



From the Pastor
15th Sunday
in Ordinary Time - C
July 10, 2022

THE MYSTERY OF THE EUCHARIST IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

WILL IT BE THE SAME OLD/
SAME OLD? It seems that
each week we meet more
and more people emerging

from the Covid quarantine and making their way back to the regular 'in-person' practice of the Faith. **Amen! Alleluia!** So, it's the perfect time to acquaint ourselves with - and to renew our reverence for - the great Gift of **Eucharist**. That's what the **US Catholic Bishops** hope to help us do through a three-year **National Eucharistic Revival** which began last month. If you missed the first two articles on this **Revival** [06/19, 06/26], go to our website for past bulletin articles. To read the Bishops' document go to <https://eucharisticrevival.org>; for a free study guide go to <https://reviveparishes.com/eucharist>.

In part three of our months long, if not years long, reflection on this **Revival**, we consider **Eucharist** as one of God's greatest gifts. Here's what the Priest prays in the Preface during **Holy Thursday's Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper** - one of my favorite Masses of the year:

"For he is the true and eternal Priest,
who instituted the pattern
of an everlasting sacrifice
and was the first to offer himself
as the saving Victim,
commanding us to make this offering
as his memorial.

As we eat his flesh that was sacrificed for us,
we are made strong, and,
as we drink his Blood that was poured out for us,
we are washed clean."

MAKING PRESENT WHAT WAS IN THE PAST.

What the **Church** commemorates with great festivity and solemn rites on **Holy Thursday** night, she does at every Mass. For through the **Eucharistic Sacrifice**, offered at every **Mass**, she 'makes present' **Christ's** unique sacrifice on the **Cross** so that we can join ourselves to it! In future articles, we will reflect on three aspects of this Gift: **1] The Sacrifice of Christ; 2] The Real Presence of Christ;** and **3] Communion with Christ,**

'and the Church; today we'll reflect on **Eucharist** as 'Gift.'

GOD'S GREATEST GIFT: THE GIFT OF HIMSELF. In the Nicene Creed, we are directed to **bow** as we profess these awesome underlined words, "**For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.**"

Many say the most wondrous moment in human history was when our **Blessed Mother** agreed to conceive **God's Son** in her womb, "**And the Word became flesh.**" [John 1:14a] At that very moment, **God** and humanity were united like never before - for God came to dwell among us **in the flesh**. Everything after was 'the icing on the cake:' **Christ's** birth and earthly life, His teachings and miracles, His redeeming **Passion, Death** and glorious **Resurrection** by which He revealed what awaits us after our earthly journey. And yet, as they say, "there's still more!"

Through the mystery of the **Eucharist, God** continues to dwell with us - and literally lives with us! For as **Jesus** promised in His **Last Supper Farewell Discourse**: "**Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.**" [John 14:23] And since **Christmas** celebrates **Christ's Nativity** AND the nine months that preceded His birth, we can enjoy another 'little Christmas' every time we worthily receive **Holy Communion!** For through the **Eucharistic** elements of **bread** and **wine** - **blessed, broken** and **shared**, consecrated and transubstantiated [a technical term we will detail in a future article], **Jesus Christ** is reborn IN US!

WE ARE SHARERS IN THE DIVINE NATURE. In his second Letter, our first **Pope** wrote, "[**God**] he has bestowed on us the precious and very great promises, so that through them you may come to share in the divine nature." [2 Peter 1:4a] For when we love someone, we want to be with them; so, too, with **God**, who loves us and desires to be with us and desires us to be with Him. One main way **God** accomplishes this loving union is through **Holy Communion**. And by entering into us, we are made divine, or as **Saint Augustine** explained it: "**the maker of man was made man, so that man might be a receiver of God.**" And all this merely scratches the surface of all that the **Eucharist** can do - for - and in - us!

In Christ,

Father Mark