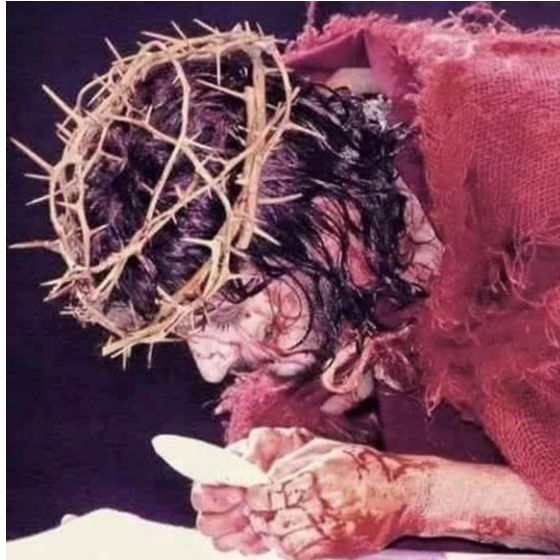


Bible Study On The Bread Of Life Discourse



On Calvary AND In the Eucharist, Jesus Christ is both Victim and Priest¹
(Jesus invites us to be UNITED TO HIM in the closest possible ways.)

1st CORINTHIANS 11:23-25 23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "**This is my body** which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 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."

Welcome to this study of The Bread of Life Discourse. Let's begin in prayer. . . .

COME HOLY SPIRIT PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful;
And enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created.
And You shall renew the face of the earth.

LET US PRAY . . .

O God, Who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of the faithful,
grant that by the gift of the same Spirit, we may always be truly wise and ever rejoice
in His consolation, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

¹ Image found on the Internet. Location and author unknown.

Jesus is the Priest behind the priest when administering any of the Sacraments. Listen to St. Ambrose from the 300's A.D. just matter-of-factly discussing this fact

ST. AMBROSE Should anyone object that the Church is content with one Head and one Spouse, Jesus Christ, and requires no other, the answer is obvious. For as we deem **Christ** not only **the author of all the Sacraments**, but **also their invisible minister** -- He it is who baptises, He it is who absolves, although **men are appointed by Him the external ministers** of the Sacraments.

Notes

Introduction

Welcome to the study on the Eucharist teachings from Jesus in the Bread of Life Discourse (in John 6).

We will begin by looking at some basic catechesis concerning the Holy Eucharist and WHY we believe.

We will then read the Bread of Life Discourse in John 6. We will see it occurred during **Passover** season.

We'll also study **Passover** in the Old Testament, to discern any background/prefiguration significance. You may refer to Table 3 on your own which unpacks Passover in even more detail.

Next we will see in the New Testament where Jesus is seen either implicitly or explicitly as the fulfillment of the Passover Lamb.

Then we will go back and review the Bread of Life Discourse in Greater Depth including objections.

When the study is concluded, you may refer to Table 1 to see some of the Ancient Church Fathers on the Eucharist.

On Table 2 you can read of the Manna ("What is it?") From Heaven in the Old Testament because that is brought up in John 6 too. The Old Testament Manna from Heaven is described as a LESSER REAL event than the Bread of Life Discourse as prophesying a REAL event. (If the Bread of Life Discourse were merely symbolic, the REAL Manna should be a GREATER event.)

Basic Catechesis On The Blessed Sacrament—The Holy Eucharist

The reason WHY the Eucharist is so important is because the Eucharist is Jesus Himself!

After the consecration at the Mass² by the priest, the Eucharistic Jesus is **fully present** both physically and spiritually in His entire substantial self in the Eucharist!

No bread and **no wine** exist after the consecration!

Only the physical appearances/properties exist after the Consecration so we can continue on in faith.

The Eucharist is the BODY, BLOOD, SOUL, and DIVINITY of Jesus. It is truly and substantially Jesus.

CCC 1374 The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is **unique**.

It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all sacraments tend."

In the most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist "the **body** and **blood**, together with the **soul** and **divinity**, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, **the whole Christ** is truly, **really**, and **substantially contained**.

This presence is called 'real' it is a substantial presence by which Christ, **God and man**, makes himself **wholly and entirely present**."

² Assuming we have a valid minister of the Sacrament (a ministerial priest or a bishop) with valid intention, valid form (i.e. in the Latin Rite "This is my body"), and valid matter.

Jesus is true God and over the last 2000 years and for the rest of eternity, now True man as well.
We WORSHIP and ADORE Jesus because He is God.
We WORSHIP and ADORE the Eucharist, because the Eucharist IS Jesus.

This action of the priest confecting the bread and wine into Jesus is because of THE Priest—Jesus working in the priest and through the priest.

CCC 1375a It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in the sacrament.

The Church Fathers strongly affirmed the faith of the Church in the efficacy of the Word of Christ and of the action of the Holy Spirit to bring about this conversion.

Thus St. John Chrysostom declares:

It is not man that causes the things offered to **become the Body and Blood of Christ**, but he who was crucified for us, Christ himself.

The priest, in the role of Christ, pronounces these words, but their power and grace are God's.

This is my body, he says. This word transforms the things offered.

Some people will ask: “Why don’t you receive Jesus’ body AND blood? I only saw you take the host.”

In BOTH SPECIES (the consecrated bread and the consecrated wine) you have **ALL of Christ**.

If you “only” take the host you receive the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ.

Likewise, if you “only” receive of the cup (as some people with severe gluten intolerance must do), you receive ALL of Jesus—Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity as well.

A non-Catholic might object to the Sacrifice of the Mass saying: “There is only ONE once for all Sacrifice.”

Catholics agree with the fact that there is “ONE once for all Sacrifice”.

We Catholics also know if fifty Protestants “accept Jesus into their hearts as personal Lord and Savior” at a revival, Catholics are NOT THINKING Protestants believe Jesus is being “RE-SACRIFICED fifty times.”

Likewise, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is not “multiple sacrifices” either.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass unites us to the ONE, once for all Sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary.

There is ONE Mass—Calvary. And the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass unites us to that ONE Sacrificial gift which is continually being RE-presented not only on the altars of the world, but in Heaven as well.

REVELATION 5:6a 6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain . . .

WHY Would We Believe Such A Thing??!!

The Eucharist is **difficult** to believe, but that should **never** cause us to **doubt**.

ST. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN “Ten thousand difficulties do not make one doubt.”

The Eucharist is a MYSTERY. Recall a mystery is a truth that is ABOVE reason (NOT contrary to reason).

We can ONLY KNOW about a mystery if it is REVEALED to us from God. You CANNOT “figure out” a mystery with natural reason. When dealing with the one true God who is infinite, we EXPECT mysteries.

The Eucharist being a MYSTERY, is not an easy thing to believe. We must “labor” to believe such a thing.

JOHN 6:27 27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal."

Q: So WHY would we as Catholic Christians believe such a thing?

A: We only believe in the Eucharist **on the authority of Christ's word!** Jesus is God and is utterly trustworthy. Catholic Christians are called to an enormous degree of FAITH. Faith in Jesus in the Eucharist, may be the summit of this call to trust Jesus in our earthly life.

The Eucharist and the Cross are the same mystery (which is **WHY I used the picture on page 1** showing as close to a Crucified Jesus as you can get short of Him being on the Cross AND Jesus at the same time confecting the Eucharist—Because remember, Jesus is the Priest behind the priest).

CCC 1336b . . . The Eucharist and the Cross are stumbling blocks. It is the same mystery and it never ceases to be an occasion of division.

