

## Session 2: Finished, Not Gone

Part 1 of 3: Leader Preparation Guide. Read this before the night. Nothing in Part 1 is read aloud. This is the hinge session of the study; prepare it more carefully than the others.

*And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain.* (Revelation 5:6, RSV2CE)

### Session Overview

#### Discovery Aim

The group discovers from Hebrews and Revelation that Christ's one sacrifice is finished and yet never absent, because the Priest who offered it lives forever and the memorial he instituted makes it present. They then find in Paul and Peter that the members of Christ's Body really do offer through him, and see that the Church names the Eucharist as the supreme expression of that participation. By the end they should be able to say what the Mass is in one sentence and why "once for all" and "at every Mass" are not in conflict.

#### Catholic Touchstone

CCC 1367: the sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice; the victim is the same, and the manner of offering alone is different. CCC 1085: the Paschal mystery cannot remain only in the past, because it participates in divine eternity and so is made present in every liturgy. CCC 1368: the Church, the Body of Christ, participates in the offering of her Head, and with him she offers herself.

### What You Need to Know

The sealed guess opens tonight. Last week each person wrote an answer to "What can you offer God to gain entrance into heaven?" Expect three kinds of answers: "nothing," "be good and go to church," and "Jesus." The reveal is that the Catholic answer begins with the same word the Protestant answer does: nothing. Nothing of our own. Only Jesus and his one sacrifice. If you say that clearly and early, everything else in the night can be heard. One guardrail for you, not for the room: "nothing of our own" does not deny Christian merit or cooperation with grace. The Church teaches that the justified can merit growth in grace and eternal life, but only because Christ's grace acts first in us, which is why the Catechism can call our merits God's gifts (CCC 2008-2011). The sealed answer is about what we bring to the door: nothing of our own.

Here is the answer in the form the group should leave with. Nothing of our own. Only Jesus, and his one sacrifice on the cross, finished once for all. He is a priest forever, so he presents that sacrifice to the Father without end. At every Mass the Church, his Body, is given to offer that same sacrifice with him, and its saving power is applied to our sins. And in him, we offer ourselves.

Notice what that answer does not say. It does not say the Mass adds anything to Calvary. It does not say the Mass repeats Calvary. It does not say the Mass adds anything to Christ's merit or earns salvation independently of Calvary. The Council of Trent said the same: in the Mass the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the cross is offered in an unbloody manner, and the fruits of that one offering are received through this one (Session XXII, chapters 1-2). The word is *applied*, not *added*. Keep that distinction in your mouth all night.

The whole disagreement turns on one word: *finished*. Both sides confess John 19:30 and Hebrews 10:14. The Protestant hears "finished" as "done and in the past." The Catholic hears it as "complete, and therefore never absent." The group will find the difference in the text. Hebrews does not portray the enthroned Christ as a retired priest: he is minister of the sanctuary and, as high priest, has something to

offer (8:1-3), holds his priesthood permanently, and always lives to make intercession (7:24-25). Revelation 5:6 shows a Lamb standing as though slain, not a Lamb who was once slain and has recovered. The wounds are still there in John 20:27. Finished is not the same as gone.

The second disagreement is narrower than most Catholics think, and the steelman must reflect it. A serious Reformed Christian agrees that Christ presents his finished work before the Father in heaven right now. What he denies is that the Church on earth has any part in that offering; he calls that claim presumption. The Catholic claim is exactly that participation. The Body offers with its Head. Do not let the group caricature the other side as “they think Jesus is done and sitting around.” They do not. They think we cannot join him. Scripture says the members of Christ’s Body really do offer through him (Romans 12:1; 1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 13:15). The Church then identifies the Eucharist as the supreme sacramental expression of that participation (CCC 1368). Keep those two steps distinct in the room: the first is exegesis, the second is Catholic doctrine drawing on it.

