

A GREAT HIGH PRIEST

Take-Home · Session 7 · A Better Covenant · Hebrews 8

A Catholic Journey Through the Letter to the Hebrews

What We Found

The sermon announced its own point. “We have such a high priest”: seated at the right hand of the Majesty, and a minister (leitourgos, from the same Greek root as liturgy) in the true tent. Heaven's throne room is a sanctuary in use: when you pray, you join a service already in progress.

The tabernacle was heaven's scale model. Moses copied a pattern shown him on the mountain (Exodus 25:40): the old priests served a copy and shadow. The Mass is not a better copy: it is participation in the original, now live (CCC 1090).

God announced the new covenant at the old one's funeral. Jeremiah 31, God's promise amid the catastrophe that destroyed Jerusalem in 587 BC: a new covenant, not like the old: because the fault was in the partners' hearts, the new one would be installed in hearts.

Four promises, one engine. The law within; I their God, they my people; all shall know me, least to greatest; and the one the old machinery could never enact: I will remember their sins no more.

Jesus claimed the oracle over a cup. “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20): Jeremiah's phrase, enacted at the Supper, prayed at every consecration. The Eucharist is Jeremiah 31 with an altar.

Voices of the Church

St. Augustine *Questions on the Heptateuch*

The New Testament lies hidden in the Old, and the Old is unveiled in the New: the Church's rule for reading both covenants as one plan (CCC 129).

St. Thomas Aquinas *Summa Theologiae*

The New Law is chiefly the grace of the Holy Spirit itself, given to believers: the law written on hearts is a Person poured in, and the commandments become the shape love naturally takes (CCC 1965–1966).

St. John Chrysostom *Homilies on Hebrews*

The priest stands below, but the sacrifice is of things in the heavens: the eye sees the copy's furniture; faith sees the original in use.

Live It This Week

1. At Mass this week, listen for Jeremiah at the consecration: the new and eternal covenant: and answer interiorly with one line of the oracle: write it on my heart.
2. Practice the amnesty: choose one recorded grievance, yours against another or against yourself, and formally close the file, once, out loud, before God.
3. Read Hebrews 9 before next session, twice if you can. Bring every question you have ever carried, or been asked, about the Mass and the words once for all. Nothing is off the table.

Scripture Memory Verse

HEBREWS 8:1 (RSV2CE)

“Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven.”

Before Next Session

Read Hebrews 9, and bring your hardest questions about the Mass and “once for all.”

Catechism Connections

CCC 1090 (the earthly liturgy joins the heavenly) · CCC 1965–1966 (the New Law is grace) · CCC 121–123, 129 (the Old Covenant never revoked as God's word) · CCC 1365 (the blood of the covenant)