The Mass mystically unites us to the ONE, once for all SACRIFICE of Jesus on Calvary. That's WHY people who “neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some” “NO LONGER” have access to that one, once for all Sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary. They are “deliberately” blowing-off the Eucharistic Assembly as **Hebrews 10 and CCC 2178 reminds us.**³ (See Hebrews 10:23-29⁴)

Let's Read The Actual Bread Of Life Discourse (John 6:50-66)

JOHN 6:50-66 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. 51 **I am the living bread** which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of **this bread**, he will live forever; and **the bread which I shall give for the life of the world IS my flesh.**" 52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “**How** can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 So Jesus said to them, “**Truly, truly**, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; 54 he who **eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life**, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 **For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.** 56 He who **eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him.**

³ **MARK 14:22-24** 22 And as they were eating, he took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take; this is my body." 23 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. 24 And he said to them, "**This is my blood of the covenant**, which is poured out for many.

CCC 2178a This practice of the Christian assembly dates from the beginnings of the apostolic age.¹¹² The *Letter to the Hebrews* reminds the faithful "not to neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but to encourage one another."¹¹³ . . .

⁴ **HEBREWS 10:23a, 25-29** 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope . . . 25 **not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some**, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. 26 For if we sin deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, **there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins**, 27 but a fearful prospect of judgment, and a fury of fire which will consume the adversaries. 28 A man who has violated the law of Moses dies without mercy at the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much worse punishment do you think will be deserved by the man who has spurned the Son of God, and **profaned the blood of the covenant** by which he was sanctified, and outraged the Spirit of grace?

57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so **he who eats me** will live because of me. 58 This is **the bread which came down from heaven**, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who **eats this bread** will live forever." 59 This he said in the synagogue, as he taught at Caperna-um. 60 Many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at it, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of man ascending where he was before? 63 It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But there are some of you that do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who those were that did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. 65 And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." 66 After this many of **his disciples** drew back and NO LONGER WENT ABOUT WITH HIM. (All caps here mine for extra emphasis)

Q: When did this "Bread of Life" discourse take place? What Jewish Liturgical season?

A: Fortunately Scripture tells us when, earlier in John 6:4, **Passover season**.

JOHN 6:4 4 Now the **Passover**, the feast of the Jews, was at hand.

That means for us to get a deeper meaning of what is happening, we need to study the Old Testament context of Passover to see if Jesus is fulfilling the Passover. This is important because to fulfill the Old Covenant, is part of why Jesus came into the world.

MATTHEW 5:17 17 "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; **I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them.**

Let's momentarily cease from The Bread of Life Discourse and study the Passover in Egypt.

Passover (Also Called: "The Feast of the Unleavened Bread" Or "Pesach")

God used Moses to deliver the Israelites **out of slavery** in Egypt. "Slavery" in Egypt is a mere shadow of a much worse slavery—mankind being stuck in sin (John 8:34-36).

God brought ten plagues⁵ (you can read about the plagues and Passover in more detail in Exodus chapters 7-13) upon Egypt to convince their king (they called him their "Pharaoh") to let the Israelites leave Egypt altogether.⁶ The tenth plague is what eventually culminated in the release of the Israelites.

Here is the tenth plague . . .

EXODUS 11:4-5 4 And Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: About midnight I will go forth in the midst of Egypt; 5 and all the first-born (Hebrew = bechor) in the land of Egypt shall die, from the

⁵ **The Ten Plagues:** 1. Water to blood (Ex. 7). 2. Frogs (Ex 7-8). 3. Lice or gnats (Ex 8). 4. Wild animal attacks and flies (Ex. 8). 5. Pestilence against the Egyptian livestock (Ex. 9). 6. Boils (Ex. 9). 7. Storms (thunder, lightning/fire, hail—Ex. 9). 8. Locusts (Ex. 10). 9. Three Days of Darkness (Ex. 10). 10. Death of firstborn (Ex. 11-12).

⁶ This began as a directive to merely allow the Israelites to go out into the desert to worship God apart from the Egyptians. Pharaoh refused to allow this. See Exodus 5:1-3. By Exodus 7, it was clear Pharaoh was not going to obey so now the directive was increased to let the Israelites completely leave Egypt.

first-born of Pharaoh who sits upon his throne, even to the first-born of the maidservant who is behind the mill; and all the first-born of the cattle.

The angel of death was to be sent from God to kill EVERY first-born in the land of Egypt. In order to EXEMPT a household from this curse, explicit instructions were given to the Israelites through Moses.

Here are just a few aspects of the Passover that we need to bring to mind here.

- First of all, the Lamb had to be perfect or “unblemished” (Exodus 12:5).
Jesus was unblemished (Hebrews 4:15).
- The Lamb was to be really and actually killed (Exodus 12:6) and sacrificed including the shedding of blood and death. You couldn’t “spiritually sacrifice” the Passover Lamb. As Hebrews 9:22 reminds us: “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”
Jesus shed His blood for us. (See Hebrews 9:11-23 for excellent details on this)
- The Passover sacrifice was to take place in the late afternoon (evening).
- Jesus’ ultimate sacrifice takes place at the “ninth hour” (3:00 PM—Luke 23:44-46).
- Not a bone could be broken from these Passover lambs (Exodus 12:46).
- St. John explicitly mentions not a bone of Jesus was broken (John 19:35).
- And St. John specifically said this was to FULFILL the Scriptures!

JOHN 19:36 36 For these things **took place that the scripture might be fulfilled**,
"Not a bone of him shall be broken."

- With Passover, the blood of the lamb was to be touched upon the lintel and doorposts of the homes (three points of contact).
- In the fulfillment of Passover, the blood of the Lamb of God (Jesus) was touched upon four points of contact in the shape of His Cross.
- A **hyssop branch** was used to distribute the blood of the Passover lamb (Ex. 12:22).
- A **hyssop branch** was used to distribute the sour wine to Jesus on the Cross (John 19:29-30)

The Passover event occurred in darkness (Exodus 11:4, “about midnight”).

The fulfillment of the Passover event occurred in darkness (despite it being daytime).

LUKE 23:44-46 44 It was now about the **sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land⁷ until the ninth hour**, 45 while **the sun's light failed**; and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

But something in the Passover is missing here. What is it?

⁷ This was NOT a solar eclipse. Solar eclipses last minutes. This “failing” of the sun’s light lasted three hours.

But What Else Was Needed For Obedience To God's Passover Instructions?

But there was ONE more aspect you NEEDED for Passover obedience to be completed.

You had to REALLY and ACTUALLY partake (**EAT**) of the Lamb! And they had to eat it with what? Fortunately, Exodus 12:8 tells us . . .

EXODUS 12:8 8 They shall **eat the flesh** that night, roasted; **with unleavened bread** and bitter herbs they shall eat it.

- With Passover, the flesh of the Passover lamb was to be REALLY ACTUALLY PARTAKEN of **with unleavened bread** (and BITTER herbs as a reminder of the sacrifice).
- With the fulfillment of the Passover, the flesh of the Passover Lamb of God is to be REALLY ACTUALLY PARTAKEN of under the appearance of unleavened bread (which has now been transformed by Jesus through the ministerial priest).

Jesus of course knows He is offering the definitive Passover in the Eucharist. . . .

