In this giving the Holy Spirit is especially, almost peculiarly, recognised. For by his omnipotence he can confer other gifts without his being present through grace; but when he bestows love, he shows that he is himself present through grace.

So if a man speaks with the tongues of men and angels, and has not love, he will be as sounding brass or tinkling cymbal. Even if he has the gift of prophecy, and knows all mysteries and all knowledge, even if he has faith enough to move mountains, but has not love, he is as nothing. Even if he distributes all his possessions to obtain food for the poor, and hands over his own body for burning, yet has not love, it avails him not (I Cor 13, 1 ff).

Yet who would deny that all these attributes are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, for the Apostle witnesses that they are conferred through the Spirit? But none of them avails where there is not love. For the Holy Spirit provides all these attributes even to those in whom he does not dwell; but he never withdraws from those to whom he gives love.

Therefore holy Church, during the Sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ, prays that the Holy Spirit be sent to her, and asks particularly for the gift of love, so that through it she may preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And because it is written 'Love is strong like death' (Cant 8, 6) she asks for this love to mortify her earthly limbs. She recalls that by this love

her Redeemer died for her without thought of reward.

So the Holy Spirit sanctifies the sacrifice of the Catholic Church. The result is that the people of Christ abides in faith and love, as long as each one of the faithful, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, worthily eats and drinks the body and blood of the Lord; as long, that is, as each one holds the faith from his God unswervingly, and by his goodly life does not abandon the unity of the body of the Church.

St. Fulgentius of Ruspe, De missione Filii et Spiritus Sancti. PL 65, 789-91.

3. Huius Aquae et Vini Mysterium

CHRIST supported us all, for he supported our sins. We see, then, that the water symbolises his people, and the wine reveals Christ's blood. When the water and wine run together in the chalice, Christ and his people are one. The crowd of believers is linked and joined with him in whom they believe. This fusing and intermingling of water and wine in the Lord's chalice is such that the elements cannot be separated from each other. So nothing will succeed in separating the Church, the people who form the Church, from Christ. This undivided love will cohere and abide.

So in the consecration of the chalice of the Lord neither water alone nor wine alone can be offered. For if wine alone were offered, then Christ's blood would begin to exist without us. If water alone were offered, the people would begin to exist without Christ. But when both are intermingled and joined with each other in indistinguishable unity, the sacrament of life and of heaven is achieved. As the body of Christ cannot be flour alone nor water alone, but these elements must be linked and joined and integrated into the one bread, so the Lord's chalice is not water alone nor wine alone, but a fusion of the two. By this sacrament our people is shown to be one. As many grains gathered, compounded, and intermingled make the one bread, so we may know that in Christ, the bread of heaven, there is one body in which we are all joined and united.

From St. Cyprian's letter (53) to Caecilius. PL 4, 395-6.

4. Our Daily Bread

GIVE us this day our daily bread'. This can be understood in both a spiritual and a literal way. In both senses the benefit conferred by God assists us to salvation. For the bread of life is Christ, and this bread does not belong to all men but is ours. Just as we say 'our Father' because he is the father of those who know him and believe in him, so we call the bread ours because Christ is the bread of those who partake of his body. We ask that this bread be given to us each day, so that those of us who dwell in Christ and receive the Eucharist daily as the food of salvation, may not be sundered from Christ's body because some more serious sin occurs during the time when we are forced to

hold back from communion with the heavenly bread. Christ himself in his preaching reminds us: 'I am the bread of life who came down from heaven. He who eats of my bread will live for ever. The bread which I shall give you is my flesh, for the life which is to come'. (Jn 6, 51).

So when Christ states that he who eats of this bread lives for ever, clearly those who partake of his body, and receive the Eucharist by duly communicating, live on. On the other hand, we must be fearful and pray that none, whilst withdrawn and separated from Christ's body, may remain far from salvation. For Christ himself uttered the warning: 'Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink of his blood, you will not have life in you' (Jn 6, 53). So we ask that our bread, which is Christ, be given to us every day, so that we who abide and live in Christ may not withdraw from his body and from the holiness he confers.

From St. Cyprian's treatise on the Lord's Prayer. PL 4, 548-9.

5. The Grace of the Eucharist

As soon as we enter the church, the grace of the Holy Spirit casts out disbelief, increases faith, diminishes sin, augments virtue, removes ignorance, and reinforces knowledge. Through the hearing of the sacred readings it makes the disposition and habit of the faith, virtue and knowledge contained in them lasting and unchanging. Through the sacred hymns which follow, it achieves a ready assent in the soul towards the virtues, and towards the intellectual pleasure and delight which virtue arouses in her. Through the devout reading of the holy Gospel, it puts an end to mundane thoughts and the world of sense. By closing the doors on these things, it achieves a transformation in the soul, a disposition whereby she passes from this perishable world to the intelligible world. It closes the gates of the senses and purifies them from the images of sin.

