

and all the transgressions of their wrong-doing and their sins in the kingdom of iniquity.¹ And those who enter into the covenant shall make confession after them saying: We have done evil, we have transgressed, we have sinned, we and our fathers before us, in our way of life² . . . truth and justice . . . his judgement upon us and upon our fathers.³

Père Bauchet adds that the next column, line 9, speaks of "the combustion of an eternal fire."

¹ Lit. "of Belial," as in II Cor. vi, 15.

² I have added "in our way of life."

³ I have added "and upon our fathers."

ON THE HOLY EUCHARIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT¹

THE Holy Eucharist, Christ's supreme gift of himself, fulfilment of all man's instincts of worship and sacrifice expressed in Jewish and pagan rite, is the representation by his Church under efficacious signs of his own sacrifice on the Cross and the source of the life of his Mystical Body, cf. I Cor. xi, 26; x, 17; John vi, 51-9; Dz 938. Bond of union between the members of the Body and their risen Head, it is the bond of union between the members themselves, and the joyful pledge of their resurrection (cf. I Cor. x, 16f; John vi, 56; Cyr. Alex., *Adv. Nest.*, iv, ch. v, PG lxxvi, 189-97). "That God who gave life to the world by his Son should not have wholly withdrawn him from the world, that the flesh which saved it should still sustain it, does not that seem worthy of his goodness? Does it not seem consistent with the very plan of the Incarnation? It is, moreover, the only right meaning of Scripture" (Lagrance, *The Gospel of Jesus Christ*, I, p. 235). Far from contradicting the historical records of Jesus, it appears in all of them as an essential part of his life and the perfect revelation of his love. For while it recalls previous Jewish practices and beliefs, it is closely joined to salient features of Jesus's own teaching: the Messianic banquet, the new Covenant, his presence among his own even to the end of the world, the giving by the Messiah of the new manna, the heavenly bread, the true bread of life (DBS, *Eucharistie*, 1211). These traits do not suffice of themselves to explain the origin of the Eucharist. That is due to a definite, historic initiative of Christ. But they help to explain how the

¹ This is a draft, published by permission, of part of an article for the forthcoming *Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*. The author will appreciate criticisms. Abbreviations appear as they will be used in the Commentary. DBS=*Supplément au Dictionnaire de la Bible* which contains the articles *Agape*, by L. Thomas, and *Eucharistie* by J. Coppens (with copious bibliography). RSR=*Recherches de Science Religieuse*. Dz=Denzinger's *Enchiridion Symbolorum*. ICC=International Critical Commentary. A star indicates a non-Catholic writer.

minds of the apostles could have been open to understand the supreme act of their master, manifested on the eve of his death, though part of the Eucharistic discourse of John vi may have been transferred from the occasion of the Last Supper (DBS, *Eucharistie*, 1168), and certainly the full intelligence of the Mysteries of Jesus is attributed by the Gospels themselves to the inspirations of the Spirit of God, DBS, 1212 (cf. John vi, 63; xiv, 26; xvi, 12-14). "Sanguis Christi, novum testamentum" (Florus, *Expositio Missae*, c. 61). The Eucharist "sums up in its richness everything which St. Paul in Eph. unites in the one word 'Mystery,' that is to say the whole content of the designs of God upon the world, revealed and realized in Christ" (de Lubac, S.J., *Corpus Mysticum*, p. 224).

It cannot be expected that this Mystery will be accepted by those who go by their natural judgment alone, not believing the words of Jesus or possessing the spirit of faith, while to those who deny his divinity, it makes nonsense (cf. I Cor. ii, 14, 15; John vi, 44-7, 64; xvi, 9). Of the early Reformers, Luther kept the Real Presence but with his doctrine of impanation, Zwingli is father of the purely symbolic interpretation, Calvin of the dynamic. These views are still common, but are not accepted by most Liberal Protestants or by Rationalists. These tend to agree that the Pauline churches held the realist, Catholic interpretation, but attribute this to influences from primitive religion, or more usually from the "Mystery" religions. Jesus himself, according to the Liberal view, was free from all sacramental concepts. As the Gospel account of the institution of the Eucharist is full of such concepts (since Jesus foresees his death and attributes to it a mystical, sacrificial, expiatory value,) arguments are adduced to disprove its historicity: (a) Jesus in his humility would not have instituted a rite to commemorate his passion; (b) the order to repeat the rite is not given by the more ancient tradition of Matt. and Mark but only by Paul and Luke (I Cor. xi, 26; Luke xxii, 15); (c) Paul knew he was innovating, for he traced this order to a direct revelation from Christ (I Cor. xi, 23); (d) the origin of the Eucharist is accounted for on various hypotheses according to various critics. Peake's *Commentary*, without going so far, says "it is doubtful if we ought to say that Jesus ordained the sacrament" (p. 669).