LUKE 22:14-15, 19-20 14 And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with him. 15 And he said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat **this passover** with you before I suffer . . . 19 And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "**This IS my body** which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 20 And likewise the cup after supper, saying, "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

CCC 1340a By celebrating the Last Supper with his apostles in the course of the Passover meal, Jesus gave the Jewish Passover its definitive meaning. . . .

It's reasons like we just read, that the prophet St. John the Baptist, refers to Jesus as "The Lamb of God."

JOHN 1:28-30, 35-37 28 This took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. 29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**" 30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.' . . . 35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples; 36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked, and said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God!**" 37 **The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.**

St. Paul sees Jesus as our Passover ("Paschal") Lamb of God too . . .

1st CORINTHIANS 5:7-8 7 Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For **Christ, our paschal lamb**, has been **sacrificed**. 8 Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Jews of today and historically, see their celebration of the Passover Seder as an ACTUAL real PARTICIPATION (Greek = "koinonia") **in the Passover event mystically in Egypt.**⁸ (See Exodus 13:8)

⁸ "By participating in the Seder, we are vicariously reliving the Exodus from Egypt. Around our festival table, **the past and present merge** ... Quote from Director of Education (Debbie Mastro). From Temple Sinai "Shofar" (Abe & Erna Bochner Jewish Community Center). April 2008 Edition, page 6.

In fulfillment of this, Catholic Christians likewise see our participation of Mass and reception of the Eucharist as a mystical but real PARTICIPATION in the body and blood of Christ!

1st CORINTHIANS 10:16-17 16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a **participation** (Greek = koinonia) in the blood of Christ? **The bread which we break, is it not a participation** (Greek = koinonia) in the body of Christ? 17 **Because there is one bread**, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of **the one bread**.

CCC 1363 In the sense of Sacred Scripture the *memorial* is **not merely the recollection of past events** but the proclamation of the mighty works wrought by God for men.¹⁸⁴ In the liturgical celebration of these events, **they become in a certain way present and real. This is how Israel understands its liberation from Egypt**: every time Passover is celebrated, the Exodus events are made present to the memory of believers so that they may conform their lives to them.

But it is not ONLY the “memory” . . .

CCC 1364a In the New Testament, the memorial takes on new meaning. When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates **Christ's Passover, and it IS made present the sacrifice Christ offered once for all** on the cross remains ever present. . . .

I want to repeat this. In order to complete the Passover instructions in Egypt, the family was called to REALLY and ACTUALLY PARTAKE of the LAMB. They could NOT MERELY “spiritually accept” this lamb.

JOHN 6:47 47 Truly, truly (Greek = “Amen, amen”), I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

“Believes” in “what”? Well certainly that Jesus is God. But Jesus wants us to believe MORE here. What is the “more” here? Fortunately Jesus is about to tell us . . .

JOHN 6:47-50 47 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who **believes** has eternal life. 48 **I am the bread of life**. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die.

Let's go on keeping in mind the Passover backdrop . . .

JOHN 6:4, 51 4 Now the **Passover**, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. . . . 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. 51 **I am the living bread** which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of **this bread**, he will live forever; and **the bread which I shall give for the life of the world IS my flesh.**”

The context here is Jesus giving us “His flesh” and this is for “the life of the world”. So He is at least talking about Calvary. So we are talking about the real actual sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus for us.

The context here CANNOT be mere “metaphor”. Why not? Because that would make Calvary mere “metaphor”. The context here is REAL.

Okay. But how did the Jews around Jesus understand this statement at that time? That's key because when Jesus said "I am the Vine" (John 15:1 and 15:5) and "I am the door" (John 10:7, and 10:9) the people around Him knew that was metaphorical symbolism.

JOHN 6:52 52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "**How can this man give us his flesh to eat?**"

Well would you look at that. The Jews think Jesus REALLY means it. In the next verse Jesus is going to clarify. First let's look at what Jesus DOESN'T say . . .

NOT JOHN 6:53 53 So Jesus said to them, '**Truly, truly**, I say to you, you must spiritually accept me into your heart. "Eat me by this acceptance."

Jesus doesn't do that. Jesus ups the ante. Before Jesus just told them He gives His flesh for the life of the world and that "a man may eat of it and not die". Now Jesus tells them that "**UNLESS you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you!**"

JOHN 6:53 53 So Jesus said to them, '**Truly, truly**, I say to you, **unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you;**

Q: Yikes! Wouldn't drinking blood violate Levitical law prohibitions (Leviticus 17:10)?!

A: Yes it would. And it would get you removed from the Old Covenant (a Covenant that could NEVER save anyone. See Hebrews 10:4). That's partially WHY we would need a New Covenant. And not only a New Covenant, but a New Covenant in the BLOOD of Christ that we are instructed explicitly to commune with! Also Jesus' work FULFILLS that precept making dietary blood avoidance no longer necessary (see Mark 7:19).

The ONLY time Jesus uses this most important Hebrew word "**Covenant**" in the Gospels is during the Eucharistic institution narrative in the Upper Room. Here is St. Matthew's account . . .

MATTHEW 26:26-28 26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; **this is my body.**" 27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "**Drink of it, all of you;** 28 for **this is my blood of the covenant,** which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

The original manuscripts of John's Gospel were almost certainly written in Greek. Therefore, a brief review of some of the Greek as it pertains to the Bread of life discourse may be helpful.

Variations of the Greek word "phago" (φαγω), to "munch" or "chew" is used four times! (Eat = phago in John 6:50, 6:51, 6:52, and 6:53)

Then in John 6:54, 6:56, 6:57, and 6:58, St. John uses the Greek word "trogo" (τρώγω) to drive home the point that this is REAL eating even further.

According to "Vine's Expository Dictionary," (a Protestant English-Greek Bible study dictionary)

- Phago means “to eat, devour, consume . . .”
- Trogo means “primarily to gnaw, to chew, stresses the slow process; . . .”

But then Vine’s goes on to **opinionate** that the word “trogo” must be used “**metaphorically**” in John 6!

The writers of this dictionary feel compelled to offer commentary here (but don’t do that anywhere else where the words phago and/or trogo are used in Scripture).

JOHN 6:50-53 50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat (Greek Phago = eat, devour, consume) of it and not die. 51 **I am the living bread** which came down from heaven; if anyone eats (Greek = eat, devour, consume) of **this bread**, he will live forever; and **the bread which I shall give for the life of the world IS my flesh.** 52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “**How** can this man give us **his flesh** to **eat** (Greek = eat, devour, consume)?” 53 So Jesus said to them, ‘**Truly, truly**, I say to you, **unless you eat** (Greek = eat, devour, consume) **the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you;**

JOHN 6:54-58 54 he who **eats** (Greek Trogo = gnaw, chew) **my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life**, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 For **my flesh is food indeed**, and **my blood is drink indeed**. 56 He who **eats** (Greek = gnaw, chew) **my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him**. 57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so **he who eats** (Greek = gnaw, chew) **me** will live because of me. 58 This is **the bread which came down from heaven**, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who **eats** (Greek = gnaw, chew) **this bread** will live forever.”

Jesus tells His hearers about eating His flesh eight times and commands them to partake of Him four times in four different ways! The Greek is clear here.

St. John Chrysostom was the native Greek-speaking Catholic Bishop of the Greek-speaking city of Constantinople. St. John Chrysostom (who was born in 344 A.D.) had this to say concerning the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist . . .

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM “That which is **in the chalice** is **the same** as what **flowed from the side of Christ**. What is the bread? **The Body of Christ**. Not only ought we to see the Lord, but we ought to take him in our hands, **eat him**, **set our teeth upon his flesh** and most intimately unite ourselves to him”

- St. John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople. 344-407 A.D. Hom. 24 on 1 Cor. n. 1, 2

At this point assuming Jesus really DOES mean what he says, you have to ask yourselves: “What else could Jesus have said that He already didn’t say to convince people he REALLY meant just what he said?”

Objection: Well perhaps this “eating flesh” is Biblical metaphor?

Answer: “Eating flesh” can’t be mere Biblical metaphor here. Why not?

Because there IS a Hebrew metaphor for “eating flesh” and it means to “hate” and “despise”.

The Hebrew metaphor just wouldn’t make sense for a command of Jesus to you.

And it would violate the context as well.

Let's review the metaphorical usage of "eating flesh" in Sacred Scripture for a moment:

King David, in Psalm 27 is lamenting about how his **enemies** want to do him in. He is lamenting because his enemies want to "**eat up my flesh.**" King David uses this phrase in its real Hebrew **metaphorical** sense here.

The King James version, also a Protestant Bible translation⁹, states the **literal translation** clearly.

PSALM 27:2 (KJV) 2 When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to **eat up my flesh**, they stumbled and fell.

There are other examples of the Hebrew term "eating flesh" used in a metaphorical sense in Scripture. They are **ALL of a negative quality!**

Other Biblical **metaphorical** examples of "**eating flesh**" include . . .

. . . Micah 3:3, Ecclesiastes 4:5, Zechariah 11:9, Isaiah 9:18-20, Isaiah 49:26, 2nd Samuel 23:15-17, and even in the New Testament; Revelation 17:6 and 17:16.

Remember, the Hebrew metaphorical use of "eat my flesh" is to "hate me" and "revile me", "utter slanders against me", or to "treat me as an adversary or enemy."

If John 6 we using Biblical Hebrew metaphor, it would have Jesus commanding people to hate and revile Him. This wouldn't make sense. Let's read on . . .

JOHN 6:59-63a 59 This he said in the synagogue, as he taught at Caperna-um. 60 Many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at it, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of man ascending where he was before? 63 **It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail;**

Objection: The flesh is of no avail so Jesus COULDN'T mean for us to REALLY partake of Him!

Answer: "THE FLESH" IS of "no avail". But Jesus NEVER says "MY FLESH is of no avail."

Recall earlier in John 6:51 Jesus contextually reminds us He gives us HIS flesh for the life of the world.

JOHN 6:51b . . . and the bread which I shall give **for the life of the world is MY flesh.**"

"The Flesh" in a Hebrew culture means that you are a Hebrew. It also means what Tribe you are from such as the Tribe of Judah (a Jew) or the Tribe of Benjamin. It means you follow Old Covenant precepts such as being circumcised on the eighth day as well. Even being a Pharisee would count!

⁹ And although the RSV Protestant translation doesn't literally translate "**to eat up my flesh**", to their credit, they DO put the literal translation in the footnote.

PSALM 27:2 (RSV) 2 When evildoers assail me **uttering slanders against me***, (*footnote: Heb. **to eat up my flesh**) my adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall.

The NIV translates this more literally than the RSV Protestant edition saying: "**to devour my flesh**".

These are all genealogical aspects and/or following the Old Covenant precepts which could never save anyone (again see Hebrews 10:4). Let's review what St. Paul says and WHY he could put "confidence in THE FLESH" but still being in "THE FLESH" would not save him! . . .

PHILIPPIANS 3:3-4 3 For we are the true circumcision who worship God in spirit, and glory in Christ Jesus, and put **no confidence in THE FLESH**.

4 Though I myself have reason for confidence in **THE FLESH** also.

If any other man thinks he has reason for confidence in **THE FLESH**, I have more:

Why St. Paul, could you have had "confidence in "THE FLESH" back in your pre-Christian days?

PHILIPPIANS 3:4b-6 4b If any other man thinks he has reason for confidence in **THE FLESH**, I have more:

5 **circumcised on the eighth day,**

of the people of Israel,

of the tribe of Benjamin,

a Hebrew born of Hebrews;

as to the law a Pharisee,

6 **as to zeal a persecutor of the church,**

as to righteousness under the law blameless.

"The law" incidentally that St. Paul is blameless in here, is **ritual** law, NOT **moral** law. Pedigrees and various rituals such as circumcision is where Paul refers to himself as "blameless".

St. Paul when referring to **moral** laws in 1st Timothy 1:15, refers to himself as "**foremost**" among sinners and NOT "**blameless**".

Since Paul fulfilled these Old Covenant ritual classifications perfectly, he considers himself blameless or perfect in these categories, and thus he could put more confidence in "**THE FLESH**" than anybody.

So St. Paul basically is telling these Philippians what?

That "**THE FLESH**" is **of no avail**!

Now knowing that, re-read John 6:63a and see if you cannot obtain a deeper meaning here.

JOHN 6:63a 63 It is the spirit that gives life, **the flesh** is of no avail;

NOT JOHN 6:63a 63 It is the spirit that gives life, **MY flesh** is of no avail;

Objection: Jesus' WORDS are Spirit and life.

JOHN 6:64b 64 the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.

(NOT JOHN 6:64b 64 the words **ALONE** that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.)

Answer: Jesus' words ARE Spirit and life, but only for us to "cash in on" if we **obey Him**.

The command to eat of the Passover lamb was from the Spirit of God too and resulted in life. But if you decided to forego partaking of the Passover lamb, you would have woken up in the morning to a dead first-born in your household.

HEBREWS 5:9-10 9 and being made perfect he became **the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him**, 10 being designated by God a high priest after the order of Melchizedek.

Melchizedek by the way was a “priest of God” at “**SALEM**” who prefigured Jesus, THE Priest of God at Jeru**SALEM** (same place).

Melchizedek “brought out” (almost certainly as a sacrifice), “bread and wine” (Genesis 14:18)! Jesus brought out “bread and wine too. But also transformed it into Himself united to His sacrifice on Calvary.

Objection: This eating Jesus is cannibalism!

Answer: No it isn't. Cannibalism is where you kill someone to eat of their dead flesh. In the Eucharist we are not killing Jesus again and we partake of His risen glorified flesh. Jesus suffers nothing when we partake of His Divine Eucharistic Flesh.

JOHN 6:64-66 64 But there are some of you that do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who those were that did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. 65 And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." 66 After this many of **his disciples** drew back and NO LONGER WENT ABOUT WITH HIM.¹⁰

This is the ONLY place in the Gospels where Jesus' own disciples leave Him. And the Scriptures say they “NO LONGER went about with” Jesus! They left Him, never to come back.

We know Jesus' hearers thought (correctly) that Jesus REALLY meant what he was saying here.

JOHN 6:52 52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “**How can this man give us his flesh to eat?**”

If Jesus meant all of this as mere metaphor, and His hearers thought Jesus meant it literally, and they are now going to leave Jesus FOREVER (“no longer go about with Him”), Jesus SHOULD have called them BACK and said something like: “Guys! I didn't REALLY mean for you to take this literally! Relax. I am only talking about “accepting me into your hearts as personal Lord and Savior spiritually ONLY”.

Instead Jesus let His own “disciples” go away . . . permanently.

Objection! I just can't believe a priest could do this.

Answer: Recall Jesus is the Priest doing this through the priest. That's the point of the picture on the cover of this study.