Through the Procession of the sacred mysteries, it makes the teaching and knowledge of the divine economy in our regard more perfect, more mysterious and strange. Through God's welcoming kiss, it achieves identity of purpose and opinion and love not only between all men, but first within each individual and between himself and God. Through the confession of faith which is the creed, it induces a fitting thanksgiving for the amazing manner of our salvation. Through the hymn to the thrice Holy, it engenders union and equality of stature with the holy angels, and the unceasing and euphonious harmony of hallowed praises to God. Through the prayer in which we presume to call God Father, it brings that authentic adoption which is in the gift of the holy Spirit.

Through the prayer *One and Holy* and what follows, the grace of the Spirit brings that friendship and kinship which unites us to God himself. Through devout participation in the pure life-giving Mysteries, we attain partnership and identity with him according to the measure of our likeness

to him. And through this, man is thought worthy to be transformed from man to God. Here in our present existence we believe that we possess the gifts of the holy Spirit through grace, in faith. But in the life that is to come we believe that we shall apprehend them as they are in fact and in truth. We believe this by the unfailing hope of our faith, by the secure and unchangeable promise of him who proclaimed it, that if we keep the commandments as best we can, we shall apprehend those gifts. We shall pass from the grace of faith to the grace of vision, when our God and Saviour Jesus Christ openly transforms us into himself and removes the marks of our mortality.

St. Maximus the Confessor, Mystagogia, c. XXIV. PG 91, 704-5.

6. The Sacrament of Union

I am the living bread who came down from heaven' – living, that is, because I came down from heaven. The manna too came down from heaven, but the manna was the shadow whilst this bread is the reality. 'If anyone eats of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread which I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world'. . . . The faithful recognise the body of Christ, if only they do not disregard its existence. If they wish to live in dependence on the spirit of Christ, let them become the body of Christ. None but the body of Christ lives in dependence on Christ's spirit.

Understand, brethren, the purport of these words. Each of you is a human being with a spirit and a body. By spirit I mean what is called soul, which is clearly the source of your human existence, for you are composed of soul and body. You have, then, an invisible spirit and a visible body. Tell me, which of the two depends for its life on the other? Does your spirit live in dependence on your body, or is it the other way round? Every person who is alive gives answer, for he who cannot answer this is scarcely alive. What answer does the living man give? Surely my body lives in dependence on my soul. Do you too, then, wish to live in dependence on the spirit of Christ? Then reside in the body of Christ. For clearly my body does not live in dependence on your spirit. No, my body depends on my spirit, as your body depends on yours. Christ's body can live only by dependence on Christ's spirit. Hence the apostle Paul, when he interprets the meaning of this bread for us, says: 'We, though many, are one bread and one body.'

O sacrament of reverent love, mark of unity, bond of affection! He who desires life has here both a place and source of life. Let him draw close, and believe: let him become part of the body, that he may be endowed with life. Let him not stand apart from the close-knit structure of the limbs: let there be no foul member deserving of amputation: let no twisted limb be cause for shame. Let it be splendid and well-fitting and healthy. Let it cling to the body, living for the God who is sprung from God. Let it now toil on earth that it may later reign in heaven.

From St. Augustine's treatise on John's Gospel c. VI. PL 35, 1612-13.

MEDITATION

This is my Body. . .

LORD, when you gave us your body and blood saying 'Take and eat', you did not give us a 'thing'. You gave us yourself. You – Jesus Christ the Son of God, true God and true man. You – not something which represents you, not just a part of yourself, but you, my Lord and my God.

You are the living gift of God to mankind. A gift which is not the result of an impulse of momentary generosity, but which comes straight from the eternal unchanging heart of God. A gift without reserve or limit, measured not by the cost to the giver but by the needs of those to whom it was given.

No Lord, it was no 'thing' that you gave us. No mere token or symbol of love. Not a memento or keepsake left behind to remind us of you in your absence. You gave us yourself. You, present among us all days, even to the end of time. You are not the aloof spectator of our human lives, but God-with-us, as one of us. You are with us in order that we may realise that you are entirely for us. You became our food and keep us alive with yourself. We eat you and become strong and walk in the strength of that food. Our God is our food, the source of our life, our strength, our endurance.

You gave us things enough when you created the universe. But we took those things and forgot the giver. We used the things you gave us to assert our independence of you. We became self-sufficient and forgot our need of you. But you, Lord, did not forget how much we need you. And what you knew as God you learnt again as man in the hard school of suffering. You gave yourself because your desire to satisfy our need of you is infinitely greater than our desire for you. Indeed, Lord, we could never desire and need you did you not first have that immense divine thirst to share yourself with us.