But the evidence of the sources is that Jesus instituted the sacrament and ordered its repetition, and the reasons for setting this aside are not sound. (a) What is really at issue is his divinity. If divine he foresaw his expiatory death, and to set himself beneath sacramental signs that men might commemorate his passion by offering him again and entering communion with him, shows a humility truly divine. (b) The custom of Matt. and Mark to reproduce a shorter, liturgical text fits in with their accounts. Without a command from Christ himself the Apostles would not have repeated the Lord's Supper, but there was no need to

repeat the command in the rite. St. Paul's less polished text indicates perhaps an earlier tradition. (c) St. Paul does not say he received a direct command from Christ, but "I received by tradition from the Lord" (παρέλαβον ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου) (xi, 23; cf. xv, 3), "I handed on as tradition (παρέδωκα) what I received as tradition (παρέλαβον); (Gal. i, 9; Col. ii, 6; iv, 17; Phil. iv, 9; I Thess. ii, 13; iv, 1, 2; II Thess. iii, 6); exhaustive discussions in Allo, I Cor., Exc. xii. Thus he attests both the Jerusalem tradition and its origin from Christ. (d) If the sources stand, the rationalist hypotheses on the origin of the Eucharist fall; cf. DBS, *Eucharistie* 1147-1167; 1192-1210 for a detailed account.

The most frequent of these hypotheses is that of a dependence of the Eucharist on the "Mystery Religions." These rites expressed the vague desires of the human soul for God and immortality, and so in some cases may have been a remote preparation for their transcendent fulfilment in Christian worship. But paganism filled Jews and Christians with horror (e.g. I Cor. x, 20; II Cor. vi, 14). Attempts to derive the Eucharist from such rites are thus psychologically impossible, and moreover they contradict the evidence of the sources that the Eucharist came from Christ. There is also an abyss between the real and highly spiritual union with Christ effected by eating his Body and drinking his Blood, and the vague union with a deity of vegetation or totemistic myth conceived as present at a banquet or as extending protection to the initiated. These gods had no historic life or sacrificial death or resurrection. Poor little Dionysius Zagreus was devoured, much against his will, by the Titans and his heart eaten by Zeus; Osiris, the only "resurrection god" we know, symbol of the growth and death of cereals, was murdered and the pieces found and buried. He regained life only in the underworld and the living sought not union with him in life but to become an Osiris after death. These rites were frequently immoral and concerned τὰ πάθη τῶν θεῶν (Athenag. *Supplic.*, xxxi), i.e. their adventures, dispositions and sometimes sufferings, but they never conceived of justification through the merits of a suffering god, or a giving of the spirit, and the initiated had no dominant desire to purify themselves from personal sins. The "drama" of Attis concerned not his death and resurrection but his castration. It was only at a later date that Neo-Platonist syncretists tried to attribute approximately Christian ideas to these rites. Writers like St. Justin and Tertullian indignantly repudiated such suggestions. There is no evidence that Mithraism, which developed after Christianity, had any influence on it. cf. DBS, *Eucharistie*, 1163-1167; 1193-1210; DA, *Mystères Païens et saint Paul* 1008-1010 (Jacquier); Lagrange, RB. 1920, 420-46.

It will now be apparent why Pius X condemned the Modernist error: 'Non omnia quae narrat Paulus de institutione Eucharistiae historice sunt sumenda' (Dz 2045).

