

Unless You Eat My Flesh and Drink My Blood

Jesus Christ's Ultimatum to Man:
The Saving Power of the Eucharist

by Michael DiSalvo

"Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath
eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day."
— John 6:54 (KJV)

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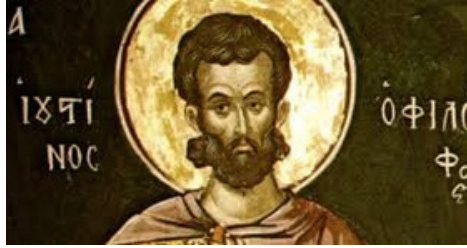
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Foreword



“That can’t be right, that’s cannibalism!”

The words hit my heart and caused me sorrow. My mom had just got off the phone with my favorite aunt. Mom had just shared with her the traditional Christian teaching on the Eucharist and John 6. It didn't go very well, so she expressed her frustration with me.

No doubt, if we do admit Christ’s “flesh is meat indeed, and blood, drink indeed,” John 6:55, KJV , then we are, in a certain sense, advocating cannibalism.

After all, the standard definition for cannibalism is “the act of eating the flesh or organs of another human”.

But if we are to get a bit more exact, Catholics believe in the consuming of the true body and blood of the resurrected Christ *under the appearance or aspect* of bread and wine.

But why would they believe *that*?

Clearly cannibalism was condemned in the Old Testament.

- Cannibalism is portrayed as a terrible curse and judgment from God
- After the flood, God permitted eating meat but specifically excluded humans
Genesis 9: 3-6 Moses warned it would be a consequence of disobeying God
- Leviticus 26:29

There were even Prophetic Warnings:

- Deuteronomy 28: 53-55 describes it as a horrific consequence of siege warfare
- Jeremiah 19:9 prophesied it would occur during the Babylonian siege
- Ezekiel 5:10 warned about parents and children consuming each other

Then again, for Christians we have also been warned about *worshipping men*.

In Prophecy:

- Psalms 146:3 "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help."
- "Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man. Jeremiah 17:5

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can understand it? "

If we can a priori say that it is impossible that Christ gave us His flesh to eat because it is cannibalism and forbidden in the Old Testament, would it also be right to say we should not *worship* Christ because He is *man*, that he is the *Son of Man*, or that we should not trust him because He is *man* and because "the heart Christ's heart?) is deceitful above all things?

Of course not.

These verses need to be seen in their proper context, and we need to understand that one big reason God used the Old Testament law and even Old Testament history was *to prepare* His people for *what He was going to do in the New Testament with Christ, the True Lamb of God, the True Bread from Heaven, who was true God, and true man, whose heart was pure and humble, and not only the trustworthy Son of Man, but also the Son of God.*

In this short book, you will notice I have used the King James Version of the Bible. *I don't believe God chose King James to translate the Bible, neither do I believe he had divine authority or even all the proper resources to have it translated properly.*

However, for those with a current attachment to the KJV, I will still use it to point to the *unmistakable Catholic teaching*, in the hopes that one will see that Christ gave His true authority and teaching power to the traditional Catholic Church in places like 1 Timothy 3 15 ("the church...the pillar and foundation of truth"). Of course, one should do one's own research regarding hermeneutics and what the original languages said and meant in the verses referenced.

Before you read, I appeal to my Protestant and non-Christian friends with this: it is not bad news to believe Christ is present in the Eucharist confectioned by a true priest in a true Catholic Mass. *It is supremely good news* that one can be united to one's Creator so intimately in this life. He is the true Bread that sustains us, and we *need* this Bread for this lengthy and arduous journey here below.