And now, because you have given us yourself, Lord, we can no longer be satisfied with anything less than you. You offer yourself to us as our food and teach us what hunger we should have. You are the real bread that we need. The bread that increases our appetite whilst satisfying our needs. But Lord, we would never have known it had you not given yourself to us.

Supposing, Lord, that instead of giving yourself you had given us more 'things'. What if those who believed in you were never to feel the hunger and thirst of the body. Then, Lord, you would have given us nothing. For no accumulation of things can ever add up to that gift of self which is the heart of love. And Lord, the man you created in your image needs love because you are love.

Lord God of Love, I need you because I am made to love. And all my other wants and necessities only make sense in the pattern of my life when they feed upon this need for you and are satisfied by your gift of yourself. But even though I understand this I still continue to treat you as a thing. A

most holy and sacred thing, it is true, but none the less as a thing. And all the time you cry out to me, 'It is I'.

For what you invite me to, Lord, is not an exchange of gifts, but a communion of life. You in me and I in you. Where your life is the food of mine, and my life is a living by you. The food you give me assimilates me to you. I become like you when I eat you. Your food is infinite love. Your food is infinite holiness. And this is the meal you invite me to share with you. Lord, your hunger is satisfied only by love. Give me love then, that you may not hunger.

Take and eat of this, all of you. But, Lord, you do not give yourself to me apart from others. I take my place at your table, where you are host and servant and food, because I am a member of your family. I am here because I belong to you. And belonging to you, I belong to all those whom you have invited to your supper. No man eats the bread you give him by himself. He who sups with the Lord sups with all those to whom the Lord gives himself.

For what use is it, Lord, if I eat at your table and fail to recognise the needs of my brothers. What will it avail me if I satisfy myself and then hear you say, 'I was hungry and you gave me not to eat'. He that eats your bread, Lord, must eat in order to satisfy the wants of others. He must eat in order to live by you. And you live in order to give yourself to mankind. For that, Lord, is love and charity – to give oneself first and foremost.

The gift that does not even signify the giving of self is a mockery. When the soul is absent the gesture of the body is a pretence and a betrayal. The kiss that Judas gave you, Lord, was a sign that he rejected you. His body embraced you whilst his soul steeled itself against you. But even though Peter went away from you to weep, he left with you a sorrowing heart. And, Lord, you never despise the humble and sorrowing heart. But you set no store on the things I give you unless I am in them, unless they are myself.

For the things that you give, Lord, have ceased to be things and have become you. The bread is your body, the wine your blood. The food of the body is transformed into the food of the soul, and yet it does not cease to be the food of the whole man. In what seems to be merely bread and wine I recognise you, Lord. Dear Lord, help me to love enough, so that whatever I give contains my whole being. Help me to give with you, so that while I give myself, others may recognise you in that gift.

Let me not be afraid, Lord, of putting myself into the hands of others. Even though I feel afraid, do not let that stop me from giving. You were afraid, but your fear did not dictate the extent of your giving. With the words, 'this is my body. Take and eat', you put yourself into the hands of those who would rend your body and cast it out of their city to die nailed to a cross. But when you gave you did not lay down conditions first. You just gave. There was no thought of insuring yourself against loss or injury. You did not withhold your gift because you saw that men would not appreciate it. For you, all that was included in your gift. Your infinite love gave all and still counted it as nothing. Dear Lord, it is because I love so little that I give so little, and

tremble before the cost of the little that I do give. Teach me, Lord, to give with you and through you.

Not only did you give but you were glad to give. It was with a heart filled with thanksgiving that you took bread and broke it. This gift of yourself was the fulfilment of your deepest desire, Lord, I am glad to receive you. I am grateful that you come to live in me. But where is the sincerity of the thanks I give you during Mass, when I come away and refuse to give myself to others, You who are life and strength in me cry out, 'Come to me all you who labour and are burdened'. But I hush your voice by keeping you to myself as if it were for myself alone that you have come to me.

And yet, in spite of all that I do to you, you still come to me as I labour under the burden of my own selfishness. Help me, Lord, to go out to meet you. Let me find in your infinite generosity the remedy for my unending miserliness, in your boundless love the remedy for the fears that paralyze me. May the reception of this sacrament of your body and blood be an entering into you; a growing up into the likeness of you who give yourself for the life of the world. Amen.

SPIRITUAL VOCABULARY

Historians of the Liturgy have been working for many years on the Mass of the roman rite. The origin of many phrases (and gestures) is still being investigated and discussed: e.g. the phrase 'mysterium fidei' in the formula of the consecration. The little glossary which follows gives the accepted explanations of some of the words and phrases used in the Canon of the Mass.