Of the Agape much has been written. Everyone agrees (except Baumgartner, but cf. *Allo*, Exc. xi) that the Lord's Supper at Corinth was either the Eucharist or joined with its celebration. Some rationalist critics held that it was simply a fraternal banquet manifesting the union of the members of the Church and analogous to those of the pagan brotherhoods; others that the idea of a relation to the death of Christ was introduced into it by Paul, and from this came the attribution of a sacramental effect to the receiving of the bread and wine (von Dobschütz, Loisy). Early Christian writers clearly distinguish the consecrated bread and wine from what was eaten and drunk besides, the Greeks (except Ephraem) holding this meal came before, the Latins after, the Eucharist. St. Thomas thought the meal an abuse which Paul forbade. Two main views may be distinguished among modern Catholics. (1) The Agape was a meal offered by rich Christians to poor ones, and St. Paul forbade this Corinthian custom as soon as he heard of it, saying "if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home" (I Cor xi, 34; cf. 22 (Batiffol, L. Thomas, Coppens)). Thus the Eucharist in the Pauline churches would be exclusively sacramental, without connection with the Agape. The Corinthians expected to be praised for introducing a meal which recalled the Last Supper, but perhaps the introduction was a pagan infiltration and Paul pours scorn on it. ('Do I praise you?' I Cor. xi, 22). In the view of these authors, evidence for an NT Agape is slight, namely Jude 12 and II Peter, ii, 13; where the text is doubtful and anyhow need not refer to an actual feast. (2) However Funk, *Allo*, Leclercq and many others agree that the Lord's Supper was a fraternal feast which normally culminated in the Eucharist, and the knowledge we now have of ceremonial meals among the Jews supports this view. Among the gentile converts, however, abuses arose, and these St. Paul was repressing. Eventually the danger led to a separation of Eucharist and Agape shown in Pliny, Ep. x, 96, etc. Paul tells the hungry to eat at home first, that they may not mind waiting for the others (I Cor, xi, 34), which suggests a meal rather than the Eucharist alone. Christians did not repeat the Paschal Supper itself, for Jesus had abolished that by substituting a new, incomparably superior sacrifice. But it was natural to keep the Supper framework. In Acts ii, 46 the "breaking of bread" is set in the context of a meal.

The "Breaking of bread" together with blessing and giving of thanks was the accustomed sign of union in formal Jewish meals. Noted by all Evangelists in Christ's feeding of the multitude with obvious symbolic reference to the Eucharist (Matt. xi, 19; xv, 36; Mark vi, 41; viii, 6; Luke ix, 16; cf. John vi, 11;) it comes in the scene at Emmaus, and in Acts xxvii, 35 (where the point is that St. Paul eats openly before the pagan crew). Mentioned in all accounts of the Institution (Matt. xxvi, 26; Mark xiv, 22; Luke xxii, 19; I Cor. xi, 24), it became the most ancient technical term for the Eucharist (cf. DAC, *Fractio Panis*, [Cabrol],

2104, n.6; *Did.*, xiv, 1). The Pentecostal community "were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, *the communion, the breaking of the bread and the prayers*" (Acts ii, 42). If this were an ordinary meal, not a religious act, the "perseverance" in it would not be joined with other elements of Christian teaching, life and worship; moreover in the Greek, "the breaking of the bread" is in apposition (without "and") to "the communion." St. Luke is using the same term as his master St. Paul: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ" (I Cor. x, 16; cf. Jacquier, *Actes*, p. 87). Acts ii, 46 gives a further sketch of the Christians' life: "persevering with one accord in the Temple and breaking bread from house to house, they took their share of meat in gladness and simplicity of heart." Acts xx, 7, 11 relates how "on the first day of the week, when we had come together to break bread," Paul preached, and after the interruption caused by the fall of Eutyches, "having gone up, broken the bread and tasted," he conversed with them till morning.