Introduction: An Unmistakable Call to Faith

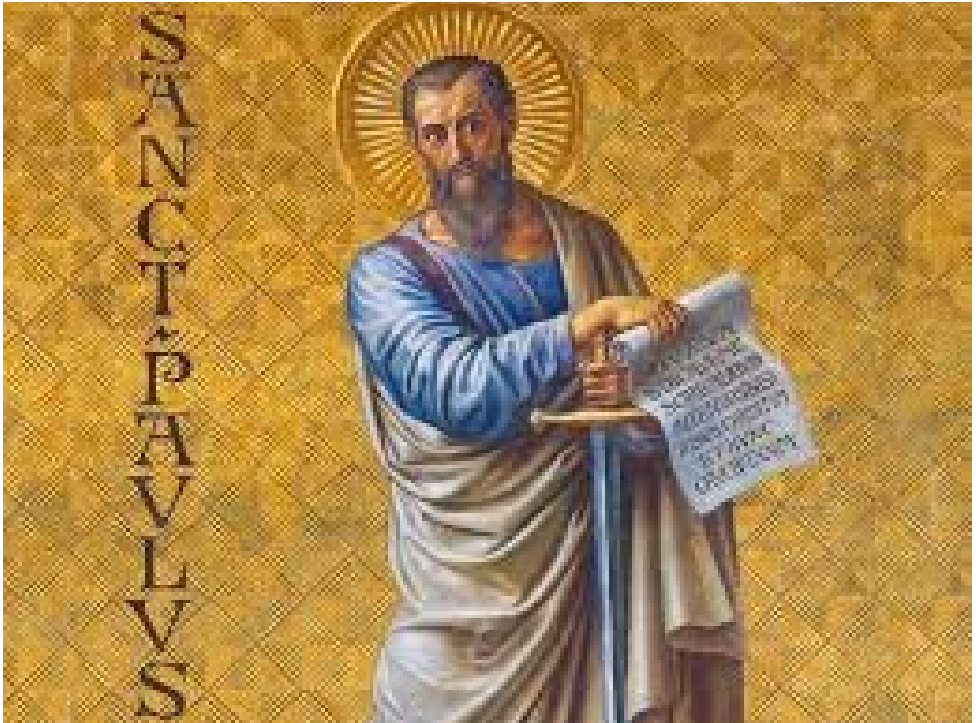
"Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?" Galatians 4:16 . Christ's words in John 6 stand as a challenge and an invitation to every believer: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you."

Yet in his discourse, as today, most of those who understand these plain words are greatly offended.

For centuries, these words have stirred debate, divided opinions, and sparked profound faith. Are they really metaphorical? Symbolic? Or are they literal? As we embark on this journey, I invite you to open your heart and mind to Christ's unmistakable teaching on the Eucharist. Together, let's uncover the truth found in Scripture and history—a truth that leads us to salvation and unites us with the very essence of Christ Himself. These words challenge us to confront our assumptions about faith and salvation.

Could the very act of consuming Christ's body and blood be the *key* to eternal life?

Why has this teaching persisted through centuries of scrutiny, remaining central to Catholic doctrine? As we delve into the depths of Scripture, history, and the Church's



sacred tradition, we'll find that this teaching is not only rooted in Christ's own words but is necessary for our salvation.

We will see that the Eucharist is not an optional metaphor—it is a divine reality.

Chapter 1 Genesis and the Perfect Marriage

The modern believer or new Christian is often amused or bewildered by Old Testament ceremonies and laws. To our modern mind, ritual uncleanness, slavery, the death penalty-- even for a child talking back to his parents-- so much of it seems too much.

But if we play the game of the Manicheans (who made God the Father the "bad God" and Jesus the "good God"), or the modernists (who basically make *us* God-- we ultimately decide what part of the Bible we will embrace and interpret for ourselves), *we don't do justice to God*, or the authorities He set over us to preserve us from these errors.

The reality that we must embrace is that God is all-powerful, all-knowing and all-good. He foresaw our situation today, and allowed the Old Testament, with all the history, events, and prophecies to unfold as they did to teach us and prepare us for what He would do in the New Testament, and what he is doing in your life, even as you read or listen to this.



The Truth About Prefigurements & Types

We need not conjecture that this is what God has done. The Bible actually *tells us* about prefigurements and types and how they are meant to teach us and edify us.

Here are some examples:

1 Corinthians 10:11 "Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

Galatians 4:24 "Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar."

Colossians 2:16-17 "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Paul explains that the Old Testament rituals and observances were shadows pointing to Christ, the reality.)

Hebrews 8:5 "Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, 'See,' saith he, 'that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount.'" The tabernacle and its services are described as a shadow of the heavenly realities fulfilled in Christ.)



Hebrews 10:1 *For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things* , can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. The sacrifices and rituals under the law prefigure the perfect sacrifice of Christ.