Be sure to pray and fast about this because Jesus tells us we need to LABOR “for the food which endures to eternal life” (John 6:27).

¹⁰ All caps here mine for extra emphasis.

Forget about the priest at Mass for just a moment, and ask yourself . . .
if you BELIEVE JESUS HIMSELF at the Last Supper when He said . . . "This IS my body"?

1st CORINTHIANS 11:23-25 23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "**This is my body** which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 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."

If you can believe and trust Jesus there, you are half way home to believing Him here at Mass too.

Jesus I Trust in You.

In Summary

- We looked at some basic catechesis concerning the Holy Eucharist and WHY we can believe Jesus.
- We read the Bread of Life Discourse in John 6, and noted it occurred during **Passover** season.
- We looked at **Passover** in the Old Testament, and noted the background/prefigurement significance.
- In conclusion we went back and reviewed the Bread of life Discourse in Greater Depth including some common objections.

May God richly bless you! Thank you for participating in this study.

Table 1

A Brief Sample Of The Early Church Fathers Teachings On The Holy Eucharist

(There is some minor redundancy of quotes here and in the study. Some people copy off just the Fathers quotes to share with others and I did not want those quotes to be missing here so I doubled up on a few of them purposefully.)

St. Ignatius of Antioch and St. Polycarp of Smyrna were disciples of the beloved disciple St. John!

ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH "From the Eucharist and prayer they (the gnostic **heretics**) hold aloof (or stay away from), **because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ**, who suffered for our sins . . .

. . . And so, those who question the gift of God perish in their contentiousness"

- St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch (**Died 107 A.D.!**) From Letter to the Smyrnians, 7.

ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH The Eucharist is "the medicine of immortality, the antidote against death, and everlasting life in Jesus Christ." "Take care then, to partake of **one Eucharist**; for **one is the Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one the cup to unite us with His Blood.**" "Let that celebration of the Eucharist be considered valid which is held under the bishop or anyone to whom he has committed this."

- St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch in his Letter to the Smyrnians, 8:1.

St. Justin the Martyr who died in 165 A.D. taught the same thing . . .

ST. JUSTIN THE MARTYR “For as not ordinary bread and not ordinary drink do we receive these, but in the like manner as the work of God **Jesus Christ** our Savior **was made flesh and had flesh and blood** for our salvation, so also **the food . . . is, we are taught, the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh**”

- St. Justin Martyr (who died in 165 A.D.!) First Apologia, 1, 62.

We will look at quotes in the CCC from **St. John Chrysostom** and **St. Ambrose**, two ancient Church Fathers who lived about 300-400 AD and wrote prolifically.

CCC 1375a It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in the sacrament. The Church Fathers strongly affirmed the faith of the Church in the efficacy of the Word of Christ and of the action of the Holy Spirit to bring about this conversion. Thus **St. John Chrysostom** declares:
It is not man that causes
the things offered to **become the Body and Blood of Christ**,
but he who was crucified for us, Christ himself.
**The priest, in the role of Christ, pronounces these words,
but their power and grace are God's.**
This is my body, he says. This word transforms the things offered.

And **St. Ambrose** back in the 300's A.D. wrote remarks about this conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus (“Be convinced that this is NOT” mere bread and wine) . . .

CCC 1375b **Be convinced that this is NOT what nature has formed,
But what the blessing has consecrated.**
**The power of the blessing prevails OVER that of NATURE, because
by the blessing nature itself is changed.**
Could not Christ's word, which can make from nothing what did not exist,
change existing things into what they were not before?
It is no less a feat to give things their original nature than to change their nature.

St. Ambrose, a Catholic Bishop in Milan Italy was instrumental in the conversion of **Saint Augustine**. St. Ambrose died in 397 A.D. St. John Chrysostom died in 407 A.D. (illustrating these are ancient teachings).

Speaking of **St. Augustine**, **Augustine** said (in about the year 400 A. D.) that when Jesus held up the Eucharist at The Last Supper, Christ carried Himself “in His own hands”!

ST. AUGUSTINE “Christ was carried in his own hands when, referring to his own body, he said, **‘This is my body’** [Matt. 26:26]. For he carried that body in his hands” (St. Augustine. Explanations of the Psalms 33:1:10 [A.D. 405]).

Let's look at a quote from St. Hilary regarding the Eucharist incorporated into the Roman Catechism. St. Hilary was a Catholic Bishop from Gaul (what we now call France) and defended valiantly the Divinity of Christ at the Council of Nicaea.

We will refer to the Roman Catechism (CCT or "Catechism of the Council of Trent") quoting St. Ambrose and St. Hilary has this to say concerning the Eucharist:

CCT Part 11, "The Eucharist" (transubstantiation, paragraph 6b)
... St. Ambrose says: Although the species of bread and wine are visible,
yet we must believe that **AFTER** (the) consecration,
the body and blood of Christ are **ALONE** there.
Explaining the same doctrine almost in the same words,
St. Hilary says that although externally it appear bread and wine
yet in reality it is the body and blood of the Lord . . .

St. Hilary of Poitiers who was a Catholic bishop, died in 368 A.D. and was famous for defending Christ's divinity against the Arian heretics of the early Church years.

St. John Chrysostom was a Greek-speaking Bishop of the mainly Greek-speaking city of Constantinople. The native Greek-speaking St. John Chrysostom who was born in 344 A.D. (!) had this to say concerning the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist . . .

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM "That which is **in the chalice** is **the same**
as what **flowed from the side of Christ**.
What is the bread? **The Body of Christ**.
Not only ought we to see the Lord,
but we ought to take him in our hands, eat him,
set our teeth upon his flesh and
most intimately unite ourselves to him"

- St. John Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople. 344-407 A.D. Hom. 24 on 1 Cor. n. 1, 2

Let's see what St. Clement of Alexandria had to say in about 200 A.D. concerning this.

ST. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA "'Eat my flesh,' [Jesus] says, 'and **drink my blood.**' The Lord supplies us with these intimate nutrients, **he delivers over his flesh and pours out his blood,** and nothing is lacking for the growth of his children" (The Instructor of Children 1:6:43:3 [A.D. 191]).

Let's listen also to St. Cyril of Jerusalem in the mid-300s A.D. so we have even more insight on what the early Christians really believed.

ST. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM "The bread and the wine of the Eucharist before the holy invocation of the adorable Trinity were simple bread and wine, but the invocation having been made, **the bread becomes the body of Christ and the wine the blood of Christ**" (Catechetical Lectures 19:7 [A.D. 350]).

And we will close not with an ancient Church Father, but a quote from St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta. The late Saint Mother Teresa emphasizes this relationship between Calvary and the Eucharist. . . .

ST. MOTHER TERESA OF CALCUTTA When you look at the Crucifix, you understand how much Jesus loved you **then**.

When you look at the Sacred Host you understand how much Jesus loves you **now**.

This is why you should ask your parish priest to have perpetual adoration in your parish.

- [Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta](#).

Table 2

Manna From Heaven Extras

You know the story in Exodus about the Manna from Heaven in Exodus 16.

“Manna” is the Hebrew word for “What is it?” If you’re familiar with the Manna from Heaven account, skip Exodus 16:1-36 and go straight to “Steve Wood Has An Interesting Insight” just below Exodus 16.

By the way. When the Israelites were grumbling, God gave them meat (“quail”) from Heaven. So they had “bread” (manna”) and then meat. I would suggest BOTH prefigure the Eucharist.