The Greek and Hebrew you need. *Tetelestai* (John 19:30) is a perfect tense: a completed action whose result continues into the present. *Tamid* (Exodus 29:42) means “continual” and names the daily lamb offered morning and evening in the temple. *Anamnēsis* (Luke 22:19) means memorial, and Jesus uses it in the Passover setting of the Last Supper, and in biblical liturgical memorial God’s saving acts are not merely recalled; they become in a certain way present and real to the worshiping community (CCC 1363). *Koinōnia* (1 Corinthians 10:16) is participation, a real sharing in.

## Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

**The continual offering (Exodus 29:38-42; Numbers 28:3-8).** Two lambs a day, morning and evening, every day, forever: the *tamid*. Israel’s worship was not occasional. A lamb was always burning before the LORD. The group will read Exodus 29 in B4 and notice the words “day by day continually” and “throughout your generations.”

**The pure offering among the nations (Malachi 1:6-14).** Malachi condemns the priests for offering blind and lame animals, and God says he will not accept an offering from their hand (v. 10). Then he promises something that did not yet exist: from the rising of the sun to its setting, in every place, among the Gentiles, a pure offering (v. 11). When Malachi wrote, sacrifice was legal in one place, Jerusalem, for one people. From the second century on, Christians read verse 11 as the Eucharist: everywhere, all day, among the nations, pure. Notice for the empty-versus-commanded thread that the same chapter rejects a polluted offering and promises a pure one. God’s answer to empty ritual is not no ritual. It is a pure offering.

**Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4).** A priest-king of Salem brings out bread and wine and blesses Abram. Psalm 110 promises a priest “for ever after the order of Melchizedek,” and Hebrews applies it to Christ at length. The Fathers noticed that Melchizedek’s offering was bread and wine (St. Cyprian, Letter 63). The Church has not defined that typology, but it is very old. Keep it in the Dig Deeper.

**The Passover memorial (Exodus 12:14; 13:8; Deuteronomy 5:3; 16:3).** “This day shall be for you a memorial day.” Every Israelite is to say “what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt,” and Deuteronomy insists the covenant was made “with us, who are all of us here alive this day,” not only with the fathers. A biblical memorial collapses the distance between the event and the people keeping it. Jesus chose that night, and that word, for “Do this in remembrance of me.”

## Voices of the Church

**St. Justin Martyr** *Dialogue with Trypho*, 41, c. AD 155-160

Arguing with a Jewish scholar, St. Justin says the prophecy of Malachi 1:10-12 was spoken about the sacrifices Christians offer in every place: the bread and the cup of the Eucharist, offered in remembrance of the suffering Christ endured. The old offerings of flour, he says, were a figure of this bread.

**Tier 2.** A faithful summary of the chapter; the pairing of Malachi 1:11 with the Eucharist is Justin's own. Wording of English translations varies, so it is given in substance.

**St. Cyprian of Carthage** *Letter 63 (to Caecilius)*, 17, c. AD 253 (Epistle 62 in the ANF numbering)

Writing to correct communities that were using water alone in the cup, St. Cyprian insists the priest does what Christ did and offers what Christ offered. The passion of the Lord, he says, is the sacrifice we offer. The Mass is not the Church's invention laid over the Lord's Supper; it is the Lord's Supper obeyed.

**Tier 2.** Summary. The sentence that the Lord's passion is the sacrifice we offer is Cyprian's; the framing around it is ours.

**St. John Chrysostom** *Homilies on Hebrews*, 17, on Hebrews 9:24-26, late fourth century

Preaching on the very verses the steelman uses, St. John asks the objection out loud: do we not offer every day? We do, he answers, but as a remembrance of his death, and the offering is one, not many. We do not offer another sacrifice as the old high priest did, but always the same one. Or rather, he says, we perform the remembrance of the one sacrifice.

**Tier 2.** Summary of the passage, following its argument closely. St. John's answer to Hebrews 10 is the Church's answer, given sixteen centuries before Trent.