Haec sancta sacrificia ILLIBATA. Not a technical ritual term, but a word belonging to the vocabulary of common usage. It has the simple meaning of 'untouched' and is almost synonymous with 'immaculate'.

OMNIBUS ORTHODOXIS ATQUE CATHOLICAE ET APOSTOLICAE FIDEI CULTORIBUS. Those for whom this prayer is offered are all the 'orthodox' Bishops, i.e. those who are faithful to the teaching of the Apostles and the universal Church, and whose duty it is to watch over (*cultoribus*) the purity of the faith. *Orthodoxis* is then not an adjective but a noun which stands in apposition to *cultoribus*. 'For all those who, faithful to the true teaching, are guardians of the catholic and apostolic faith.'

SACRIFICIUM LAUDIS. An echo of Ps 49, 14. It is an expression which characterises the spiritual nature of the christian sacrifice (cf. *rationabilem*), and further emphasises the fundamental purpose of that sacrifice: the praise of God.

COMMUNICANTES. The problem is to know to which phrase this word is to be attached. The most obvious and probable solution is to take it as part of the prayer which precedes, reading: '*tibi reddunt vota sua aeterno Deo vivo et vero, communicantes et memoriam venerantes . . .*' The essential idea is that of the communion of saints, the union of the Church militant with the Church triumphant in this sacrifice of praise. But even whilst the Church recalls our fellowship with the Saints in heaven she measures the distance which separates us from them ' . . . memoriam venerantes'. 'United in one communion we venerate the memory . . .'

Hanc igitur oblationem SERVITUTIS NOSTRAE. This phrase, like the *nos servi tui* in the prayer *Unde et memores*, designates the clergy. When the whole Church is meant the words 'familia', 'famulus' are used: e.g. *Nobis quoque peccatoribus, famulis tuis*, which includes clergy and people.

Ut PLACATUS accipias. The word is a *cliché* of the vocabulary of prayer. The meaning is not that of classical latin and it would be wrong to translate by 'placated'. The idea is rather that of benevolence or approval, with the kindly eye of the father of the family.

Quam oblationem RATIONABILEM. Originally this word was used as an equivalent of the greek 'logikos'. Cf. 1 Pet 2,2; Rom 12,2, in the Vulgate translation (Douai). The problem facing the translator of the Canon is to

know whether it keeps this primitive meaning and can be translated by 'spiritual': or whether it has taken on a newer shade of meaning. The generally accepted solution is that 'spiritual' is the underlying meaning, but the best translation is probably 'perfect', understanding that a perfect sacrifice must be spiritual and not merely an offering of material things.

PRO MULTIS *effundetur*. The aramaic word which 'multis' translates means equally 'all' and 'many'. The meaning here is 'all'.

PER QUEM HAEC OMNIA *sanctificas*. The 'haec omnia' originally denoted not the Body and Blood of Christ but the other things which were to be blessed at this moment of the Mass, e.g. the blessing of the oil of the sick on Holy Thursday. It is in Christ that the Father has created everything, and it is in the context of the Eucharist that we are able to thank him for all his gifts.

AMEN. An adverb derived from a hebrew root denoting firmness, solidity, stability, and hence truth, which the Jews thought of in terms of what is solid and worthy of confidence. The cry Amen! is to affirm that one holds as true what has been said or is going to be said. In addition, it denotes the committing of oneself to the course of action implied in those words, especially when they are a prayer. This is the sum of the Amen used in the liturgical renewal of the alliance, Dt 27, 15-16. In the Church's liturgy Amen expresses exactly this whole-hearted engagement of the community in the course of action implied in the prayer offered in their name to the Father, through Christ, the Amen of God; 'for all the promises, of God find their Yes (i.e. Amen) in him'. 2 Cor 1, 20; cf. Apoc 3, 14.

SHEKINAH (from the hebrew *shakan*, dwell; cp. *mishkān*, tent) is the Rabbinic term for God's Presence among his People. The biblical synonyms are 'glory', 'majesty' and 'power'. The rabbis thought of the Shekinah as an enveloping cloud or an indwelling presence. They spoke of the Shekinah as clothing Adam before the Fall, a symbol of God's Presence by grace. In ancient Israel God's Presence was manifested particularly by the cloud of glory that dwelt within the Holy of Holies.

In the New Testament the Incarnation is announced in terms of a new Shekinah: 'The *power* of the Most High will *overshadow* thee' (either of God's descent in power to effect the Incarnation or of the descent of the Word upon the ark of the new Covenant). For St. John Christ is the new Shekinah, dwelling within the Tabernacle of his human nature, revealing his glory at the transfiguration: 'The Word was made flesh and *dwelt* (as the new Shekinah) among us and we saw his *glory* (at the transfiguration)'.