EXODUS 16:1-36 1 They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had departed from the land of Egypt. 2 And the whole congregation of the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, 3 and said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." 4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or not. 5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." 6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, "At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, 7 and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your murmurings against the LORD. For what are we, that you murmur against us?" 8 And Moses said, "When the LORD gives you in the evening flesh to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your murmurings which you murmur against him--what are we? Your murmurings are not against us but against the LORD." 9 And Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your murmurings.'" 10 And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. 11 And the LORD said to Moses, 12 "I have heard the murmurings of the people of Israel; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat flesh, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'" 13 In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning dew lay round about the camp. 14 And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as hoarfrost on the

(To see the rest of the “Tables” pages, please see E-Version of handout.)

ground. 15 When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat. 16 This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Gather of it, every man of you, as much as he can eat; you shall take an omer apiece, according to the number of the persons whom each of you has in his tent.'" 17 And the people of Israel did so; they gathered, some more, some less. 18 But when they measured it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; each gathered according to what he could eat. 19 And Moses said to them, "Let no man leave any of it till the morning." 20 But they did not listen to Moses; some left part of it till the morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them. 21 Morning by morning they gathered it, each as much as he could eat; but when the sun grew hot, it melted. 22 On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers apiece; and when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, 23 he said to them, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy sabbath to the LORD; bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over lay by to be kept till the morning.'" 24 So they laid it by till the morning, as Moses bade them; and it did not become foul, and there were no worms in it. 25 Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field. 26 Six days you shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is a sabbath, there will be none." 27 On the seventh day some of the people went out to gather, and they found none. 28 And the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? 29 See! The LORD has given you the sabbath, therefore on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days; remain every man of you in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." 30 So the people rested on the seventh day. 31 Now the house of Israel called its name manna; it was like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. 32 And Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations, that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'" 33 And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar, and put an omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD, to be kept throughout your generations." 34 As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the testimony, to be kept. 35 And the people of Israel ate the manna forty years, till they came to a habitable land; they ate the manna, till they came to the border of the land of Canaan. 36 (An omer is the tenth part of an ephah.)

Steve Wood Has An Interesting Insight

Before we read Steve's insight I want to quote the relevant portion of John 6 to provide you with better insight. You may skip this portion too, if you are already familiar with it.

JOHN 6:10-51 10 Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11 Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. 12 And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, that nothing may be lost." 13 So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten. 14 When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, "This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!" 15 Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself. 16 When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, 17 got into a boat, and started across the sea to

Caperna-um. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. 18 The sea rose because a strong wind was blowing. 19 When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat. They were frightened, 20 but he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." 21 Then they were glad to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going. 22 On the next day the people who remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. 23 However, boats from Tiberi-as came near the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 So when the people saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Caperna-um, seeking Jesus. 25 When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" 26 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. 27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you; for on him has God the Father set his seal." 28 Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." 30 **So they said to him, "Then what sign do you do, that we may see, and believe you? What work do you perform?"** 31 **Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'** 32 Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.** 33 For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world." 34 They said to him, "Lord, give us this bread always." 35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst. 36 But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. 37 All that the Father gives me will come to me; and him who comes to me I will not cast out. 38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me; 39 and this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up at the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that every one who sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." 41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." 42 They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" 43 Jesus answered them, "Do not murmur among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Every one who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. 46 Not that any one has seen the Father except him who is from God; he has seen the Father. 47 Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. 48 **I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.** 50 **This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. 51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.**" . . .

Keeping all the above in mind . . .

The following is a very interesting excerpt from a Steve Wood letter we received concerning the Eucharist and the Manna from Heaven. It has to do with Manna, the feeding of the 5000 with loaves and fishes, John chapter six, prefigurements and fulfillments, all leading up to the Eucharist. And how if you share this with some people it resonates with them (I had to scan the letter in to share it with you so there may be some formatting errors on my part) . . .

...from the desk of Steve Wood

Dr. & Mrs. George Jay
46191 193rd St Morris,
MN 56267-4597

March 30, 2024

Dear Dr. & Mrs. Jay,

I had to write you this letter about the **crisis** that's on my mind right now — the widespread unbelief of Catholics in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Millions of Catholics don't even bother to go to Mass.

That's bad enough. But here's a fact that shocked me and will probably shock you, too. Among Catholics over 65 years old who attend Mass regularly, only half of them believe in the Real Presence. Even worse: over two-thirds of younger Catholics who attend Mass don't believe in the Real Presence!

Like most Protestants, these confused Catholics believe the bread and wine after consecration in communion only symbolize Jesus. They don't understand or accept the source and summit of our Catholic faith, which is the Real Presence of Jesus Christ — body, blood, soul, and divinity — in the Eucharist.

This is a full-blown unmitigated catastrophe.

I just shake my head over this colossal failure of the American hierarchy to teach the Catholic faith. If our leaders aren't responsible for this disaster, then who *is*?

You've probably heard about the gigantic Eucharistic Congress that will be held July 17-21 in Indianapolis at the Lucas Oil Stadium. Unfortunately, most Catholic families will be priced out of this conference because of the travel and hotel expenses plus the registration fee of over \$300 per person.

The \$64,000 question is: how can we get the Catholic teaching about the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist across to the average Catholic family and also to Protestants? The answer won't come from a committee or a task force.

Let me tell you one of the most extraordinary conversion stories I've ever heard, which will make the answer crystal clear.

A Catholic seminarian named Phil Wolfe sat down with five anti-Catholic Protestants for one hour and achieved five converts out of five — a 100 percent success rate!

Incredible as it sounds, by the end of that hour, all five Protestants were convinced they needed to become Catholic because of the teaching about the Real Presence in the Eucharist!

(Please go to page 2)

At the time, Phil was working in the lumber industry in Maine to earn some money during the summer for his seminary expenses. (Today he's a priest in the Fraternity of St. Peter, stationed in Shawnee, Kansas.) Five of the guys he was working with were hard-core Protestants. Since they knew he was a Catholic seminarian, they hammered him all summer long with their Protestant arguments.

Near the end of summer, Phil asked the five Protestants if they could give him just one hour to explain something important about the Catholic faith. They agreed. To prepare for this crucial one-hour meeting, Phil transcribed a talk I had given explaining the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

Let me give you one of the key concepts that persuaded the five Protestants to convert.

You see, the Eucharistic miracle must be understood in the context of other "bread miracles" in the Bible - going back to the Old Testament manna miracle.

And keep this in mind: from the Old Testament to the New Testament, we go from shadow to substance, from provisional to fulfillment, from the lesser miracle to the greater miracle. That's a crucial concept.

This was truly a miracle "of biblical proportions"!

Consider the Old Testament manna miracle, as described in Exodus 16:14. Bread from Heaven came down and covered the earth like hoar frost so that each Jew could gather an "omer" of it. How much is an "omer"? It's about six pints.

Now, there were more than 2,000,000 Jews wandering in the wilderness at the time of the manna miracle, conservatively speaking. Do you have any idea how much manna came down from Heaven to supply 2,000,000 Jews in the wilderness every day. Prepare to be astounded, and make sure you're sitting down. I sat down with a calculator and multiplied six pints times 2,000,000.

Imagine a train pulling 30 fully loaded freight cars. And another 30-car train, and another, and another. It would take 10 such trains - that is, 300 fully loaded freight cars - to deliver six pints of manna to 2,000,000 people. And this happened every day for 40 years!!! If ever there was a miracle of biblical proportions, this miracle certainly qualified as one.

