



Key Considerations from *The Eucharist* (Dr. Feingold)

**PRESENCE**

- His Presence is a desire to dwell WITH His beloved. Intimacy of God with man creates a desire to remain physically close.
- Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist is a mystery requiring belief, not understanding or detailed knowledge.
- Incarnated in love – from Word to flesh, through the Passion & Resurrection to Eucharist
- Christ desired to offer His Presence in the world – physically and spiritually – to dwell among us beyond the Resurrection ... for all time and in all places
- God's Presence in Eden, restored in Old Covenant and Incarnation with a beatific vision of the Church triumphant.
- "Shekinah" - an overshadowing presence of God from Hebrew "shachan", meaning to dwell or abide. Described the presence of God in the burning bush, as cloud over Tent of Meeting which held the Ark of the Covenant.
- Ark of the Covenant contained: Ten Commandments (living Torah), jar of manna (Bread of Life) and Aaron's rod (eternal High priesthood)
- God's Presence sanctified the land of Israel
- Incredible love of God that leads the Word to become flesh also leads flesh to remain as gift of Presence veiled behind bread and wine
- Invitation to FAITH in both Eucharist and Incarnation that deepen faith in divine reality within divinity that is completely veiled
- Grace received in the Eucharist "is always perfectly adapted to our personal spiritual needs."
- Just as Jesus turned water into wine at Cana, at the Last Supper, he turned wine into blood. These things were changed when the Word was applied, becoming a sacrament
- We believe the bread becomes Christ's body through the Words of the priest – share in persona Christi, as the words of Christ.
- "What is the word of Christ" It is the word by which all things were made." - St. Ambrose
- He who said, "Let there be light!" now says ... "this is my Body."
- This can be difficult to imagine, even difficult to understand; but not difficult to believe. Belief is a choice. We do not carry the burden of proof – Jesus only asks us to believe.
- Christ is more than real, He has a substantial Presence in which Christ – both God and man – is made wholly and entirely present
- Brief theology – accident (species) is what is known of a thing through our senses. Substance is the inner identity of a thing. The accident (species) can change but the substance answers the question of what a thing is. God changes the substance of bread and wine, leaving the accident/species miraculously unchanged – Transubstantiation
- "Our human nature – bodily and spiritually – requires frequent sensible manifestations of the invisible truths we believe."



## SACRIFICE

- The sacrificial love of God desires to give oneself FOR the beloved, drawing us into Jesus' act of self-gift.
- Jesus came as a gift – to sacrifice self to reconcile us with God and win the forgiveness of sins to merit every grace.
- Christ's Passion offered infinite charity for all men – atonement for sin of man
- In the Eucharist, Christ is given to the Church as a perpetual sacrifice
- Christ took on what was ours so we can share in what is His
- Jesus came as the perpetual Paschal Lamb – the final and supreme offering of Israel in the chief sacrificial offering of self
- Sacrifice shared in communion – covenant / relationship of sharing
- Fullness of Christ's sacrifice: offered as food to consume, offered as atonement for sins, offered to establish peace (unity)
- Blood of sacrifice continues to save: just as Moses sprinkled on people at Mount Sinai and homes were marked for those saved from the Angel of Death at Passover
- The sacrifice of the Mass also involves our sacrifice
- Christ gave Himself as victim, priest and sacrifice – all sanctified by God through the Words of the Eucharistic prayers we share
- In the sacrifice of the Mass, we offer ourselves to Christ as a consecrated offering within the wholeness of the Eucharistic offering.
- Christ's Passion & death were offered as gifts, first to the Father and then for the Church
- Religion "binds us back" to God, this sacrifice is an act of virtue. We offer to God an internal offering of the submission of our will and intellect back to God
- The visible sacrifice is the sacrament of the invisible sacrifice.
- "Christ's sacrifice was more pleasing than all sin together is displeasing."
- In sacrifice, we are reminded that what matters is: whom it is offered to, whom it is offered by, what is offered and whom it is offered for. These are important considerations as we approach the altar at every Mass.
- Following the Passion, death and Resurrection – Jesus then returns to His Father only after he leaves us a means of sharing in His ongoing sacrifice
- "True sacrifice turns us all into sacrifice" (Ratzinger)
- The Eucharist makes the sacrifice of our Redemption, the center of all human history and the center of our own lives.
- Christ's sacrifice is the central event of humanity – it's the center of all history and the cause of all hope
- To offer sacrifice, means sharing in it. Our outward offering signals our interior sacrifice.
- Sacrifice and sacrament cannot be separated – the greater our disposition of desire and charity than the greater the effects of grace can be received in the Eucharist
- "Receive daily that it may profit you daily ... so live as to deserve to receive it daily." - St. Augustine
- "the only cure for sagging or fainting faith is Communion." - J.R.R. Tolkien
- "Christ gives Himself to us in the measure that we give ourselves to Him." - Bl. Columba Marmion