Shekinah is also used of the Father and of the Holy Spirit. God the Father speaks from the cloud of glory at the transfiguration. God the Holy Spirit descends in power to 'clothe' the Apostles with power at Pentecost (Lk 24,49). In St Paul it is applied to the glory dwelling within, or enveloping, the temples of the soul, of the body (especially the resurrection-body) and of the Church.

RECOMMENDED READING

SCRIPTURE. *Memory and Tradition in Israel* is a biblical study particularly appropriate to this issue of **THE WAY**. The author shows that, in the context of public worship, to remember is so to reach out after reality that the effort results in an actualisation of the redemptive history of Israel. In Israel's memory, the Exodus, though a fixed historical event, continued to transform the chronological time of each new generation into God's redemptive time. Even those who have no knowledge of hebrew will be able to appreciate this exciting search for the full and pregnant meaning of the word 'memory', and see how the notion has shaped the Church's spiritual teaching on God's power and presence in the holy Eucharist.

Most of us, as children, were introduced to the Old Testament through the medium of bible stories. *The Kingdom of God*, a 'shortened' bible, which was first published as a text book for schools in a German diocese, illustrates in its own way – literally as well as metaphorically, for it contains a set of very intriguing woodcuts by Walter Habdank – the great advances made in our time in the teaching of Scripture. By means of synopsis and short introductory explanations, Salvation history is presented as a continuous whole. Unfortunately it is far too expensive for use as a school text book. Those who suspect that the prophetic books are beyond their mental grasp will be much encouraged by reading *The Prophets*, which is short and inexpensive, at least in its English edition.

Christ, yesterday, today and forever is a *vade-mecum* of the Gospels, intended not for the student but 'as a guide for anyone who seeks to know the life and doctrine of the Divine Master.' It contains an apologetic, historical and topographical introduction, followed by a 'life' of Christ from the four Gospels, with brief notes and a summary of the dogmas revealed in the Gospels. One wonders when the book, a translation from the Italian, was first published, as some of the exegetical notes are rather out of date. A useful book for the ordinary reader, but far too expensive. Richard of Chichester's famous petition 'to know thee more clearly, love thee more dearly, follow thee more nearly' is the declared purpose of *Behold the Lamb of God*, a selection of extracts from the Gospels. Fr. Murray tries to show how the christian virtues and aspirations are illustrated by Christ's behaviour and words. We think that the phrase 'aspects of Christ's personality' is a rather unfortunate one; and some of Fr. Murray's notes raise difficulties rather than solve them (e.g. on the unjust steward, p. 118).

A certain amount of publicity was given recently to a collection of Gnostic papyri discovered in Egypt in 1945, when one of them, *The Gospel of Thomas*, was made available in translation. *The Gospel of Philip* is the second of these papyri to be published in English, with a full commentary and notes. A book for the specialist in New Testament studies and the history of theology.

LITURGY. Darton, Longman and Todd have published a beautifully

printed (except for a curious misprint repeated four times) edition of the Lord's Supper, the Passion and the Easter Vigil. Brief but adequate explanations indicate that the text was prepared for young people by one who understands what children want to know and how they can be helped to share in the liturgy. The text is in English, rendered freely but with reverence; and the people's prayers and responses are also given in Latin. Rosemary Haughton's illustrations are a joy. But why spoil the whole production by abbreviating the Ordinary and the Canon? Rosemary Haughton has also written and illustrated four picture books for very young children which fuse the liturgical seasons with the seasons of the year.

It has often occurred to us that good christian families should be encouraged to plan their prayers to suit every crisis and occasion. *Prayers at Home* provides this encouragement. It may fairly be called a para-liturgical book for the family. The 'services' are composed of a psalm, a reading from the New Testament, a short direction for a few moments' silent prayer, the Our Father and one of the great liturgical collects.

THEOLOGY. *Tradition in the Early Church*, by the Lightfoot Professor of Divinity, is a very valuable and very timely book for the Catholic theologian and divinity student. The author is not only a competent patristic scholar; he is also a Canon of the Anglican Cathedral of Durham. Hence his examination of the meaning of tradition in the Apostolic and ante-Nicene Fathers, together with his conclusions, point up the problems which must arise, in the oecumenical context, during the discussions on the source(s) of revelation at the next session of Vatican Council II. *Christian Unity* is a collection of papers read at the Heythrop Oecumenical Conference last summer, sponsored by the Hierarchy of England and Wales. The purpose of the conference was educative, as Archbishop Heenan implies in his introduction, where he explains why and how English-speaking Catholics, clergy and laity alike, must begin to interest themselves seriously in matters oecumenical, and enumerates the obstacles which restrict such serious interest. The various papers inevitably overlap; but that by Fr. Bévénôt, on joint services between Catholics and other christians, is a very penetrating piece of writing, which it would profit every christian to read.