Some critics, especially Lietzmann* in his important *Messe und Herrenmahl*, allege that the primitive Church had two Eucharists: the "breaking of bread" alone (Acts), which goes back to the meals taken by Christ with his disciples, and the "Lord's Supper," introduced by St. Paul and connected by him with Christ's death and the Last Supper. But "to break bread" was a Jewish expression for a meal, and St. Paul's own use of it includes the Cup (I Cor. x, 16). He himself is simply said to have "broken bread" in Acts xx, 11, and this explains Acts ii, 42. The evidence from post-apostolic writings for a double rite shows no more than that from the second to the fourth century some heretical sects and some particular churches, under ascetic and doctrinal influences of non-Christian origin, innovated by celebrating under one kind DBS, 1171. While ably refuting the two-rites theory, O. Cullmann* (*La Signification de la sainte Cène, Rev. d'hist. et de phil. rel.*, 1936, 1-22) put forward the view that St. Paul, in accord with his theology of the Redemption, had attached the Eucharist to the Last Supper and the death of Christ, whereas the joyful "breaking of the bread" in Acts derived from the meals taken with the risen Christ. Cullmann was right in stressing the importance of these meals in primitive Christianity, and he opened the way to a valuable synthesis made by Père Yves de Montcheuil, RSR 1946, 10-43, *Signification eschatologique du Repas Eucharistique*.

The meals taken with Jesus after the Resurrection are nearly always the occasions for the collective apparitions (Mark xvi, 14; Luke xxiv, 30, 40; John xxi, 12-14; probably Acts i, 4). They guarantee the authoritative witness of the apostles (Acts x, 41). The joy of those who celebrated them sprang from union with the Lord present among them, from union among themselves, and from certainty of the Resurrection,

first fruits of the glorious coming of that Kingdom in which they already shared. These meals form a natural link between the Last Supper and the Eucharist in Acts. How could the Apostles when they celebrated the Eucharist forget that Supper or those meals with their risen Lord? "Meal" should not imply a non-religious act. In the Gospel Christ's meals have all a religious, and in the broad sense a sacramental character, for by them he enters into full communion with men. Sharing his meals, as did the sinners he came to pardon, is a foretaste of a share in the future Messianic banquet (Matt. ix, 10-14; xxi, 31; Mark ii, 16, 17; Luke xv, 1-32). Food and drink are not "profane," but God's gifts. Our daily bread, enjoyment already of a divine gift, is also the promise of a total gift. The meals at the multiplication of bread and the marriage feast of Cana certainly look forward to the Eucharist (Bouyer, *Quatrième Évangile*, 87-9). When Jesus said that he would not eat the Pasch again until it was fulfilled in the Kingdom of God, nor drink of the fruit of the grape until the kingdom of God came (Luke xxii, 16-18), and that he disposed to them a kingdom, that they might eat and drink upon his table in his kingdom (v. 30), he set the final reality in the consummation of eternity, but he envisaged also his kingdom upon earth, in which the divine banquet of the Eucharist replaces and accomplishes the Jewish figures (cf. Lagrange, in loc.). Already we "taste the heavenly gift and . . . the powers of the world to come" (cf. Heb. vi, 4, 5; ii, 5). Already the risen Christ, present to the eyes of faith, is our host as well as our divine food. Thus the chain from the meals of Christ's life-time to the last Supper, and from the Last Supper through the meals with the risen Jesus to the reunion of Christians with him in the Eucharist, leads to the final Messianic banquet. It was this consciousness that Christ risen was amongst them and that they were already transported into his kingdom, which filled the first Christians with joy and giving of thanks for the fulfilment of the Father's promises, and the sending of his Son. It would seem that they were also filled with the hope of his imminent return, a hope which did not involve any error since they knew there was no certainty of the time but which explains why they thought of the Eucharist rather as the anticipation of the eternal banquet and why Acts do not mention the link with the Last Supper, cf. de Montcheuil, RSR, p. 33.

But Christians cannot separate Christ's resurrection from his death, which was the necessary way to glory (Luke xxiv, 26). St. Paul did not create a new Eucharist. He brought out from tradition the fact that sharing in Christ's glory involves sharing in his cross, and thus gave to the Church a reflexive consciousness of the connection of the Eucharist with the Last Supper. But he sees the Passion and the Resurrection "less as past events than as present Mysteries" (de Montcheuil). The risen Christ dies now no more, and while we die to sin with him in

