

The Mass of the Lord's Supper – 04/14/2022

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

Today, Holy Thursday, is the day we commemorate the institution of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass – the fulfillment of God's promise to his people – It is the new and eternal Passover of the Lord.

At the first Passover every family was to partake of a lamb and apply some of its blood to the door posts and lintels of their homes so that the angel of death, seeing the blood, would pass by.

The Israelites were spared from destruction to prepare them for their arduous journey to the Promised Land.

Now, however, the unblemished Lamb of God – Jesus Christ – is consumed by every Catholic and his blood is not just applied to the door posts and lintels of every home but

touches the very lips of the faithful, who are then spared from destruction.

Our bodies are meant to be temples of the Lord and our mouths are like the doorway to that temple.

As we hear at every Mass just before receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, “Behold, the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.” And then the people respond, “Lord I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”

At Mass, provided we are in the state of grace, we are commanded to partake of the Lamb of God – the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ – so that we can be freed from slavery to sin and death.

But like the Israelites before us, the journey doesn't end with the sacrificial offering. It is only the beginning. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass prepares and strengthens us for the arduous journey to the Promised Land of heaven.

All that happened in the Old Testament points to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is the fulfillment of everything the Israelites longed for – everything the world longs for.

In the Church, we give a dying person Viaticum – the Eucharist – on their deathbed, to strengthen them for their journey into eternal life.

We are all dying. The Eucharist is our Viaticum. The word literally translated means a provision for a journey.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “The Eucharist is ‘the source and summit of the Christian life.’ The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the Blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch.”

The Catechism concludes, “the Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: ‘Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking.’”

Without the Eucharist we are just another denomination.

However, with the Eucharist and our humble childlike faith in it there is freedom from the slavery to sin and consequently the hope that after our arduous journey through life we too may gain entrance into the Promised Land of Heaven.