That really impressed the five Protestants.

After Jesus multiplied the bread and fed the 5,000, the Jews challenged him to top the manna miracle

O.K. Let's fast forward to New Testament times. Jesus Christ performed another bread miracle by feeding the 5,000. Certainly this was a remarkable miracle, but it didn't top the Old Testament manna miracle. It was a lesser miracle — not a greater miracle.

That's why the Jews asked Jesus in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John what he was going to do to top the manna miracle. They didn't think any bread miracle could top that!

(Please go to page 3)

And that's when Jesus replied, "I am the bread which came down from Heaven.... He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life." In the Eucharist, God incarnate in Jesus Christ gives us his true flesh to eat and true blood to drink after the consecration of bread and wine. Once the five Protestants grasped that concept, they were stunned to the core by the truth.

Because of space limitations I can only scratch the surface of the amazing Eucharistic miracle in this letter. But one thing is for sure: The Eucharist is definitely the Biblical bread miracle par excellence. It tops the Old Testament manna miracle and the New Testament miracle of the feeding of the 5,000.

By contrast, the Protestants' symbolic interpretation of the Eucharist doesn't even come close to the other bread miracles in the Bible. That's a screaming clue that the way most Protestants interpret the Eucharist misses the mark.

I urge you to take full advantage of the natural curiosity Protestants have about why we're Catholic. Here's a story that shows what I mean.

I was on a flight, sitting in the "coach" section as I normally do. Unexpectedly, a stewardess asked me if I'd like to move up into First Class. Without hesitation I said yes, because you get a lot more room in First Class, and I looked forward to spreading out my work and getting a lot done.

What I said that SHOCKED the Protestant pastor's wife

I was sitting next to a lady who was obviously using some highbrow Bible study tools to prepare for a talk. When I learned that she was the wife of a nationally known Assemblies of God minister, then I knew why the Lord had arranged for me to fly First Class that day. It was providential!

I told her we had a lot in common because I had attended an Assemblies of God college before becoming an Evangelical pastor.

Then I dropped "the bomb" on her. I said, "Now I'm a Catholic." She was flabbergasted. Then she asked me the very question you LIVE for! She asked, "What do you have now as a Catholic that you didn't have as a Protestant?"

Every Catholic needs to be ready to answer that question. There are many things you could say in reply. But to keep things simple I recommend that you concentrate on just three things - as I did in my conversation with the Assemblies of God pastor's wife:

the Eucharist
the Eucharist
the Eucharist

You need to hear my vintage talk on Eucharistic Messages to get all the details. This is the very same talk that Phil the seminarian transcribed so he could present the explanation to the five Protestants. . . .

Table 3

Passover and Jesus As Fulfillment Of Passover

(This is the same as in the study but with more citations/verses printed.)

Passover (Also Called: “The Feast of the Unleavened Bread” Or “Pesach”)

God used Moses to deliver the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt.

This “slavery” in Egypt is a microcosm of the “slavery” that mankind is in without the Trinitarian life in us that we receive in Baptism. That’s WHY Jesus reminds the Pharisees THEY are in slavery in John 8¹¹.

JOHN 8:34-36 34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, **every one who commits sin is a slave to sin.** 35 **The slave does not continue in the house for ever; the son continues for ever.** 36 **So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.**

Back to the Passover. You know the history.

The Israelites were enslaved in Egypt (recall sin enslaves mankind). God was going to work through his priest, Moses to deliver the people out of slavery.

God brought ten plagues¹² upon Egypt to convince their king (they called him their “Pharaoh”) to let the Israelites leave Egypt altogether.¹³ The ninth plague was three days of darkness¹⁴. Remember that because soon you are going to see three hours of darkness.

Pharaoh considered allowing the Israelites to leave, but always relented for nine of the plagues. This led to the tenth plague which was a sacrifice of the first born¹⁵ (even of the animals) all throughout Egypt.

EXODUS 11:4-5 4 And Moses said, "Thus says the LORD: About midnight I will go forth in the midst of Egypt; 5 and all the first-born (Hebrew = bechor) in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of Pharaoh who sits upon his throne, even to the first-born of the maidservant who is behind the mill; and all the first-born of the cattle.

¹¹ Jesus heals a “slave” in Luke 22:50-51. This is a perfect “ear repair”, but it ALSO suggests a symbolic microcosm of Jesus healing humanity. A humanity that is in slavery.

¹² **The Ten Plagues:** 1. Water to blood (Ex. 7). 2. Frogs (Ex 7-8). 3. Lice or gnats (Ex 8). 4. Wild animal attacks and flies (Ex. 8). 5. Pestilence against the Egyptian livestock (Ex. 9). 6. Boils (Ex. 9). 7. Storms (thunder, lightning/fire, hail—Ex. 9). 8. Locusts (Ex. 10). 9. Three Days of Darkness (Ex. 10). 10. Death of firstborn (Ex. 11-12).

¹³ This began merely as a directive to allow the Israelites to go out into the desert to worship God apart from the Egyptians. Pharaoh refused to allow this. See Exodus 5:1-3. By Exodus 7, it was clear Pharaoh was not going to obey so now the directive was to let the people completely leave Egypt.

¹⁴ There are many prophecies concerning “**The Three Days of Darkness**” as a “conscience re-awakening” for mankind in a miniature fulfillment of the end of time and perhaps AGAIN close to the Second Coming of Christ.

¹⁵ This generic “first-born” was used here as the Hebrew word “bekhor” states. Some translations like the NIV ADD the word “sons” here probably because of the prophecy of Exodus 4:22-23. But that prophecy suggests “son” for Pharaoh. Exodus 11:5 suggests “first born sons and daughters” for all others including the firstborn animals in Egypt (except Passover households).

EXODUS 4:22-23 22 And you shall say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says the LORD, Israel is my first-born son, 23 and I say to you, "Let my son go that he may serve me"; if you refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay your first-born son."

The Passover instructions are unpacked in Exodus chapters 11 and 12, but I want to reiterate some of the more important aspects here.

- First of all, the Lamb had to be perfect or “unblemished” (Exodus 12:5).
Jesus was unblemished (Hebrews 4:15).
- The Lamb was to be really and actually killed (Exodus 12:6) and sacrificed including the shedding of blood and death. You couldn’t “spiritually sacrifice” the Passover Lamb. As Hebrews 9:22 reminds us: “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.”
Jesus shed His blood for us. (See Hebrews 9:11-23 for excellent details on this)

“The whole assembly of the congregation of Israel” needs to be involved in this killing of the Lamb. In a certain sense even the Blessed Virgin Mary had to yield to this (not “approve” of it the sense of WANTING Her son killed, but “approve” in the sense of yielding to God’s will—See Luke 1:38, 2:34-35).

EXODUS 12:5a, 6 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish . . . 6 and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs in the evening.

JOHN 19:12a, 14-15a, 18a 12 Upon this Pilate sought to release him, but **the Jews** cried out, "If you release this man, you are not Caesar's friend; . . . 14 **Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover;** it was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" 15 They cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him!" . . . 18 There they crucified him. . .

The “ninth hour” (3:00 PM in the afternoon is “evening” in ancient Hebrew culture.)

LUKE 23:44-46 44 It was now about the **sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land**¹⁶ **until the ninth hour,** 45 while **the sun's light failed;** and the curtain of the temple was torn in two. 46 Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last.

Because of Pharaoh’s hardness of heart, he brought a curse upon all the people living in Egypt. To remedy that curse being upon the Israelites, God gave them Passover. Let’s summarize the Passover.