St. Paul, one of two greatest leaders in the early Church also reveals profound truths about Christ as the “Second Adam” and how this typology unveils the divine mystery of the Eucharist. By tracing the parallels between Adam, Christ, and the Bride, we discover a deeper understanding of our invitation to become one with Christ through the Eucharist.

Christ as the Second Adam

In Romans 5:14, St. Paul writes, “Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.”

Here, Paul explicitly identifies Adam as a type of Christ, the one who was to come. Where Adam brought sin and death into the world through disobedience, Christ, the Second Adam, brings righteousness and life through perfect obedience Romans 5:19 .

But Paul’s insight extends even further.

Christ is not merely a restoration of Adam but exceeds him in glory and purpose.

Adam was formed from the dust of the uncursed Earth, fashioned by the hand of God before sin entered creation. In a similar but greater way, Christ takes His human nature from Mary, the “new Eve,” who is herself the fulfilment of the uncursed Earth—a vessel free from the stain of sin, as proclaimed by the angel Gabriel: “Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women” Luke 1:28 .

Eve, the Bride, and the Church

In Genesis 2:23-24, Adam declares of Eve, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

The union of Adam and Eve prefigures the union of Christ and His Bride, the Church. St. Paul draws on this imagery in Ephesians 5: 31-32 “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.”

Here, Paul reveals that the marital union is a type of the *greater* spiritual union between Christ and His Church. Just as Eve was formed from the side of Adam, the Church is born from the side of Christ, pierced on the Cross. “But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side and forthwith came there out blood and water” John 19:34 .

The blood and water, we will see, symbolize the sacraments of the Eucharist and Baptism, through which we are incorporated into the Body of Christ and actually made *one with Christ* a more perfect union than could ever be had between Adam and Eve, for Christ invites us to the perfect wedding feast, in which He is *one with His beloved*, the soul in His friendship and grace.

The Eucharist: Becoming One Flesh with Christ

The typology of Adam and Eve finds its ultimate fulfilment in the Eucharist, where the faithful are invited to become “one flesh” with Christ.

Jesus declares in John 6:56 “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.” This is no mere metaphor but a profound reality. In Holy Communion, we partake of Christ’s very Body and Blood, uniting ourselves to Him in the most intimate way possible.

This union is not simply spiritual but familial. Through the Eucharist, we are grafted into the divine bloodline, becoming true sons and daughters of God. As Paul writes in Galatians 4: 6-7 “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

The Invitation to the Wedding Feast

Revelation 19:7-9 paints the final picture of this divine union: “Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him: for the marriage of *the Lamb* is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

We will see later that former Presbyterian minister Scott Hahn’s exploration of the “Fourth Cup” offers a profound insight into how Christ fulfilled the Passover in giving us His true Flesh and Blood in the Eucharist. In the Jewish Passover feast, four cups of wine were traditionally consumed, marking stages of the celebration. The final, or fourth, cup symbolized the completion of the Passover sacrifice. The language Christ used on the cross, “It is consummated” echoes the language that unites the lover and the beloved in Holy Matrimony.

The Eucharist is the also the foretaste of the heavenly wedding feast, where Christ’s Bride, the Church, is united with Him for all eternity. In every Mass, we participate in this mystery, becoming one with Christ as we await the fullness of His Kingdom and the Eternal Feast of the Prince of all peace.

St. Paul’s typology of Christ as the Second Adam should open our eyes to the profound connections between creation, redemption, and the Eucharist. Just as the uncursed Earth gave birth to the first Adam, Mary, the new Eve, gives birth to the sinless Christ. And just as Eve became one flesh with Adam, the Church, as the Bride of Christ, is invited to become one with Him through the Eucharist. In Holy Communion, we share in His very life, bloodline, and mission, becoming part of God’s family and heirs to eternal life. Truly, this is the great mystery of the Christian faith, what should be the source and summit of our Christian life.

Chapter 2 Born in the House of Bread

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, a name that literally means “House of Bread” in Hebrew. From the very beginning, God’s plan was revealed— Christ would become the Bread of Life. His humble birth in a manger, where animals are fed, foreshadows His mission to nourish humanity with His very body.