## Catechism Connection

- **CCC 1085:** the Paschal mystery cannot remain only in the past; because Christ's death destroyed death, all that he is and did participates in divine eternity and so transcends all times, and is made present in them.
- **CCC 1362-1367:** the Eucharist as memorial (*anamnēsis*) in the biblical sense, and as sacrifice because it re-presents the sacrifice of the cross. CCC 1367 quotes Trent: one single sacrifice, the same victim, the manner of offering alone differing.
- **CCC 1368-1369:** the Church offers with Christ and offers herself; the whole Church, in heaven and on earth, is united in this offering.
- **CCC 1544-1545:** Christ's priesthood is unique and eternal; the ministerial priesthood makes his one priesthood present without adding to it.
- **CCC 662:** Christ's entry into the heavenly sanctuary as High Priest is permanent; the liturgy of the Church shares in it.
- **CCC 2100:** the only perfect sacrifice is the one Christ offered on the cross; our sacrifices are acceptable when united to it.
- **Council of Trent, Session XXII, chapters 1-2 (1562):** the Mass is a true sacrifice, instituted at the Supper, in which the same Christ is offered in an unbloody manner and the fruits of the bloody offering are received. Chapter 2 says explicitly that this sacrifice in no way detracts from the sacrifice of the cross.

## Thread Watch (leader only)

### Threads tonight

- **The sealed guess resolves.** Open it at the top of Build, before any Scripture. Sort the answers into three piles on a board: Nothing / Something I do / Jesus. Do not comment on any pile until the end of the night.
- **The matter thread continues:** bread, cup, altar, a Lamb with wounds. Still do not name it.
- **The continual thread is planted:** the *tamid* (B4) leads to the Lamb standing as though slain and lands next session at the altar in Revelation and the altar in your parish.
- **Empty versus commanded develops** through Malachi 1: God rejects the polluted offering (v. 10) and promises the pure one (v. 11). Point at both verses in B4 but do not connect them yet to Isaiah 1 or Matthew 6; that is Sessions 3 and 4.
- **The centurion** stays hidden until Session 3.

## Objection Bench (leader only)

### Likely objections and where the text answers them

**“Hebrews 10:18 says there is no longer any offering for sin.”** Read the sentence before it. Verse 11 says the Levitical priests stand daily offering sacrifices “which can never take away sins.” Verse 18 ends that kind of offering. It does not retire the Priest: Hebrews 8:1-3 still calls him minister of the sanctuary with something to offer, and 7:24-25 says he holds his priesthood permanently. The Mass is not another offering for sin. It is the one offering, made present in the memorial he instituted.

**“Christ sat down (Hebrews 10:12). Catholic priests stand.”** Sitting is the posture of a king enthroned, not of a priest retired. Hebrews 8:2 calls the seated Christ “a minister in the sanctuary” in the present tense (*leitourgos*, the word behind “liturgy”), and Revelation 5:6 shows him standing. The priest at Mass stands in the person of the Priest who is still ministering.

**“Remembrance just means remembering.”** In Torah a memorial is sacrificial language: Leviticus 24:7 (the memorial portion of the bread), Numbers 10:10 (“over your sacrifices... a reminder before your God”), Exodus 12:14. Passover is not a history lesson; every generation must regard itself as having come out of Egypt (Mishnah *Pesahim* 10:5, a rabbinic tradition, not Scripture). Jesus chose that word on that night.

**“The Mass is a work we do to earn heaven.”** The Mass is Christ’s work into which we are drawn. Nothing we do earns first grace (CCC 2006-2011). This is why the night begins with the word “nothing.”

**“If it is the same sacrifice, why call it propitiatory and offer it for sins? That is adding.”** Trent’s own words: the fruits of the bloody offering are received most abundantly through the unbloody one. Applied, not added. A doctor applying a cure already discovered is not discovering it again.

**“Revelation 5:6 is symbolic.”** Granted; it is a vision. But the symbol is chosen: a slain Lamb standing. Ask what the symbol would have to mean for a reader who held that the slaying was simply over.