The author of *The Christian in Politics* declares that there is no connection between the christian political thinker who presupposes a christian re-conversion of society before christian political ideas can be realised, and the christian politician, who cannot presuppose any such re-conversion. The book offers a survey of the relationship between church and state in the West from early christian times, and lays particular emphasis on the English scene since the Reformation. A devout christian and a political journalist, Mr. James concludes that no christian entering the field of politics can hope 'to keep himself unspotted from the world.' Though it is often *simpliste* from an historical and theological point of view, the book is a thoughtful study which no

christian in public life should ignore. *Problems and Progress*, a collection of theological and psychological papers, read in the school of General Studies at Fordham University, includes a worthwhile essay on the American political scene in which the President is a Catholic. Mr. James, with his slight bias against the 'Roman' Church, might be surprised to find that he and Fr. Constanzo, S. J., have many ideas in common.

In This World is a series of essays on the theology of the lay apostolate, with special reference to the importance of the liturgy and of the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi*, which Dom Ralph Russell styles the *Magna Carta* of the lay apostolate. *The Master Calls*, a handbook of morals for the layman (reviewed in THE WAY, October 1961, p. 321), is now available from an English publisher.

SPIRITUALITY. 'The union of her, who is not, with Him who is', is the definition of prayer given by Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity when she entered Carmel at the age of twenty-one. The extracts from her letters and spiritual notes which make up this edition of her *Spiritual Writings* illumine the truth which lies at the foundation of the interior life: the realisation in faith that the christian soul is the centre, the home where the glory of the Trinity dwells. This book should be read by any christian who feels afraid of death, and particularly by parents who have any hesitation in giving their children to God in religion. *The Prayer of Faith* is to be recommended, not so much for its general doctrine, which, as the title suggests, is pedestrian enough, as for the penetration of many incidental remarks, e.g. on the relations between illuminations and preparation for prayer (pp. 55-6). Fr. Boase has an extraordinary knack of making asides which *ex professo* contemplatives will relish and beginners can understand to their profit. There is wisdom here which is the fruit of experience. *The Prayer of Love and Silence* propounds an apparently simple method of the 'practice of the presence of God' which is very close to St. Teresa's 'deep recollection'. But the author does not seem to take sufficient account of how exactly the method is to be applied by those who lack the external supports of the monastic life. These three books overlap; and we think that the third adds very little to the first two.

In reading the works of the Abbé Courtois one feels that his style - a mixture of the magisterial and the *cliché* - belongs to a generation which is passing, in spite of his acquaintance with modern vocabulary. *An Hour with Jesus*, the fourth in his series of meditations for religious women, is no exception. Certainly the language of his colloquies is rather forced; and one wonders about the translation: 'the salutary virulence of our faith', and 'establishing contact with God permits us little by little to purify our deep psychology' are puzzling phrases. Despite these criticisms, the book contains much sound supernatural sense, and can be recommended for spiritual reading, if not for use at prayer. *Tell me about Prayer* is advertised as suitable for the age group eight to twelve. The illustrations indicate that a very young twelve-year-old is envisaged; whilst the text will be beyond all but the very good

readers amongst eight-year-olds. The book could very well be used by parents for teaching their children how to pray.

The publishers of the Orchard Series deserve our thanks for their new translation of the great Salesian classic *A Treatise of the Love of God*. Purists may complain that the translator has recourse to paraphrase far too frequently. But Fr. Kerns seems to have achieved a mean between a literal rendering of the highly ornate seventeenth century French, so unpalatable to modern taste, and a paraphrase which might distort the true sense of the original. The latest volume in Faber & Faber's excellent series 'Classics of the Contemplative Life' is a disappointment. Hugh of St. Victor is one of the recognised masters of the spiritual life, and these *Selected Spiritual Writings* do him far less than justice, both in the actual selection – there is nothing from *De Arrha Animae*, *De Laude Caritatis* or *De Modo Orandi*, and far too much of the moral Noah's Ark – and in the quality of the translation. Hugh's famous definition of contemplation, for example, *perspicax et liber animi contuitus in res perspicandas usquequaque diffusus* is rendered (p. 183) 'the piercing and spontaneous intuition of the soul which embraces every aspect of the objects of the understanding'; whilst *speculatio*, speculative or antecedent contemplation, becomes admiration; and *in speculatione admiratio* becomes 'in admiration, wonder'.

How to give a Retreat is a very uneven translation of Fr. Iparraguirre's *Direccion de una tanda de Ejercicios*. The first part consists of general instructions on the Exercises and on the direction of an Ignatian retreat; the second part is a detailed adaptation of the Exercises for a retreat of five days for young men.