baptism, we live with him to justice (Rom. vi, 9-12; Gal. ii, 19-20; v, 24-5 etc.) We think of Christ's death and then of his resurrection and we tend to think of them separately. St. Paul sees first the risen Christ, and starting from his glory, comes to his cross. But we, he insists, must first suffer with him if we would be glorified with him (Rom. viii, 17). And so he reminds the giddy Corinthians that the Eucharist is, by Christ's command, a re-presentation of the Last Supper, and that "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he come" (I Cor. xi, 23-7). From the first he had preached the connection of the Eucharist with the Last Supper (xi, 23), and yet nobody could say that the Eucharist at Corinth was "sad." The glorious Coming (xi, 27, cf. John vi, 54) is still the final perspective which lights up the Mystery and its pledge is the anamnesis, the effective memorial of what was done at the Last Supper. This sacrificial act of the New Alliance (I Cor. ii, 25) carries the community into Christ's glorious kingdom, bringing sentiments of holy fear, repentance, joy and fervent charity. It is always so. "Unde et memores nos, sed et plebs tua sancta . . . tam beatae passionis, nec non et ab inferis resurrectionis, sed et in caelos gloriosae ascensionis."

St. Paul's interpretation goes back to Christ's own words of institution, as is shown by the double repetition of his command, "Do this" (I Cor. ii, 24, 25). Thus they "proclaim the death of the Lord until he come." The words "this is my body," "this is my blood" themselves affirm the Real Presence (cf. St. Thomas in loc.). The Protestant theory that these words signify only the Mystical Body of Christ, symbolized by the bread, distorts the words themselves and fails to account for the parallel, "this is my blood," and for the tradition of the Christian churches exemplified in I Cor. St. Paul's whole account, particularly xi, 27 "guilty of (or 'accused for') the body and blood of the Lord," v, 29 "not discerning the Body of the Lord" (μη διακρίνων τὸ σῶμα), and v, 26 "you proclaim the death of the Lord" show that "the faithful entered into direct relation with the personal body and blood of the Saviour separated on Calvary" (Allo, I Cor., Exc. xi, p. 296). The Mystical Body of Christ is a *consequence* of communication in his true Body (the "unique Bread," x: 17). (In the analogous passage x, 4; "they drank of the spiritual rock which followed them and the rock was Christ", the point is that the *Person* of Christ was there symbolized by the Rock, cf. Allo in loc.). Moreover "body of Christ" and "blood of Christ" (if the context does not determine the former to mean the Church) always imply the Lord's death (cf. Rom. iii, 25; v, 9; vii, 4; Col. i, 20-2; Heb. x, 5, 10).

Thus the Eucharist is a sacrificial act in which the ritual elements are identified with the Body and Blood of Christ, that blood which is "the new alliance in my blood." In I Cor. x, 18-21 St. Paul compares

the drinking of the chalice of the Lord and the sharing of his table with the Jewish and pagan sacrifices, the point being that to share ceremonially in the thing sacrificed, is to share in the sacrificial act and all that it implies (ICC). Like the pagans and the Jews (v. 18), the Christians too have an altar, and cannot share in this altar and in that of devils (v. 21). The whole argument shows that the Eucharist is a true sacrifice (cf. Dz 939), a re-presentation of the Sacrifice of the Saviour: "Do this for my anamnesis." "You proclaim the death of the Lord until he come." The presence of Christ was not merely moral, nor some emanation which made the elements the vehicle of some spiritual power, but real and corporeal, though secret and mysterious: "This is my body . . . Is it not the communion of the body of Christ? . . . Not discerning the body of the Lord." Finally the repetition of Christ's command together with his words and the statement that this is the proclaiming the death of the Lord until he come (xi, 24-6), is a good proof that the words uttered by Christ over the bread and wine at the Last Supper were repeated at the Lord's Supper in order to represent his death (Allo, p. 294).

St. Paul unites in one movement of thought the presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the effect upon the communicants. The Eucharist symbolizes and effectively realizes the unity in charity of the Mystical Body. Precisely because the Christians communicate in Christ really present, and not only—though also (cf. *Did.* 9, 4)—in symbol, their communion is the source of their unity. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation of the body of Christ? Because the bread is one, it makes us one body, though we are many in number. For we all share in the unique bread" (I Cor. x, 16, 17). There should therefore be no room for individualism, but the Eucharist does not work as magic, and man's moral co-operation is required (xi, 17, 18, 27-9). Like its figures, the manna and the water from the Rock, the Eucharist is a spiritual food and drink (I Cor. x, 3-4), and confers that communication of the Spirit and increase of charity which belongs to the Kingdom of God (xv, 50; II Cor. xiii, 13; DBS 1186-7). Let a man examine his conscience before he receives it (I Cor. xi, 28; cf. II Cor. xiii, 5).

