



*From the Pastor  
22<sup>nd</sup> Sunday  
in Ordinary Time - C  
August 28, 2022*

**THE EUCHARIST IS A SACRIFICE.** This is part 4 of my series on the **US Catholic Bishops'** document, **The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church**, which will guide their

three-year **National Eucharistic Revival** which began last June. To read past articles on this **Revival**, the whole document, or the free study guide, go to our Parish website: **easeton.net** and click on **National Eucharistic Revival Bulletin Articles**. We begin this article with the words said at each **holy Mass**:

**The Institution Narrative in all Eucharistic Prayers**

*Take this, all of you, and eat of it,  
for this is my Body,  
which will be given up for you.  
Take this, all of you, and drink from it,  
for this is the chalice of my Blood,  
the Blood of the new  
and eternal covenant, which will  
be poured out for you and  
for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this in memory of me.*

**CHRIST OFFERS HIMSELF TO REDEEM SINNERS.** The **exact words** in the box above, in that **exact order**, are **NOT** found in the **Bible**. The **'Institution Narrative'** in each **Eucharistic Prayer** is like a rich broth which the **Church** created by 'boiling down' the **Gospel** accounts of the **Last Supper** [Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-20] and other references to it by **Jesus** [The Bread of Life Discourse John 6:22-59] or an **Apostle** [1 Peter 2:21-24; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26], to cite just a few biblical references. These words encapsulate how the **Eucharist** is a **Memorial**, a **Remembrance**, a **Communal Meal** - and above all - a **Sacrifice**.

**WE ARE ALL SINNERS.** The fallout of our First Parents' **'Original Sin'** is like a virus that taints every human action. However, the grace we receive by sharing in **Christ's** once-for-all **Sacrifice** is like a firewall that can protect us from sin. Each time we worthily partake of the **Eucharist**, we are given a 'dose' of the graces **Christ** won for us by His **Passion**, **Death** and **Resurrection**. No wonder

our **First Pope, Saint Peter**, could boldly and joyfully proclaim, **"By his wounds you have been healed."** [1 Peter 2:24] To understand how by sharing in the **Eucharistic Elements** we gain such a great Gift, we need to recall salvation history.

**SACRIFICE ATONES FOR SIN.** Our ancestors in faith offered many sacrifices to express their remorse and devotion; of all sacrificial offerings, the greatest, most important one is the **Passover** meal. Our **Jewish** sisters and brothers are still mystically joined to **Moses** and the **Israelites** as they were freed from slavery in Egypt by joining each year in a sacrificial meal of **unleavened bread**, and an **unblemished lamb**, whose roasted flesh was eaten, and whose blood was used to mark the doors of their home so the avenging **Angel of Death** would **'pass over'** them. This was probably the meal **Jesus** and the **Apostles** celebrated at the **Last Supper** - which **Jesus** radically 'altered.'

**THE LAMB OF GOD.** Before we consume the **Sacred Species** in **Holy Communion**, the presider echoes **Saint John the Baptist's** words: **"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."** [John 1:29] At the **Last Supper**, a few hours before His **Body** was nailed to a **Cross** and His **Blood** was poured out when a soldier's lance pierced His **Sacred Heart**, **Jesus** specified that all He was about to do was for love for us, to redeem us from sin, and restore us to eternal life. He did all this, as **Preface V for Easter** says, by becoming **"the Priest, the Altar and the Lamb of sacrifice."**

In **John's Gospel**, which is rich in symbolism, it says that when the **Crucified Christ** was thirsty, **"they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth."** [John 19:29b] **Hyssop** is a flimsy, short twig that could never hold a wet sponge so high, but **Moses** directed the people to use a stick of **hyssop** to mark their doors with the **Passover Lamb's blood**. And it is cited in one of the Bible's greatest penitential hymns: **"Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow"** [Psalm 51:9] So, as the **Bible** notes, the **Eucharist**, 'makes present' for us **Christ's Sacrifice** so that we can be joined to it and share in the forgiveness of all our sins and all graces He won for us! How could we 'pass over' this weekly dose of grace?

***In His holy Name,***

***Rev. Thomas J. Serafin, KCHS***