## If a Friend Is at the Table

This is the session your friend came for, and they may know Hebrews better than the room. Let them build the steelman. They will do it well. Do not counter-punch. The press questions are real questions. Concede everything that is true: once for all, no repetition, finished. Say out loud that Trent teaches those things. The only disagreement is whether the Church joins the offering, and you should name it as the only disagreement.

If your friend wrote “nothing” on the sealed sheet, honor it. Say that the Catholic answer begins with the same word. If they wrote “Jesus,” say that is the Catholic answer too. The sealed guess is not a trap; it is a mirror.

Your friend may say, “You are Catholic, you cannot really believe once for all.” Answer from CCC 1367 and Trent chapter 2, and hand them the Take-Home so they can see it printed.

## Session Goals

1. The sealed guess is opened and sorted, and the group hears the Catholic answer begin with “nothing of our own.”
2. The group finds in Hebrews that the sacrifice is once for all, and affirms that the Church teaches exactly that.
3. The group builds and presses the strongest Protestant reading of Hebrews 10 and finds Hebrews 8:3, 7:25, and Revelation 5:6 for themselves.
4. The group discovers the *tamid* in Exodus 29 and the pure offering among the nations in Malachi 1, and sees the early Church read Malachi as the Eucharist.
5. The group learns what a Passover memorial is and why Jesus chose that word.
6. The group finds that Paul and Peter command the Church to offer, through Christ, and connects this to the words of the Mass.
7. Each person can say the one-sentence answer: one sacrifice, one eternal Priest, never repeated, sacramentally made present in the memorial he instituted.

## Time Note

Ninety minutes, and it is full. Do not add anything. If you must run 75 minutes, cut in this order: (1) skip B6 (1 Corinthians 10) and mention only Hebrews 13:10 in passing; (2) skip the Dig Deeper; (3) ask only Send question S2. Never cut the sealed guess opening or the steelman press.

| Segment                                            | Minutes | Running total |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------|---------------|
| Opening prayer and welcome                         | 4       | 0:04          |
| Win (W1, W2)                                       | 8       | 0:12          |
| Sealed guess opens and is sorted                   | 8       | 0:20          |
| Build B1-B2 (finished; once for all)               | 10      | 0:30          |
| Steelman and press (B2a-c)                         | 16      | 0:46          |
| Build B3 (where is Jesus now)                      | 6       | 0:52          |
| Build B4-B5 (the continual offering; the memorial) | 14      | 1:06          |
| Build B6-B7 (participation; offered with)          | 12      | 1:18          |
| The answer; Send (S1, S2)                          | 7       | 1:25          |
| Live It, memory verse, closing                     | 5       | 1:30          |

## Discussion Guide

Part 2 of 3. Marks: READ ALOUD, SAY, ASK, LEADER. Depth tags: [Floor], [Ground], [Depth].

### Opening Prayer

**SAY** Let us pray. Father, your Son said “It is finished,” and we believe him. Tonight we want to understand what he finished, and where he is now, and what he is doing. Give us honest minds and open hands. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Win

**W1** Think of the moment at Mass when the priest lifts the host. What have you been told is happening? What do you actually think is happening?

**Leader:** *Let the honest gap show. Many will admit they were told “the sacrifice” and never understood what that meant.*

**W2** Have you ever heard someone say Catholics “re-sacrifice Jesus” at every Mass? What did you feel, and did you have anything to say back?

### The Sealed Guess Opens

**LEADER** *Have everyone unseal their Take-Home 1 guess. Go around the table. Each person reads theirs aloud. Sort every answer onto the board under three headings: Nothing / Something I do / Jesus. Do not comment. When all are sorted, say the following.*

**SAY** Here is what a thoughtful Protestant would write: nothing. Only Jesus and his finished work on the cross. Here is the Catholic answer: nothing of our own. Only Jesus, and his one sacrifice, finished once for all. We are going to spend tonight on why those two answers start with the same word and where they part. Hold your pile in your head. We will come back to it.

