



*From the Pastor
29th Sunday
in Ordinary Time - C
October 16, 2022*

ORATIONS: EUCHARISTIC ADORATION. In part 10 of my series on *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church* US Bishops' document, I'm reflecting on the 4th of the 7 prayers used to end *Benediction*. The 7 'themes' are: *Memorial; True God/True Man; Paschal Lamb of God; Heavenly Bread of Angels; Spirit and Truth; Life-Giving Bread/Viaticum; and Paschal Mystery Renewed*. Past articles on this *Revival*, the whole document, and a free study guide, are on our Parish website: easeton.net; click on *National Eucharistic Revival Bulletin Articles*.

Eucharistic Adoration Oration: 4 of 7

*Lord our God, you have given us
the True Bread from Heaven.
In the strength of this food
may we live always by your life
and rise to glory on the last day.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

PANIS ANGELICUS. For whatever reason, the revered, venerable song, '*Panis Angelicus*'- '*Bread of Angels*'- is found on classic *Christmas* albums - which will be here before you know it! Its words come from the last stanzas of the hymn - '*Sacris Solemnii*'- '*Solemn Feast*' - written in the 13th Century by *Saint Thomas Aquinas* for the *Feast of Corpus Christi*. It has been performed by tenors Andrea Bocelli, Luciano Pavarotti, Plácido Domingo and many others. Perhaps since its last lines: '*Manducat dominum Pauper, pauper Servus et humilis*'- '*The body of the Lord will nourish the poor, the poor, the servile, and the humble*' - recalls the *Christ Child's* humble manger or animals' feeding trough - it became a *Christmas carol*. However, as the above oration for concluding *Eucharistic Adoration* reminds us: He who once rested in a manger bed is now truly present to us - and for us - in the *Eucharist*- as our food for eternal life!

TRUE BREAD FROM HEAVEN. In order to better appreciate the title, *True Bread from Heaven* for the *Eucharist*, we must go back to the days of ancient Israel as they journeyed through the desert on their way to the *Promised Land*. In

their dire thirst and hunger, the people often grumbled against *Moses* and *Aaron* - and the *Lord*: "*If only we had died at the LORD's hand in the land of Egypt, as we sat by our kettles of meat and ate our fill of bread! But you have led us into this wilderness to make this whole assembly die of famine!*" [Exodus 16:3] In response, the Lord rained down fine flakes or a coriander-like seed which they used to make 'bread.' They called it '*manna*' - a word meaning '*what is this?*' since it was so mysterious - but *God* called it "*bread from heaven.*" [16:4] This was their daily sustenance for their 40-year desert trek; once they entered the *Promised Land*, "*the manna ceased.*" [Joshua 5:12]

"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE." In His '*Bread of Life*' Discourse, *Jesus* referred to this '*manna*' as He explained in the *Fourth Gospel*: "*I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.*" [John 6:48-51] *Catholicism*, unlike most of *Protestantism*, takes these words *literally* - which, as the rest of our *Lord's* dialogue with our ancestors makes clear, is how He intended them as well. *Jesus* even allowed those who refused to accept this fact - that the bread He gives is, indeed, *His Flesh* for the life of the world - to walk away! [Cf. John 6:66] We must also accept this non-negotiable revelation about the *Eucharist*!

"WE BECOME WHAT WE RECEIVE." Far be it from me to 'correct' a Saint, but whenever I reference the above quote, credited to the great *Saint Augustine of Hippo* [354-430], I change one word: "We become *WHO*, not *what*, we receive!" For under the forms of bread and wine, *Jesus* truly, really, enters us, to enable us to become more like the *One* we receive. By extension, we who worship and adore *His Eucharistic Presence* can also be changed. All analogies 'limp,' but think of it this way: as workers keep photos of loved ones in their office to help them remember the ones for whom they go to work, holy images help us to do the same. However, *Christ's REAL Presence* is even more powerful! When was your last 'visit' to the *Blessed Sacrament*?

In His holy Name,

Rev. Thomas J. Serafin, KCHS