Christ is not a kind of impersonal force. He is a Person, the friend around whom his own gather in joy, the host at the Supper at which he gives himself. The NT Eucharistic doctrine is so rich that there is always danger of one of its elements being isolated by heresy or one-sided piety. The commemoration of Christ's death must not be separated from his real Presence, nor that presence from the sacrificial character of the Eucharist, and individualism constantly menaces the sense of a communal banquet. When Christ's coming seemed imminent, men tended to forget that they must go to him by his death. As his coming

seems delayed they forget that they already share in his resurrection. But all these values are in St Paul's doctrine of that breaking of bread which is the communion of the Body of the Lord (cf. de Montcheuil, p. 37).

Heb. insists on the unique sufficiency of the sacrifice of the Cross compared with those of the Old Law, and of the one, eternal priesthood of Christ compared with the Levitical: "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once" (Heb. x, 10; cf. vii, 27; ix, 26, 28; x, 2). This is the point of departure of the Catholic doctrine of the identity of the sacrifice of the Cross and that of the Eucharist: the Eucharist is a real re-presentation of that sacrifice, with the same Victim and the same High Priest (cf. Dz 938, 940). The Protestant objection that Heb. shows the Eucharist not to be a sacrifice rests on a misapprehension of this exegesis of Heb., I Cor. and the words of Institution. Deeper examination shows the epistle's Eucharistic implications. The sacrifice of the Cross is described in the sacrificial terms used by Christ at the Last Supper: offering his body (x, 10) and his blood (ix, 12, 14) the Mediator of the New Testament, offers the blood of the new covenant for the remission of sins (ix, 15, 18-20; x, 29; xii, 24; xiii, 20). The comparison of Christ's priesthood with that of Melchisedech suggests comparison with the sacrifice of bread and wine. Moreover his priesthood is not extinguished by his death (vii, 15, 24, 27). The sacrifices described as proper to the Christians (xii, 15, 16) exclude only those of the Law, and can be well understood in function of the Eucharist. In communion with Christ (iii, 14), we have a way opened to the heavenly sanctuary in the Blood and through the Body of the great Priest-Victim (x, 20; vi, 19, 20), and thus we are already citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem, and companions of the angels and saints (xii, 22-4; cf. I Cor. i, 9; x, 16-18, 21). The humblest Christians in the new dispensation are far more privileged than the Jewish priests, for "we have an altar of which they who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat" (Heb. xiii, 10). This altar would seem to be the Cross, but we "eat" from it by the nourishment of the Eucharist.

St. John's great exposition of the Eucharist in ch. vi might at first appear to be his only reference to it, and he does not repeat the narrative of the Institution. But when we realize that St. John's facts are also symbols, and symbols with many values, we find his Gospel shot through with allusions to that rite which was the centre of the Christ-life of the churches for whom he wrote. The Eucharist prolongs the Incarnation. "In the Word was life . . . he was in the world . . . the Word was made flesh" . . . "The bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world . . . he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life" (John i, 4-14; vi, 51, 54). The marriage of Yahweh and his people is a theme constant in the OT. Jesus the bridegroom (iii, 29) chose wine

at the marriage feast of Cana for the first sign whereby he manifested his glory (ii, 11; cf. i, 14), and prefigured the Eucharist, shown in his last sign upon the cross (xix, 34). The vine was the traditional symbol for God's people. In his discourse after the Last Supper Jesus declares that he is the true vine in which his disciples must abide (xv, 1; cf. vi, 56) and the Eucharistic reference was acknowledged by early Christians (*Did.* ix, 1). The sacraments of baptism and of the Eucharist are symbolized, together with the Redemption, by the blood and water which flowed from Christ's side, to which John renders solemn testimony (xix, 34, 35; cf. I John v, 6-9). By his sacrificial death he consecrated both himself and those apostles whom he commanded to renew his sacrifice (John xvii, 19). An affirmation of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist as decisive as anything in the Synoptics or St. Paul is given in the declaration: "The bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world" (John vi, 51c).

