



PERFECTED IN GRACE:

Part 6: The Source and Summit of Christian Life

LENTEN REFLECTION FOR THE TASTE PROGRAM – MAR 21ST, 2024

Opening Prayer

2

Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me.
(John 6:53-57)

The Source and Summit of Christian Life

3

- ▶ *Short Review*
- ▶ The Heavenly Liturgy
- ▶ Fruits of the Eucharist
- ▶ *Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving.*
- ▶ *Questions*

Theosis, Deification, Divinization

4

- ▶ *for the Son of God became man so that we might become God (St. Athanasius)*
- ▶ *"The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods." (St. Thomas Aquinas)*

Theosis Begins in Baptism

- ▶ Adorns our soul, cloths it in beauty, renders it an object of His delight and love (St. John Chrysostom)
- ▶ Makes us a new creation; Incorporates us into the mystical body of Christ (CCC 1265)
- ▶ For those in whom the Spirit dwells are divinized (St. Athanasius)

The Life of Virtue: Cooperation with the Holy Spirit

6

- ▶ The gifts of the Spirit are bound together in love so that whoever has [the theological virtue of] love has all the Gifts of the Spirit. **If you do not have love, then the gifts of the Spirit will lie dormant in your soul.** (*Suma* I, II, 68, 5)
- ▶ The practice of a life of virtue is the key that unlocks the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. (*Suma* I, II, 65, 3)

From Faith to Love

7

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your **faith** with **virtue**, **virtue** with **knowledge**, **knowledge** with **self-control**, **self-control** with **endurance**, **endurance** with **devotion**, **devotion** with **mutual affection**, **mutual affection** with **love**.

(2 Peter 1:5-7)

Gifts for the Salvation of Others

8

- ▶ Charismatic Gifts: strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts (cf. 1 Cor 12:31)
- ▶ Holy Orders: the one priesthood of Christ; it is made present through the ministerial priesthood (CCC 1545)
- ▶ Matrimony: images divine love and the nuptial relationship of Christ and His Church (cf. Ephesians 5:21-33)

Institution of the Eucharist (and the Liturgy)

On the night he was handed over, he took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

(1 Cor 11:23-25)

The Heavenly Liturgy

10

- ▶ Liturgy is an "action" of the whole Christ (*Christus totus*). Those who even now celebrate it without signs are already in the heavenly liturgy, where celebration is wholly communion and feast. (CCC 1136)
- ▶ The book of Revelation ... reveals to us, "A throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne": "the Lord God." It then shows the Lamb, "standing, as though it had been slain": Christ crucified and risen, the one high priest of the true sanctuary, the same one "who offers and is offered, who gives and is given."

What is the Liturgy?

11

- ▶ The word "liturgy" originally meant a "public work" or a "service in the name of/on behalf of the people." In Christian tradition it means the participation of the People of God in "the work of God." Through the liturgy Christ, our redeemer and high priest, continues the work of our redemption in, with, and through his Church. (CCC 1069)
- ▶ *leitourgia*: an action by which a group of people become corporately what they had not been before.

You and the Liturgy

12

CCC 1141: The celebrating assembly is the community of the baptized who, "by regeneration and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, are **consecrated to be a spiritual house** and a holy priesthood, that through all the works of Christian men they **may offer spiritual sacrifices**." This "common priesthood" is that of Christ the sole priest, in which all his members participate:

(continued ...)

The Liturgy and You

13

CCC 1141 *continued*: Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that **full, conscious, and active participation** in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people, "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people," **have a right and an obligation** by reason of their Baptism.

Fruits of The Eucharist

14

*The Eucharist is "**the source and summit of the Christian life.**" "The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch." (CCC 1324)*

Fruits of The Eucharist

15

Holy Communion augments our union with Christ. The principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus. Indeed, the Lord said: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him." Life in Christ has its foundation in the Eucharistic banquet: "As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me."
(CCC 1391)

Fruits of The Eucharist

16

What material food produces in our bodily life, Holy Communion wonderfully achieves in our spiritual life. Communion with the flesh of the risen Christ, a flesh "given life and giving life through the Holy Spirit," preserves, increases, and renews the life of grace received at Baptism. This growth in Christian life needs the nourishment of Eucharistic Communion, the bread for our pilgrimage until the moment of death, when it will be given to us as viaticum. (CCC 1392)

Fruits of The Eucharist

17

1393 Holy Communion **separates us from sin. ... the Eucharist cannot unite us to Christ without at the same time cleansing us from past sins and preserving us from future sins:**

For as often as we eat this bread and drink the cup, we proclaim the death of the Lord. If we proclaim the Lord's death, we proclaim the forgiveness of sins. ... (St. Ambrose)

Fruits of The Eucharist

18

As bodily nourishment restores lost strength, so the Eucharist **strengthens our charity**, which tends to be weakened in daily life; and this living charity **wipes away venial sins. By giving himself to us Christ revives our love** and enables us to break our disordered attachments to creatures and root ourselves in him (CCC 1394)

Fruits of The Eucharist

19

By the same charity that it enkindles in us, the Eucharist **preserves us from future mortal sins**. The more we share the life of Christ and progress in his friendship, the more difficult it is to break away from him by mortal sin. The Eucharist is not ordered to the forgiveness of mortal sins - that is proper to the sacrament of Reconciliation. The Eucharist is properly the sacrament of those who are in full communion with the Church. (CCC 1395)

The Three Pillars of Lent

In a Holy Hour

20

- ▶ **Prayer – Pray in Eucharistic Adoration.**
- ▶ **Almsgiving – Make your time of Adoration an offering for others.**
- ▶ **Fasting – Leave earth behind (cell phones, etc.) to spiritually enter into the heavenly liturgy.**

Questions?