

Take-Home Sheet | Session 13

The Cup and the Cross (Mark 14:1-15:15)

A Ransom for Many: A Catholic Journey Through the Gospel of Mark

What We Found

At Bethany, an unnamed woman broke a year's wages over Jesus' head, and we saw the thirteen-chapter irony: "Christ" means ANOINTED ONE, and the only anointing he receives in this Gospel is hers, for burial. She accepted what Peter once rebuked: a Messiah who dies, and earned a promise kept at our own table: "wherever the gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her."

Then the upper room, and everything planted came due. The four verbs of the green grass, took, blessed, broke, gave (echoed at the second feeding, where "gave thanks," eucharistesas, would give the sacrament its very name), and then the words the feedings never had: "*Take; this is my body.*" Over the cup, the covenant phrase of Exodus 24:8 with one staggering upgrade: "This is my BLOOD OF THE COVENANT", Sinai's covenant blood was splashed on the people; this covenant blood is given INTO them, Jeremiah's new covenant written on hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-33), "poured out for MANY", the ransom-saying of 10:45 and the Servant of Isaiah 53 completing themselves at the table. The one loaf in the boat finally made sense. Paul's warning sealed the realism: whoever eats unworthily is "guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 11:27), you cannot profane a mere symbol, and the early witnesses concur: "Since he himself has declared, This is my body, who shall dare to doubt?"

In Gethsemane, the cup arrived, and the Church's whole Christology stood in one sentence: "Abba, Father... remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what you will", a true human will, really recoiling, freely surrendered, Adam's garden reversed in a garden at night. The three commanded to WATCH slept, and the clock we underlined last week began striking: supper in the EVENING, the garden at night, Peter's COCKCROW, the verdict "as soon as it was MORNING." At the trial, the embargo of thirteen chapters ended from Jesus' own mouth: "Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" "I AM; and you will see the Son of man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven", the full claim, at the moment it could not be misunderstood, at the price of his life. And Peter, whose preaching tradition tells us this Gospel records, kept his own worst hour in the telling wherever he preached, because before anyone fell, Jesus had already scheduled the reunion: "after I am raised up, I will go before you to Galilee" (14:28).

Voices of the Church

Voices of the Church: St. Ignatius of Antioch (Letter to the Smyrnaeans)

The heterodox "abstain from the Eucharist... because they do not confess that the Eucharist IS the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins." For the generation taught by the apostles, the realism of "this is my body" was the dividing line.

Voices of the Church: St. Cyril of Jerusalem (Mystagogical Catecheses)

Since he himself has declared of the bread, "This is my body," who shall ever dare to doubt it? He changed water into wine at Cana by his will alone; is he not worthy of belief when he changes wine into blood? Judge not by taste, but be fully assured by faith in the Lord's own word.

Voices of the Church: St. Maximus the Confessor (Disputation with Pyrrhus; the teaching canonized at the Sixth Ecumenical Council, Constantinople III, 680-681)

"Not what I will, but what you will" proves Christ possesses a true human will, really recoiling from death as human nature must, and freely, perfectly surrendered to the Father. As St. Gregory Nazianzen taught (Letter 101, to Cledonius), what is not assumed is not healed; in the garden our own willing was assumed, healed where it broke, and taught at last to say Father.

Live It This Week

- Keep the hour he asked for: one Holy Hour this week with Mark 14 open. If you fall asleep, you are in apostolic company; come back, as he did.
- At Mass, when the words of institution are spoken, make St. Cyril's act of faith silently: "You have said, This is my body. I dare not doubt it."
- Pray Gethsemane's prayer over your hardest current thing, word for word, once daily for seven days.
- BRING YOUR SEALED GUESS to the final session. Do not open it early.

Scripture Memory Verse

"Abba, Father, all things are possible to you; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what you will."
(Mark 14:36, RSV2CE)

Before Next Session

Read Mark 15:16-16:20, the end, and the beginning. Read it on your knees if you can. Bring your sealed guess, unopened.

Catechism References

CCC 475, 612, 1339-1340, 1362-1367, 1376