### Build

**B1** Read John 19:28-30. What does Jesus say, and what does “finished” mean in this sentence? [Floor]

**Leader:** *Draw out that he says “it is finished,” not “I am finished.” Something was completed.*

#### ANSWER (share after the discussion)

“It is finished.” The Greek is *tetelestai*: brought to completion, accomplished, the goal reached. Jesus is announcing that the work he came to do is done. The Catholic Church says amen to that with no reservation. Whatever the Mass is, it is not Jesus finishing something he left unfinished.

One grammar note worth giving the group, with its limits. *Tetelestai* means accomplished, completed. Its perfect tense presents the work as completed with an abiding result. That is all the Greek says, and it is enough: the sacrifice is finished once for all. Whether the finished sacrifice is also present now is a question the Greek tense cannot answer. Hebrews can, and that is where we go next.

**B2** Read Hebrews 9:24-28 and 10:10-14. Count how many times the text says “once” or “once for all.” What is Hebrews denying? [Floor]

**Leader:** Have them count out loud. Then ask: does the Catholic Church agree with this?

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

At least five times across the two passages: once for all at the end of the age (9:26), once to bear sins (9:28), once for all through the offering of his body (10:10), a single sacrifice for sins (10:12), a single offering (10:14). Hebrews is denying repetition. The old priests offered daily and could never take away sins; Christ offered once and did.

The Catholic Church teaches exactly this. CCC 1367 calls the cross and the Eucharist “one single sacrifice.” The Council of Trent said the Mass in no way detracts from the cross. If anyone tells you the Mass sacrifices Jesus again, they are describing something the Church condemns.

**Steelman: “It is finished”**

**LEADER** Full strength. This is the best case against the Mass that Protestant theology has, and it is a serious one. If a friend is present, let them build it. Do not press until the room agrees it has been stated fairly.

**SAY** Here is the objection at its strongest, in the words of the people who made it.

**READ ALOUD** Hebrews 10:11-14 and 10:18. Then read this from the Anglican Thirty-Nine Articles (Article 31, 1571): “the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits.”

**SAY** The argument runs like this. Hebrews draws one contrast: the old priests stood, every day, offering the same sacrifices over and over, and it never worked. Christ offered once, and sat down. Sitting means finished. Verse 18 closes the door: where sins are forgiven, there is no longer any offering for sin. Now look at a Catholic parish. A priest stands at an altar, every day, offering what he calls a sacrifice for sins, over and over. That is the exact picture Hebrews contrasts with Christ. And a Passover memorial is a meal that remembers; nobody in Egypt thought the Passover lamb was slain again each year. So the Mass either does nothing, in which case why call it a sacrifice, or it adds something to a finished work, in which case it insults the cross. Either way, “It is finished” should end the discussion.

**ASK** Is that fair? Is there anything in it that is simply true?

**LEADER** Let them say yes. Once for all is true. No repetition is true. Finished is true. Then press.

**B2a** Press 1. Read Hebrews 8:1-3. Where is the High Priest, what posture is he in, and what does verse 3 say is necessary for him? [Ground]

**Leader:** Verse 3 is the whole press. Read it slowly, twice.

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

He is seated at the right hand of the throne in heaven (v. 1), and he is a minister, *leitourgos*, in the sanctuary (v. 2), present tense. And verse 3: “it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer.” Hebrews does not portray the enthroned Christ as a retired priest. He remains the heavenly High Priest and minister of the sanctuary, and the logic of verse 3 is that a high priest has something to offer; what Christ offered, once, was himself (7:27; 9:14). The sitting is the posture of a king enthroned, not a priest who has clocked out. Do not make this verse carry more than that; the next two presses finish the argument.

**B2b** Press 2. Read Hebrews 7:23-25. What is the difference between the old priests and Christ, and what is he doing right now? [Ground]

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

The old priests were many because death kept ending their service. Christ holds his priesthood permanently, “because he continues for ever,” and “always lives to make intercession.” A priest is someone who offers. A priest who has stopped offering is a former priest. Hebrews says he is a priest forever. So the offering is not repeated; it is never over.