This connection between Bethlehem and the Eucharist is profound. The Bread of Life chose to be born in the House of Bread, highlighting that He came not just to teach or heal but to be consumed—to become our spiritual sustenance. John 6:35 captures this beautifully: “I am the bread of life.” From the Incarnation onward, His life points unmistakably to the Eucharist. Isn’t it remarkable how Scripture weaves this narrative from the very start? This is not mere coincidence; it’s divine providence revealing God’s love for humanity.





Chapter 3 The Problem of Sin in the Blood

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood" Leviticus 17:11 . Sin, transmitted through the blood, required a pure and unblemished sacrifice for atonement.

Enter Christ: sinless, perfect, and holy. The idea of blood as life—and therefore as the means to redemption—is central to biblical theology.

When my aunt complained to my mother about Catholics acting like cannibals, she was obviously missing this point. *Wedo* need a divine blood infusion.

What better way to be part of God's family than to share his very blood and genealogy?

In Hebrews 9 22, we read, "Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sins." Christ's blood, poured out on the cross, is the remedy for our sin.

But He didnt' just shed His blood; He gave it to us in the Eucharist.

When we drink His blood, we are united to His life—a life untainted by sin and overflowing with grace.

This divine exchange—our sin for His righteousness—occurs each time we partake of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is not merely a ritual; it is the lifeblood of our salvation. The animal sacrifices of the Old Testament were no longer enough. We needed a God-man, who would take the place of the Paschal (Passover) Lamb to truly take away the sins of the world.



Chapter 4 The Prefiguring of the Eucharistic Sacrifice

Isaac and the Promised Lamb

"The Lord Himself will provide the sacrifice" In the grand tapestry of salvation history, threads of prophecy and fulfillment weave together to reveal a divine narrative that transcends generations.

Among these remarkable threads is the poignant account of Abraham and Isaac, a story steeped in obedience, faith, and foreshadowing. At its heart lies the emblematic figure of the Lamb, a precursor to the ultimate sacrifice that would be made for humanity—the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ.

The Call to Sacrifice: Abraham's Trial of Faith

The story unfolds in Genesis 22, where God tests Abraham's faith by commanding him to offer his beloved son, Isaac, as a burnt offering on Mount Moriah. This shocking directive echoes through the ages, capturing the imagination and hearts of believers. It is a narrative that lays the groundwork for understanding the depth of sacrifice and the nature of obedience in the life of faith.

Abraham's response to God's command is striking in its immediacy—"Early the next morning" Genesis 22:3, KJV , he prepares for the journey with unwavering resolve.

This promptness reflects a profound trust in God that does not waver in the face of incomprehensible demands.

As they ascend the mountain, Isaac, carrying the wood for the sacrifice, innocently inquires about the lamb for the offering. In a moment that reverberates throughout biblical history, Abraham responds, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son" Genesis 22:8 .

This declaration is not merely a comfort to Isaac; it is a profound prophetic statement that points toward the future provision of God. The implications of this moment are twofold: God will provide a lamb, and this provision encapsulates the sacrificial nature of divine love, a love that will ultimately manifest in the Eternal sacrifice of Christ, even in His Eucharistic Love.



Chapter 5 The Passover and the Eucharist

At the first Passover in Exodus 12, the Israelites were commanded to sacrifice an unblemished lamb, mark their doorposts with its blood, and *consume its flesh*.

This was not optional; it was a matter of life and death.

The lamb's blood saved them from the angel of death, and its flesh sustained them for their journey.

Fast forward to John 1:29. John the Baptist proclaims, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world."

Just as the Israelites had to eat the lamb to survive and partake in the Old Covenant, so too must we consume the flesh of Christ in the Eucharist to share in the New Covenant. This is not mere symbolism; it's a divine command. The Passover was a foreshadowing, and the Eucharist is its fulfillment—a perfect continuation of God's salvific plan.

As Paul says in First Corinthians 5:7-8, "For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast..."

We need the Eucharist—the true flesh of the Lamb of God—to sustain us on our journey to eternal life.

Without it, we are left spiritually vulnerable, just as the Israelites would have perished.

unless their homes were *literally* covered by the lamb's blood, and they actually consumed the lamb itself.

So from the manger where the animals fed to the Cross where the lamb was literally crucified for the Paschal offering, Christ's message is clear: He is true food for our souls that we need to prevent our spiritual starvation.