## COMMUNION

- Christ enters and invites us into a union of sharing as He gives Himself TO the beloved.
- Intimacy with Christ also invites a response to the communion of ecclesial unity as the Church of believers sharing together.
- The Eucharist brings us into intimate union with God by giving us a share of His divine life.
- Christ in the Eucharist models virtue – especially charity, humility and obedience.
- The Eucharist adds nothing to Jesus, it is entirely a gift for us.
- Manna was shared as food for the community – gathered together – each receiving fullness of food regardless of amount gathered
- Likewise, the smallest part of the Eucharist contains all the humanity & divinity of Christ. With it we are nourished in grace according to our individual spiritual state and fervor
- In sharing Mass as a community, we are invited to experience the three-fold gifts of the Eucharist: Real Presence of God, sacrificial offering of Christ and the spiritual nourishment of grace received in the sacrament
- In the Eucharist, we experience the sacrament of Christian unity as we worship together as the whole Body of Christ
- “Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic church.”
- We are invited through personal witness to share in the united belief that bread and wine are changed. The sacred veils of the sacrament preserve the mystery of faith, so that what we know is a decision of belief, not reliant on vision.
- In the Eucharist, all of us share in offering a sacrifice to God and we all share in receiving the sanctifying gift of Christ’s sacred banquet
- God deeply desires our participation – “Reconciliation is not a burden but a grace.”
- St. JP II - in the gift of the paschal mystery, Jesus Christ is entrusted to the Church in the “oneness of time” to be for us always and everywhere a Redeemer
- The Eucharistic sacrifice prepares us for Communion and each communion nourishes us in a deeper dimension of love
- At Mass, the priest serves to represent the people (not substitute for them) so that the people offer sacrifice together through the hands of the priest
- Sacrifice is an external sign of the internal oblation of our hearts to be faithful, to restore the right order of relationship with our Creator.
- In communion with God and with the Church, He enables us to be both gift and recipient.
- As a family of believers – the Body of Christ in the Church – we share a meal of sacrifice and communion. We receive communion to become what we receive.
- Communion unites us in purpose as a Church and as individuals with Christ. Many grains make the bread and many grapes the wine, yet it is one body & blood of Christ that each of us receive. We come at many but share together as one.
- Three conditions to receive grace (St. Justin) in the Eucharist: 1) belief 2) repentance 3) willingness to live as Christ commands
- In all things, the Eucharist is our food of salvation



## MISSION

- Manna was given in the desert as food for the journey, it was supplied during their pilgrimage and ceased when they reached the Chosen Land. Likewise – the Eucharist serves as our food for the journey, nourishing us throughout our pilgrimage on this earth until we reach the eternal chosen land of heaven.
- The Eucharist unites us with Christ's Body and Blood to draw us closer to His mystical Body, the Church
- Just as Christ is wholly present in the Eucharist, our human soul is wholly present in every part of our body giving it life. Our soul cannot be separated. Our soul can drive our desires, goals and purpose.
- At Mass, we invoke the Holy Spirit to transform our offerings of bread & wine and to transform the faithful into the unified Body of Christ – all to be offered back to God, both at Mass and in the witness of our daily lives
- Eucharistic Prayer #3: "May he (Holy Spirit) make of us an eternal offering to you, so that we may obtain an inheritance with your elect."
- Receiving the Eucharist enables each individual to offer self more deeply and more Christ-like to the Father.
- "Communion thus perfects the movement of sacrifice, just as sacrifice prepares for more perfect union." There is no work of God done alone – all in communion with Him
- Eucharistic nature of the Christian life goes beyond participation in Mass and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament – it includes a willingness to trust the sanctifying grace of the sacrament in docility to the Holy Spirit working in your daily life
- "Eucharistic life is one lived according to the Spirit." (Benedict XVI)
- We are called (in baptism) to live in transforming grace (from the sacraments) to reflect Christ in our lives. Everything we do – thoughts, words, actions – is made fuller in the Eucharist.
- Truly living worship to God extends outside of Churches and beyond Sunday Mass – its nature is to "permeate every aspect and our existence" (Benedict XVI)
- "The glory of God is the living man. And the life of man is the vision of God." (Ben XVI)
- Both the common priesthood (laity) and the ministerial priesthood (clergy) share a part of the work in building God's kingdom and join together in offering the Eucharist
- We become the living sacrifice – in lifting up our offerings we are filled with every grace and heavenly blessing
- "May he make of us an eternal offering to you" - Eucharistic Prayer. We are called and given the grace to live our life as an eternal offering.
- Our offering is an invitation to share with Christ in com-compassion for our wounds, inconveniences and discomforts. In this, we can participate both externally and internally.
- We "offer the divine victim to God, and offer themselves along with it" (Lumen Gen 11)
- To live on mission, we have a unique call, "as those everywhere who adore in holy activity, the laity consecrate the world itself to God." (Lumen Gen 34)
- Like the Israelites in the desert, the Eucharist is our spiritual nourishment for the uncertain journey of this life – living in service to God and others.

- Living on mission is to live an intentional life for Christ. In our pursuit of holiness, we experience moments of grace-filled choices that become habits of virtue towards an eternal destination of heaven. This is our purpose, this is achieving sainthood.
- The Eucharist offers particular grace to nourish us in charity; increasing our faith & hope and strengthening our docility to the Holy Spirit
- In the Eucharist, we are intimately connected with Christ. The desire of God's heart is for relationship with each person within the temple of our hearts.
- Eucharistic Prayer – “Grant that we who are nourished by his body and blood may be filled with His Holy Spirit and become one body, one spirit in Christ.”