**B2c** Press 3. Read Revelation 5:6 and John 20:27. In heaven, right now, what does the Lamb look like? [Ground]

**Leader:** *Let them notice the tense. Standing. As though slain. Now.*

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

A Lamb standing, as though it had been slain. Not a Lamb who was slain once and has since healed. In John 20 the risen Jesus still has the wounds and invites Thomas to touch them. The slaying is finished, and it is permanently present. That is what “finished” means for a sacrifice offered by an eternal Priest: complete, and never absent.

Now the group can say where the steelman went wrong. It read “finished” as “gone.” Hebrews and Revelation read it as “complete and standing.” The Mass does not repeat the sacrifice. It is where the sacrifice that never went anywhere is made present to people who were not standing at the cross.

**B3** Live discovery. In one minute, find as many verses as you can that answer: where is Jesus right now, and what is he doing? Start in Hebrews 7-9 and Romans 8. [Ground]

**Leader:** *Expect Hebrews 7:25, 8:1-2, 9:24 (“now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf”), Romans 8:34, Revelation 5:6.*

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

He is in the heavenly sanctuary, appearing before the Father on our behalf, interceding, standing as a Lamb slain. He is not idle, and he is not finished being a priest. Everything the Mass claims to be starts from this: the Priest is still at work, and his work is the one sacrifice.

**SAY** Now go back a long way, to the tent in the desert, and watch what Israel’s worship was always supposed to look like.

**B4** Read Exodus 29:38-42. How often was this lamb offered, and for how long? Then read Malachi 1:10-11. What is different about the offering Malachi describes? [Ground]

**Leader:** *Get the words “day by day continually” and “throughout your generations” out loud. Then for Malachi, ask: where, when, and among whom?*

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

Two lambs a day, morning and evening, “day by day continually,” “throughout your generations,” a “continual burnt offering.” The Hebrew word is *tamid*. Israel never had an hour without a lamb before the LORD. Then Malachi: God rejects the priests’ polluted offerings (v. 10) and promises something that did not exist when he wrote. A pure offering, in every place, from sunrise to sunset, among the nations. Sacrifice was only legal in Jerusalem, only for Israel. Malachi describes a continual, worldwide, Gentile, pure offering.

By AD 155 St. Justin Martyr was telling a Jewish scholar that Malachi 1:11 was about the bread and cup Christians offered everywhere. The Didache, a Christian manual from around AD 100, quotes the same verse about the Sunday Eucharist. The *tamid* was not abolished. It was fulfilled: one Lamb, offered once, made present continually, from the rising of the sun to its setting.

**B5** Read Luke 22:19-20, then Exodus 12:14, Exodus 13:8, and Deuteronomy 5:2-3. What kind of “remembering” is Passover? [Ground]

**Leader:** *The Deuteronomy verse is the surprise. The people Moses is addressing were mostly not alive at Sinai.*

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

Jesus says “Do this in remembrance of me” on Passover night, using Passover language. And a Passover memorial is not nostalgia. Exodus 12 calls the day itself a memorial to be kept for ever. Exodus 13 has every father say “what the LORD did for me,” not for my ancestors. Deuteronomy 5 has Moses tell a generation born in the desert that the covenant was made “with us, who are all of us here alive this day.” A biblical memorial brings the people into the event.

So when Jesus, a Jew, on Passover, says “do this in remembrance,” he is instituting a memorial in that sense. Not “think about me.” Make the memorial, and be present to what I am doing. CCC 1363-1364 says exactly this.

**B6** Read 1 Corinthians 10:16-21. What does Paul compare the Eucharist to, and what does he call the Eucharistic table? [Depth]

**Leader:** *Note the three tables: Israel’s altar (v. 18), the table of demons (v. 21), the table of the Lord (v. 21).*

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

Paul calls the cup and the bread a participation, *koinōnia*, in the blood and body of Christ. Then he sets the Eucharist beside two other things: Israel eating the sacrifices from the altar, and pagans eating at the table of demons. The Eucharist is in the category of sacrificial meals. And “the table of the Lord” is Malachi’s phrase for the altar (Malachi 1:7, 12). Hebrews 13:10 says it flatly: “We have an altar.” Sacrifice language for the Eucharist is Paul’s, not Trent’s.