Newman at St. Mary's contains, with a useful introduction, twenty of the sermons selected by the Cardinal himself from his eight volumes of *Plain and Parochial Sermons* preached when he was Anglican Vicar of the Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford; they were sermons which needed no alteration to make them acceptable to Catholics as well as to Anglicans. They form a unity in that they deal with various aspects of one topic – the growth of the christian in the world according to the image of Christ. *Alone with God*, Dom Jean Le Clercq's classic study of the eremitical life according to the writings of Bl. Paul Giustiniani, (cf. *THE WAY*, Vol. 2, January 1962, p. 80) is now available in England.

We are coming to look forward to the publications of the Furrow Trust. The most recent one, *Branch of the Vine*, a selection of articles which originally appeared in *The Furrow*, is designed to help all those good christians who are only half-alive to the truth of sanctifying grace and so tend to live joyless lives. The really valuable chapters are biblical and liturgical; the one on tolerance is not really at ease in this company; those on prayer and the fruits of the Spirit are below par. *The Nun in the World* is remarkable for its vision, depth and clarity; it is the wonderful response of a bishop to the inspiration of the Council, encouraging the active women religious of his diocese to a true renewal in the life of the Church today. Every nun will wish to read it and should find in it true consolation and encouragement, in spite of the fact that some of the author's criticisms are over-severe and unrealistic.

HAGIOGRAPHY. Cardinal Suenens writes that the most efficacious means towards a renewal of spirit in religious Institutes of nuns is a close study of the life of the foundress and a return to her essential spirit. Recent biographies of two such foundresses, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, of the Order of the Visitation (*Madame de Chantal*), and Cornelia Connelly of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus (*Du Mariage au Cloître*), are a remarkable illustration of the Cardinal's point. Both these women were drawn from married life (though Jane Frances was a widow) whilst their children were still young to make their first foundations; both had to suffer the same opposition and calumnies; both were sanctified through a remarkable submission and attachment to the Divine Will; both saw clearly that their work for God must be adapted to the wants of their age.

In *The Saints and our Children* Mrs. Newland is writing for families 'who are trying their best to raise saints'. We could mention the humour, imagination, common sense and holy wisdom which go to the making of her book; but it is enough to say that all who have her ideals will be most grateful to her. Mary Cousins's book of short saints' lives for children, *The Saints in History*, is rather more self-conscious than Mrs. Newland's. Occasionally she falls into the trap of pointing her moral in too grown-up a fashion – or so it seems to this grown-up. *To win their Crown* is a series of imaginative episodes, again for children, which emphasise the fact and constancy of martyrdom of the forty English and Welsh *Beati* whose Cause has been re-assumed for Canonisation. At the end of *To God alone the Glory* we find an eighteen-page bibliography which would not disgrace a doctoral thesis; but in the preface we are told that the book is a 'popular' biography of the great Franciscan Doctor, St. Bonaventure. We have no means of distinguishing fact from conjecture, or probability from imagination: and Sister M. Benetta seems to have adopted the approach of Alfred J. Duggan and Louis de Wohl.

We add to our hagiographical list *St. Omers to Stonyhurst*, the history of the oldest surviving college of the English Province of the Society of Jesus, established at St. Omers in 1592 and translated to Stonyhurst in 1793, because of the significant part the college played in the history of English recusancy – the story of the heroism of the Catholic laity under persecution.

Ambruzzi, S. J., Aloysius: *Jesus, Yesterday and Today and Forever* (Newman Press, Maryland \$ 7.50, pp. 687).

Barmann, S. J., Lawrence F.: *Newman at St. Mary's* (Newman Press, Maryland \$ 4.50, pp. 211).

Boase, S. J., Leonard: *The Prayer of Faith* (Geoffrey Chapman, 12s 6d, pp. 147)

Burke, T. W.: *The Liturgy of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 6s 6d 15s 6d, pp. 75).

A Carthusian: *The Prayer of Love and Silence* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 12s 6d, pp. 145).

Chadwick, S. J., Hubert: *St. Omers to Stonyhurst* (Burns & Oates 42s, pp. 413).

Child, Brevard S: *Memory and Tradition in Israel* (SCM Press, 8s 6d, pp. 96).