Through the Eucharist, Christ dwells in us, providing the spiritual nourishment we need to overcome sin and persevere in faith. This union with Christ is profound. In consuming His Body and Blood, we are drawn into

Chapter 6 The Exodus and Manna from Heaven

The Exodus symbolizes our spiritual journey from sin to salvation. Just as the Israelites needed the Passover lamb for protection and sustenance, we need the Eucharist to sustain us on our journey to heaven. It is not enough to simply "believe and be baptized" (pre-signified by the waters of the flood as alluded to by Peter and the saving waters of the Red Sea that all believers passed through); we must also partake of this Passover Lamb, this *Manna from Heaven*.

"Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him" John 6 56 .

John 6 29 36 So they asked Him, "What sign then will You perform, so that we may see it and believe You? What will You do? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Then Jesus said unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, "Lord evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, "I am the Bread of Life. He that cometh to me shall never hunger. and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I say unto you that ye also have seen me, and believe not."



Through the Eucharist, we are drawn into a relationship with Him that nourishes and sanctifies us.

Imagine the Israelites in the wilderness -- their journey was fraught with danger, temptation, and uncertainty. Yet, they were sustained by the manna from Heaven.

For Christians, the Eucharist is our manna. It is the bread of angels that miraculously appears to spiritually feed us when we are spiritually starved, the sustenance that carries us through the trials of life toward our heavenly home.



Chapter 7 Literal, Not Symbolic

In John 6: 51-58, Jesus' words are clear: "My flesh is real food, and my blood is real drink." The Greek word for "eat" shifts to "trogo"—a word that means "to gnaw or chew," emphasizing a literal act. This deliberate choice of language leaves no room for a purely symbolic interpretation. We see this over and over again anywhere "trogo" (τρώγω) is used.

The word "trogo" appears primarily in

1. Classical Greek literature, where it was used to describe:

- Animals feeding
- Poor people eating vegetables or fruits
- The physical act of munching or chewing

2. Even more so we see it refers to actual eating in the New Testament, all in the form of the verb's present participle:

- Matthew 24:38 - "For as in the days before the flood people were eating (τρώγοντες) and drinking..."
- John 6:54 - "The one who feeds (τρώγων) on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life..."
- John 6:56 - "The one who eats (τρώγων) my flesh and drinks my blood dwells in me..."
- John 6:57 - "...so the one who feeds (τρώγων) on me will live because of me."
- John 6:58 - "...The one who feeds (τρώγων) on this bread will live forever."
- John 13:18 - "The one who eats (τρώγων) my bread has lifted up his heel against me."

When His listeners protest in John 6 (the same ones who had just been fed by Christ in *another* miracle involving His feeding them supernaturally multiplied bread and who were going to force Him to be King), Jesus doesn't soften His statement. Instead, He reinforces its literal meaning.

Many disciples then leave, unable to accept this hard teaching.

John 6:60 "Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?"

In fact, John 6 points out that although Simon Peter makes his profession of faith at this point, those who do not believe Christ's words are aligned with Judas, the betrayer.

John 6:64 "But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him."

John 6:70 "Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."

Jesus doesn't call them back or explain his teaching metaphorically.

He intended for us to understand that the Eucharist is His true presence—the body, blood, soul, and divinity of what would be His ascended Body. This teaching challenges us to move beyond our limited understanding and trust in the mystery of Christ's words.

In fact, the *only* metaphorical or symbolic meaning of "eat my flesh" and "drink my blood" in Christ's time were metaphorical expressions of hatred, hostility, or betrayal. We see this in Jewish thought coming from various Old Testament passages and ancient Jewish idioms. This understanding helps clarify how Jesus' audience in John 6 initially reacted to His words with *shock and disbelief*.

Clearly, Christ was not saying to "hate" Him. For the Jews knew the metaphorical uses of "eat my flesh" could *only mean* "hate".

Old Testament Evidence for Metaphorical Use Meaning "To Hate"

1. Psalm 27:2

1. *"When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall."*

2. In this verse, "eat up my flesh" is a metaphor for hostility, persecution, and the desire to destroy someone completely. It conveys enmity rather than literal eating.