**SAY** One more step, and it is the one that answers our sealed question. We agree the sacrifice is Christ’s alone. So what are we doing there?

**B7** Read Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 2:5, and Hebrews 13:15-16. In each verse, who is told to offer, what do they offer, and how is it made acceptable? [Depth]

**Leader:** *Three verses, three commands to offer, three times “through him.” Write the pattern on the board.*

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

Paul: present your bodies as a living sacrifice. Peter: be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Hebrews: through him let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise. Scripture says the members of Christ’s Body really do offer, and it names the only way the offering is accepted: through him. That is the first step, and it is exegesis. The second step is the Church’s: she identifies the Eucharist as the supreme sacramental expression of that participation (CCC 1368).

Now listen to the Mass. “Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God.” And the Eucharistic Prayer: we offer you this holy and living sacrifice. The Church does not add her sacrifice to Christ’s. She is taken into his. St. Augustine said the Church learns to offer herself through him (*City of God* 10.6, quoted at CCC 1368). This is the whole difference between the two piles on the board. The Protestant says: I receive, and offer nothing. Scripture says: offer, through him. The Catholic says: only Jesus, and in him, myself.

**Dig Deeper: bread and wine, and a continual offering taken away**

**Melchizedek.** Genesis 14:18 has the priest-king of Salem bring out bread and wine. Psalm 110:4 and Hebrews 5-7 make him the pattern of Christ's priesthood. Many Fathers, St. Cyprian among them, read Melchizedek's bread and wine as a figure of the Eucharist. The Church honors this reading (CCC 1333) without defining it.

**Daniel.** Daniel 8:11-13, 11:31, and 12:11 speak of the "continual burnt offering" (the *tamid*) being taken away in a time of persecution. Historically this refers to Antiochus IV stopping temple sacrifice in 167 BC (1 Maccabees 1:45-54). Some Catholic writers read it also as a figure of the Mass being suppressed in the last days. The Church has not taught that; treat it as a possibility, not a doctrine. What the text certainly shows is that Israel understood the loss of the continual offering as the worst thing that could happen. The Church understands the Mass the same way.

**The Answer**

**SAY** Back to the board. Here is the answer we can now say together, and every clause of it came out of the text tonight. Nothing of our own. Only Jesus, and his one sacrifice on the cross, finished once for all. He is a priest forever, so he presents that sacrifice to the Father without end. At every Mass the Church, his Body, is given to offer that same sacrifice with him, and its saving power is applied to our sins. And in him, we offer ourselves.

**B8** If a friend says "the Mass re-sacrifices Jesus," what one sentence from tonight would you say back?  
[Floor]

**Leader:** *Let several people try. Then give them the short form.*

**ANSWER (share after the discussion)**

One sacrifice, one eternal Priest, never repeated, sacramentally made present in the memorial he instituted. Or shorter still: finished, not gone.

**Send**

**S1** Which pile was your sealed guess in? What would you write now?

**S2** Romans 12:1 tells you to offer your body. What is one thing in your life this week that you could put on the altar at Mass, on purpose, in him?

**Live It This Week**

- Go to one weekday Mass if you can. At the elevation, say silently: "It is finished," and then: "He always lives."
- At the words "Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours," name the thing from S2 and offer it.
- Write one sentence you would say to a friend who thinks the Mass re-sacrifices Jesus. Bring it next week.
- Before next session read Luke 24:13-35, Acts 2:42-47, Isaiah 6:1-8, and Revelation 4-5.