In the Eucharistic discourse of ch. vi, the real, sacramental presence is insisted upon by the repeated declarations about "eating my flesh and drinking my blood" (vi, 53-8). The only metaphorical meaning for "eating the flesh" of a person in Scripture and the Semitic languages, is to destroy by calumny, and since this meaning is here impossible, the expression is to be taken literally. Instead of explaining what he has said (as Mark v, 39; viii, 14-21 etc.), Jesus repeats it six times, and lets the worldly-minded crowd and many disciples leave him rather than retract this corner stone of his kingdom, only appealing to the latter to have that understanding faith which is given by the Spirit of God (vi, 60-6). No incompatibility between the Real Presence and the "spiritual mentality" of St. John is shown by the words "it is the Spirit which giveth life; the flesh profiteth nothing" (v. 63). They cut away the Capharnaite interpretation, but "my flesh" is not the same as "the flesh" which has the meaning of merely human, carnal, weak understanding and action (Matt. xvi, 17, 26, 41; Mark xiv, 28; John i, 13; Gal. i, 16; I Cor. xv, 50 etc.), whereas it is precisely "spirit" understood as man under God's impulse which believes in the reality affirmed by Jesus: "every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God" (I John iv, 2).

The Eucharistic discourse builds up from the multiplication of bread on the previous day, and from the OT figure of the manna to Christ as the bread coming down from heaven, and finally as divine food, really present under sacramental signs. What distinguishes this Gospel's doctrine is the stress upon the present effect of the Eucharist in him who receives it, the eternal life, the abiding in Christ. Although the perspectives open into the life of the resurrection caused by this reception, and (as the discourse following the Last Supper shows) if we live in Jesus we live in one another, the accent is on the actual relation of the

communicant with Christ, and on the eternal life already present in him who eats the flesh of Christ: "You can have no life in yourselves unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood. The man who eats my flesh and drinks my blood enjoys eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day . . . He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood, lives continually in me, and I in him. As I live because of the Father, the living Father who has sent me, so he who eats me will live, in his turn, because of me" John vi, 54-8 (KNT). St. John's is an original expression of the same doctrine as that of St. Paul.

Catholic exegesis answered the Protestant explanation of the Eucharist as symbolism or dynamic grace by showing that Scripture taught the real presence of Christ and the true sacrifice beneath the symbols. Now it has met the Rationalists who, admitting this interpretation, tried to show that the doctrine did not originate from Christ himself. Its latest task is to give to the symbols themselves and the whole rich content of NT Eucharistic doctrine all the values intended by their divine Author. Pre-figured by the manna, by Israel the vine and by the ancient sacrifices, and foretold by the last of the prophets as the clean oblation to be offered in every place (Mal. i, 11) the Institution of the Eucharist was set in the context of a religious, Jewish meal, and fulfilled and anticipated the Messianic banquet. The Last Supper "draws into unity the three apparently unrelated notions of the new Kingdom (established by a new Covenant), the suffering Messiah, the Bread of Life. For this reason it is the almost indispensable key to the Messianic plan. It so declares the essence of the mission of Jesus and so communicates its effects that it becomes the central liturgical act of the Kingdom which Christ founded: Do this in commemoration of Me!" (Dyson, S.J., and Jones, *The Kingdom of Promise*, p. 165). That act re-presents the death of the Saviour, source of salvation for all men "for the remission of sins." They share in the new, risen, eternal life of their Head by renewing the rite of his sacrifice and by participating in his Body and Blood. Thus the sacrifice of Christ's Church is at the same time the source of her life. The Eucharist, the "communion of the Body of Christ" (I Cor. x, 16) is related to the Church as the source of the union of the one Body formed by all who share in the One Bread (cf. de Lubac, S.J., *Corpus Mysticum*, p. 285). The designation of the Church as the Body and the Bride of Christ shows her coming forth from his side and nourished by his very flesh (Eph. v, 29, 30; cf. Gen. ii, 24). As in the primal Paradise God gave the first pair to eat of the tree of life, so now Christ "will give to him who conquers to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God" (Apoc. ii, 7), that tree of life which gives its fruits and leaves for the healing of the nations, all spiritual promises for time and for eternity (Apoc. xxii, 2; cf. *Allo. in loc.*, John vi, 51a).

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