2. Micah 3:3

1. *"You who eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from off them, and break their bones in pieces, and chop them up like meat in a pot, like flesh in a cauldron."*

2. Here, "eat the flesh" describes the oppressive actions of unjust leaders exploiting and oppressing the people. It is not literal but figurative, symbolizing the leaders' greed and cruelty.

3. Job 19:22

- *"Why do you, like God, pursue me? Why are you not satisfied with my flesh?"*
- The term " my flesh " refers metaphorically to Job's suffering and persecution by his friends, emphasizing their hostile treatment.

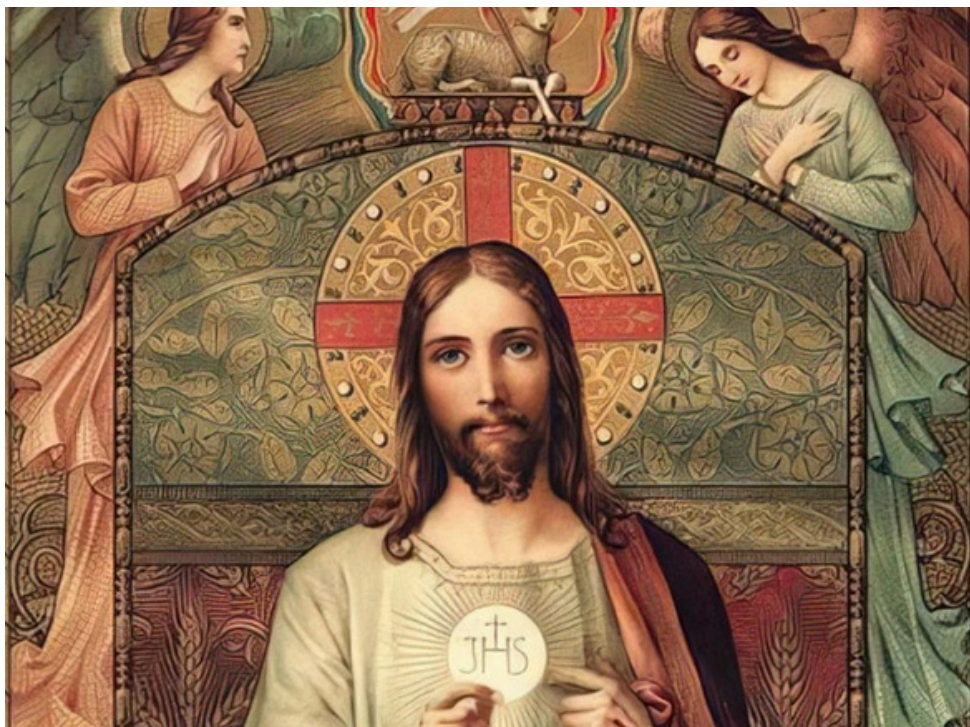
4. Zechariah 11:9

- *"Then I said, 'I will not be your shepherd. What is to die, let it die; what is to be destroyed, let it be destroyed. And let those who are left devour the flesh of one another.'"*
- "Devour the flesh of one another " symbolizes self-destruction and hostility among people, not cannibalism.

Summing Up

- In ancient Jewish culture, "eating flesh" and "drinking blood" were often idioms for expressing extreme contempt, betrayal, or enmity. For example, "to drink someone's blood" might imply taking life or exacting vengeance in a hostile or oppressive way.

There is no other plausible metaphorical use of "eat my flesh" or "drink my blood" found in Old Testament or Jewish literature.



Chapter 8 Meal, Sacrifice, and Covenant

“Take, eat, this is my body... Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant”
Matthew 26: 26-28 . Jesus’ words at the Last Supper leave no room for ambiguity. He establishes the Eucharist as the fulfilment of the Old Covenant and the foundation of the New.

Notice He doesn’t say, “This represents my body” or “This symbolizes my blood.”

His language is direct, clear, and unequivocal. In this moment, Christ gives Himself entirely to us, and this becomes even more vivid when we see Him give every drop of His blood on the Cross.

The Eucharist is the culmination of His mission and the ultimate gift of love. Through it, He invites us into the New Covenant, sealed not with the blood of animals *but with His own divine blood*.

In fact, in the book we have mentioned, “The Fourth Cup: Unveiling the Mystery of the Last Supper and the Cross,” Dr. Scott Hahn explains that the fourth cup of the Passover meal, traditionally the “Cup of Consummation,” is fulfilled in Christ’s Paschal sacrifice on the cross.