**Memory Verse**

*Consequently he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.* (Hebrews 7:25, RSV2CE)

**Closing Prayer**

**SAY** Lord Jesus, Lamb standing as though slain, you finished the work and you have never left it. Priest forever, take our small offerings into your one offering. Let us never stand at your altar carelessly again. Amen.

## Answers at a Glance

| Q   | The one-line answer                                                                                             |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| B1  | Tetelestai: complete, and standing. Not “over.”                                                                 |
| B2  | Once for all, five times. The Church teaches exactly this (CCC 1367).                                           |
| B2a | The seated Priest is a minister now and still has something to offer (Heb 8:3).                                 |
| B2b | He holds his priesthood permanently and always lives to intercede.                                              |
| B2c | A Lamb standing as though slain; wounds still there. Finished, not gone.                                        |
| B3  | In the sanctuary, appearing for us, interceding, standing as slain.                                             |
| B4  | The tamid: day by day continually. Malachi: a pure offering everywhere, among the nations.                      |
| B5  | A Passover memorial makes the people present to the event.                                                      |
| B6  | Participation; the table of the Lord is altar language; “we have an altar.”                                     |
| B7  | Offer your bodies, spiritual sacrifices, praise: through him. The Church offers with Christ and herself in him. |
| B8  | One sacrifice, one eternal Priest, never repeated, sacramentally made present in the memorial he instituted.    |

## Leader Reference Card

Part 3 of 3. Every passage used tonight, in order, plus what you need in the room.

**Materials:** Bibles, the sealed Take-Home 1 sheets from last week, a board with three headings (Nothing / Something I do / Jesus), Take-Home 2 for each person.

| Where      | Passage                                                                                             | Use                                       |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Epigraph   | Revelation 5:6                                                                                      | A Lamb standing as though slain           |
| B1         | John 19:28-30                                                                                       | It is finished                            |
| B2         | Hebrews 9:24-28; 10:10-14                                                                           | Once for all                              |
| Steelman   | Hebrews 10:11-14, 18; Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. 31                                                 | The strongest case                        |
| B2a        | Hebrews 8:1-3                                                                                       | Something to offer                        |
| B2b        | Hebrews 7:23-25                                                                                     | Priest for ever                           |
| B2c        | Revelation 5:6; John 20:27                                                                          | Standing as slain; the wounds             |
| B3         | Hebrews 7:25; 8:1-2; 9:24; Romans 8:34                                                              | Where is Jesus now                        |
| B4         | Exodus 29:38-42; Malachi 1:10-11                                                                    | The continual offering; the pure offering |
| B5         | Luke 22:19-20; Exodus 12:14; 13:8; Deuteronomy 5:2-3                                                | Memorial                                  |
| B6         | 1 Corinthians 10:16-21; Malachi 1:7, 12; Hebrews 13:10                                              | Participation; altar                      |
| B7         | Romans 12:1; 1 Peter 2:5; Hebrews 13:15-16                                                          | Offer, through him                        |
| Dig Deeper | Genesis 14:18-20; Psalm 110:4; Daniel 8:11-13; 12:11; 1 Maccabees 1:45-54                           | Melchizedek; the tamid taken away         |
| Prep only  | Numbers 28:3-8; Malachi 1:6-14; Deuteronomy 16:3; Leviticus 24:7; Numbers 10:10; Hebrews 7:27; 9:14 | Roots and Objection Bench                 |
| Memory     | Hebrews 7:25                                                                                        |                                           |
| Next week  | Luke 24:13-35; Acts 2:42-47; Isaiah 6:1-8; Revelation 4-5                                           | Pre-reading                               |

**Catechism:** 1085; 1362-1367; 1368-1369; 1544-1545; 662; 2100; 2006-2011. Trent, Session XXII, chapters 1-2.

**Voices:** St. Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho 41 (Tier 2); St. Cyprian, Letter 63.17 (Tier 2); St. John Chrysostom, Homilies on Hebrews 17 (Tier 2). Non-saint sources read aloud: Thirty-Nine Articles, Art. 31 (Tier 1); Didache 14 (summary).