- Courtois, Abbé Gaston: *An Hour with Jesus, IV* (Newman Press, Maryland \$ 3, pp. 155).
- Cousins, Mary: *The Saints in History* (Geoffrey Chapman, 10s 6d, pp. 126).
- Cousins, Mary: *Tell me about Prayer* (Geoffrey Chapman, 10s 6d, pp. 127).
- Dheilly, Joseph: *The Prophets* (Burns & Oates, 8s 6d, pp. 157; Hawthorn Books, Inc. \$ 3. 50, pp. 158).
- Finnegan, Thomas, A: *Branch of the Vine* (Furrow Trust, Gill & Son, 16s, pp. 164).
- Gleason, S. J., Robert W.: *Problems & Progress* (Newman Press, Maryland, \$ 3.00, pp. 152).
- Hanson, R. P. C.: *Tradition in the Early Church* (SCM Press 27s 6d, pp. 288).
- Haughton, Rosemary: *Autumn & Advent, Winter & Christmas, Spring & Lent, Early Summer, Easter & Whitsun* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 3s 6d each).
- Heenan, John C, Archbishop: *Christian Unity* (Sheed & Ward, 10s 6d, pp. 198).
- Iparraguirre, S. J., Ignatius: *How to give a Retreat* (Thomas More Books, 12s 6d, pp. 188).
- James, Walter: *A Christian in Politics* (Oxford University Press, 21s, pp. 215).
- Kerns, Vincent: *The Love of God. A Treatise by St. Francis de Sales* (Burns & Oates, 30s, pp. 561).
- Leclercq, O. S. B., Jean: *Alone with God* (Hodder and Stoughton, 16s, pp. 192).
- Lord, Douglas: *To Win their Crown* (Geoffrey Chapman, 10s 6d, pp. 128).
- Luff, S. G. A.: *Prayers at Home* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 15s, pp. 117).
- de Maille, Mère Marie Osmonde: *Du Mariage au Cloître* (Editions France – Empire, NF. 9, pp. 285).
- Murray, S. J., Robert: *Behold The Lamb of God* (Geoffrey Chapman, 12s 6d, pp. 142).
- Philipon, O. P., M. M.: *Spiritual Writings of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity* (Geoffrey Chapman, 21s, pp. 180).
- Putz, C. S. C., Louis J.: *The Kingdom of God – A Short Bible* (Fides Publishers Inc., \$ 4.95; Fowler Wright Books, 40s, pp. 380).
- Quinn, Sister M Bernetta: *To God alone the Glory* (Newman Press, Maryland, \$ 4.50, pp. 281).
- Reed Newland, Mary: *The Saints and our Children* (Geoffrey Chapman, 25s, pp. 210).
- A Religious of C.S.M.V.: *Hugo of Saint-Victor: Selected Spiritual Writings* (Faber & Faber, 25 s, pp. 195).
- Russell, O. S. B., Ralph: *In this World* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 6s, pp. 51).
- Stopp, Elizabeth: *Madame de Chantal – Portrait of a Saint* (Faber & Faber, 35s, pp. 272).
- Suenens, Cardinal Léon: *The Nun in the World* (Burns & Oates, 12s 6d, pp. 175).
- Tillmann, Fritz: *The Master Calls* (Burns & Oates, 42s, pp. 355).
- Wilson, B. D., R. Mc L.: *The Gospel of Philip* (A. R. Mowbray, 30s, pp. 198).

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SIGLA OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis	Gen	Tobias	Tob	Daniel	Dan
Exodus	Exod	Judith	Jud	Osee	Hos
Leviticus	Lev	Esther	Est	Joel	Joel
Numbers	Num	Job	Job	Amos	Amos
Deuteronomy	Deut	Psalms	Ps	Abdias	Obad
Josue	Jos	Proverbs	Prov	Jonas	Jon
Judges	Jg	Ecclesiastes	Qoh	Michaeas	Mic
Ruth	Ruth	Canticle of Canticles	Cant	Nahum	Nah
I Kings	1 Sam	Wisdom	Wis	Habacuc	Hab
II Kings	2 Sam	Ecclesiasticus	Sir	Sophonias	Zeph
III Kings	1 Kg	Isaia	Isai	Aggus	Hag
IV Kings	2 Kg	Jeremias	Jer	Zacharias	Zech
I Paralipomenon	1 Chr	Lamentations	Lam	Malachias	Mal
II Paralipomenon	2 Chr	Baruch	Bar	I Machabees	1 Macc
I Esdras	Ezr	Ezekiel	Ezek	II Machabees	2 Macc
II Esdras	Neh				

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew	Mt	Ephesians	Eph	To the Hebrews	Heb
Mark	Mk	Philippians	Phil	The Epistle of James	Jas
Luke	Lk	Colossians	Col	I Peter	1 Pet
John	Jn	I Thessalonians	1 Thess	II Peter	2 Pet
Acts of the Apostles	Acts	II Thessalonians	2 Thess	I John	1 Jn
Paul to the Romans	Rom	I Timothy	1 Tim	II John	2 Jn
I Corinthians	1 Cor	II Timothy	2 Tim	III John	3 Jn
II Corinthians	2 Cor	Titus	Tit	Jude	Jude
Galatians	Gal	Philemon	Phm	The Apocalypse of St. John	Apoc

FATHERS

Patrologia Latina (Migne) PL

Patrologia Graeca (Migne) PG

Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu M H S J

Monumenta Ignatiana M I



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