Hahn draws parallels between the Last Supper, Christ's crucifixion, and the Passover meal, suggesting that the Last Supper was a Passover meal and that Christ's death on the cross represents the completion of the sacrificial system.

By drinking the three cups of wine at the Last Supper and saying, "It is finished" on the cross as He drank the fourth cup, Christ fulfils the covenant and establishes a new covenant through His sacrifice.

This is further emphasized as shortly after the consuming of this chalice the veil of the temple is torn in two and the sacrifice at the temple ceases forever.

This act is more than a memorial; it is a *participation* in the Paschal Mystery. Each time we receive the Eucharist, we are united to Christ's sacrifice, death, and resurrection. It is the mystery of faith made manifest.

Chapter 9 St. Paul's Warning

In 1 Corinthians 11: 27-29, St. Paul warns against receiving the Eucharist unworthily, saying it would be a *sin against the body and blood of the Lord*, and even that some believers were *sick and dying* because they did not respect the true Body and Blood.

If the Eucharist were merely symbolic, why such a dire warning? Clearly, St. Paul understood the Eucharist as the real presence of Christ.

Like all the other Eucharist teachings, the proving of oneself or the discerning of the Body and Blood, harkens back to an Old Testament type, or allusion.

Consider Numbers 5: 11-31. This section describes a ritual known as the “ordeal of bitter water” or the “test for an unfaithful wife.” Here are the key points about this passage:

- 1.The husband brings his wife to the priest
- 2.The priest prepares “bitter water” by mixing holy water with dust from the tabernacle floor
- 3.The woman is put under oath and agrees to drink the water



4. If she has been unfaithful, the water is said to cause her "abdomen to swell and her womb to miscarry"

5. If she is innocent, she will be unharmed and able to have children.

The New Testament fulfilment of the ritual is for the Christian soul to approach Christ with a clear conscience, confessing his sin, when necessary, as referenced in James 5, to the priest (a.k.a. the elder or πρεσβύτερος "presbuteros").

To approach the Lord's table with an adulterous heart leads to judgment, to approach it with a clean heart leads to more grace and spiritual growth and fruitfulness.

Paul's words challenge us to examine our hearts before approaching the altar. The Eucharist demands reverence and faith. To partake unworthily is to profane the very body of Christ, a sobering reminder of the sacredness of this sacrament.