The angel of death was to be sent from God to kill EVERY first-born in the land of Egypt. In order to EXEMPT a household from this curse, explicit instructions were given to the Israelites through Moses.

This included sacrificing/killing an unblemished lamb (Exodus 12:5). Not a bone could be broken from these Passover lambs (Exodus 12:46). The blood of the lamb was to be collected **in a basin** and a **hyssop branch** used to **touch the blood of the lamb upon the lintel and doorposts** of the homes (Ex. 12:22). The Israelites had to STAY in their homes until morning (no going outside during the destruction period—Exodus 12:22).

Of course Jesus blood was placed upon the proverbial doorposts and lintel of His Cross, not just on three sides but on four (which is what you might expect with a FULFILLMENT).

¹⁶ This was NOT a solar eclipse. Solar eclipses last minutes. This “failing” of the sun’s light lasted three hours.

Also a hyssop branch is the SAME type of branch they offered the sour wine to our Lord Jesus with.

JOHN 19:29-30 29 A bowl full of vinegar stood there; so they put a sponge full of the vinegar **on hyssop** and held it to his mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished"; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

If the Israelites did exactly as they were told, the angel of death would PASS OVER the homes with the blood of the lamb and spare those inside!

Passover is to be kept among the Israelites as a PERPETUAL (for all time) offering see Exodus 12:24-27).

Catholic Christians keep the FULFILLED Passover perpetually as CCC 1364 reminds us . . .

And Passover is not considered by Jews as merely reciting, remembering, and re-enacting the Passover event! . . . Jews teach that somehow they themselves mystically PARTICIPATE or have a koinonia in that ONE once for all Israelite PASSOVER event. (Exodus 13:8b Tell your sons: "It is because of what the LORD did **for me** when **I** came out of Egypt.")

Here is Rabbi Jeffery Lipschultz on this issue¹⁷ . . .

. . . " Essentially, the seder asks us to transform our psyches by **putting our souls into the bodies of ancestors** who felt the whip of bondage and were released from suffering by the outstretched arm of God. Both the way we experience the story during the seder and elements of the seder—such as Matzah—help us to complete this spiritual journey with a renewed appreciation of our ancestors' experiences and our connection with God. . . "

Also from Abe & Erna Bochner Jewish Community Center newsletter¹⁸:

"By participating in the Seder, we are vicariously reliving the Exodus from Egypt. Around our festival table, **the past and present merge** and the future is promising." (Bold mine.)

Likewise, we as Catholics have a mystical "participation" in Christ on Calvary, through the Eucharist.

1st CORINTHIANS 10:16-17 16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a **participation** (Greek = koinonia) in the blood of Christ? **The bread which we break, is it not a participation** (Greek = koinonia) in the body of Christ? 17 Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

CCC 1363 In the sense of Sacred Scripture the *memorial* is **not merely the recollection of past events** but the proclamation of the mighty works wrought by God for men.¹⁸⁴ In the liturgical celebration of these events, **they become in a certain way present and real**. This is how Israel understands its liberation from Egypt: every time Passover is celebrated, the Exodus events are made present to the memory of believers so that they may conform their lives to them.

¹⁷ <https://www.jewishvoicesnj.org/articles/the-passover-seder-a-mystical-journey/>

See more especially: <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/davearmstrong/2020/01/passover-in-judaism-a-mass-that-transcends-time.html>

¹⁸ Quote from Director of Education (Debbie Mastro). From Temple Sinai "Shofar" (Abe & Erna Bochner Jewish Community Center). April 2008 Edition, page 6.

CCC 1364a In the New Testament, the memorial takes on new meaning. When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ's Passover, and **it is made present the sacrifice Christ offered once for all** on the cross remains ever present. . . .

And this not only transcends time and space here on earth, but Christ, the Lamb of God continues this re-presentation in Heaven as well!

REVELATION 5:6a, 8b-9, 11-14 6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, **I saw a Lamb standing**, as though it **had been slain** . . . 8 . . . the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, . . . 9 and they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals, for **thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation** . . . 11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, "**Worthy is the Lamb who was slain**, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!" 13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, "To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!" 14 And the four living creatures said, "Amen!" **and the elders fell down and worshiped.**

CCC 1340a By celebrating the Last Supper with his apostles in the course of the Passover meal, Jesus gave the Jewish Passover its definitive meaning. . . .

These are almost certainly just some of the reasons WHY the prophet St. John the Baptist sees Jesus as "the "Lamb of God" who takes away the sins of the world!

JOHN 1:28-30, 35-37 28 This took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. 29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!**" 30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, for he was before me.' . . . 35 The next day again John was standing with two of his disciples; 36 and he looked at Jesus as he walked, and said, "**Behold, the Lamb of God!**" 37 **The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus.**

In order to efficiently breath on a cross, the victims need to try to stand up when inhaling. To hasten people's death on the Cross, the Romans would sometimes break their legs to suffocate their victims.

At the end of St. John's Gospel, he tells us that the whole world could not fit the books that could be written of Jesus. Yet he seems to be telling his readers mere trivia when he tells us, they did not break Jesus' bones. But YOU KNOW this is NOT trivia. You know that "The Lamb" cannot have broken bones.

JOHN 19:31-36 31 Since it was the day of Preparation, in order to prevent the bodies from remaining on the cross on the sabbath (for that sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. 32 So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with him; 33 but when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. 34 But one of the

soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. 35 He who saw it has borne witness--his testimony is true, and he knows that he tells the truth--that you also may believe. 36 For these things took place that the scripture might be fulfilled, "Not a bone of him shall be broken."

But all that we looked at so far did NOT conclude the Passover instructions. There is something important still missing . . . They also had to PARTAKE (eat) of the Lamb of God!

They had to partake with "bitter herbs" (as a remembrance of the bitter yolk of slavery) and unleavened bread (Exodus 12:8)¹⁹.

EXODUS 12:8 8 They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.

I want to repeat this. In order to consummate these instructions, the family was called to REALLY and ACTUALLY PARTAKE of the LAMB. They could NOT MERELY "spiritually accept" this lamb only but had to REALLY EAT of the lamb!

EXODUS 12: 3, 5a, 6b, 8, 21-21, 43, 46 3 Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month they shall take every man a lamb according to their fathers' houses, a lamb for a household; 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish . . . 6 . . . the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs in the evening. . . . 8 They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.

Then Moses called all the elders of Israel, and said to them, "Select lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the passover lamb. 22 Take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood which is in the basin; and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning. 23 For the LORD will pass through to slay the Egyptians; and when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door, and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to slay you. 24 You shall observe this rite as an ordinance for you and for your sons for ever. 25 And when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, as he has promised, you shall keep this service. . . . 26b 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he slew the Egyptians but spared our houses.'" And the people bowed their heads and worshiped. . . . 43 And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the passover: no foreigner shall eat of it; . . . 46 In one house shall it be eaten; you shall not carry forth any of the flesh outside the house; and you shall not break a bone of it.

¹⁹ Also oral tradition says they included wine with their Passover meal (Four Cups).

Jesus Fulfills the Passover

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CCC 1225a In his Passover Christ opened to all men the fountain of Baptism. He had already spoken of his Passion, which he was about to suffer in Jerusalem, as a "Baptism" with which he had to be baptized.²² **The blood and water that flowed from the pierced side of the crucified Jesus are types of Baptism and the Eucharist.** . .