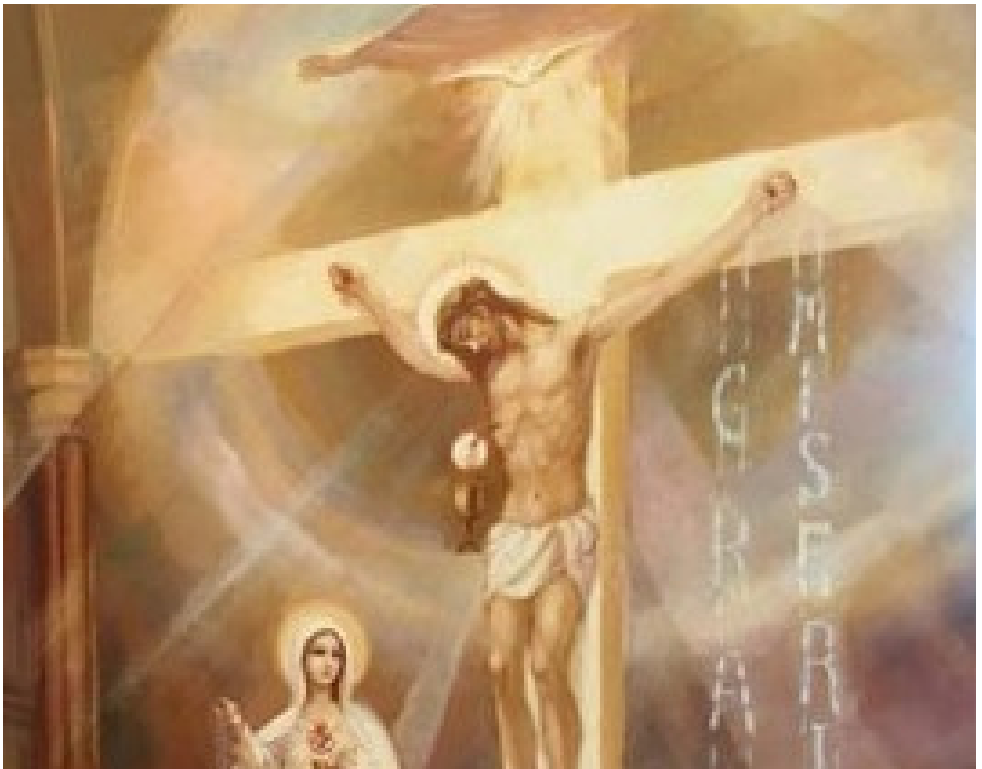
Chapter 10 Faith in the Mystery

Understanding the Eucharist fully requires faith. Just as the Incarnation is a mystery, so too is the Eucharist. In John 6:63, Jesus says, "The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life." Rather than taking away the teaching and making it a mere metaphor, His teaching invites us to trust in His divine and spiritual authority.

Judas's rejection of the Eucharist in John 6 foreshadows his betrayal at the Last Supper.

This underscores the gravity of failing to believe in Christ's words about the Eucharist-- though Judas saw the feeding of the 5,000, he still could not bring himself to believe in Christ's words of life.

Faith in the Eucharist is not blind belief; it is trust in the promises of Christ, God made man, who is Truth itself and the author of all miracles, seen and unseen.



Chapter 11 A Divine Gift and Invitation to Believe

The Eucharist is the heart of Christ's teaching and the soul of the Church. It is not merely a symbol but the true presence of Christ—body, blood, soul, and divinity. Scripture and history affirm this truth, and Christ Himself invites us to believe.

Interestingly enough, it was not only the founder of Protestantism (e.g. Lutheranism), Father Martin Luder, who believed in the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Many of the Protestant founders came from similar backgrounds.

For example, both Huldrych Zwingli and John Calvin were originally connected to the Catholic Church, but they had slightly different paths:

Huldrych Zwingli 1484-1531

Zwingli was ordained as a Catholic priest in 1506 and served as a parish priest in Glarus, Switzerland. Later, he became a preacher at the Grossmünster church in Zurich.

Influenced by Luther's writings, Zwingli began questioning Catholic practices like indulgences and clerical celibacy.

He eventually broke from the Church and led the Reformation in Switzerland,



emphasizing the Bible as the sole authority and rejecting the Real Presence in the Eucharist.

John Calvin 1509-1564

Unlike Zwingli, Calvin never served as a Catholic priest. However, he was deeply immersed in Catholic education, studying theology and law in France before his reformist convictions led him to break with the Church.

Calvin became a prominent figure in the Protestant Reformation, founding Calvinism, which emphasized predestination and the sovereignty of God.

Other Notable Catholics Who Originally Believed in the True Presence

John Knox 1514-1572

Knox was a Catholic priest in Scotland. He later became the leader of the Scottish Reformation, founding Presbyterianism and rejecting Catholic sacraments.

William Tyndale 1494-1536

Ordained a Catholic priest in England, Tyndale was deeply influenced by reformist ideas. Tyndale started by translating the Bible into English in his own translation, apart from Church authority and other English translations already written. Tyndale went on to reject many Catholic teachings, including the True Presence.

Menno Simons 1496-1561

Simons was ordained as a Catholic priest in the Netherlands. After some years as a priest, Simons began to struggle with believing the Eucharist was the true body and blood of Christ. Not being well versed in the New Testament, he began to read it more thoroughly. As he read and studied the Bible, he became convinced that the doctrine of the True Presence was entirely groundless.

Menno later became the leader of the Anabaptist movement and founded the Mennonites, who emphasized adult baptism and pacifism.

Conviction or Apostasy?

Did any of these men confront what the whole of Scripture and History say about the divine words of Christ? Or did they fall away because of lack of belief?

Did Simons or Calvin study the dozens of the living Eucharistic miracles over the millennia or their scientific proof, or does endless proof not matter?

Truly, it is harder to believe than not believe, for *faith is a gift from above*.

Will you pray for the gift of a supernatural faith to believe like the first Christians and the authors of Holy Scripture?

Matthew 15:32 "Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way."

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