

Take-Home 10: The Fourth Cup

What We Found

With our nine-week-old guesses open on the table, we followed the canonical chain to its summit. Jesus vowed off the fruit of the vine after the covenant cup (Mark 14:25). At Golgotha he refused the drugged wine at the start (Mark 15:23). At the very end, knowing that all was now finished, he said, I thirst; received the vinegar (sour wine) lifted on hyssop, the instrument that applied the lamb's blood in Egypt (Exodus 12:22); said, It is finished; and gave up his spirit (John 19:28-30). His bones were left unbroken, that the scripture might be fulfilled (John 19:36); John leaves the source unnamed, but the wording is the Passover lamb's law (Exodus 12:46; Numbers 9:12).

We held two things in balanced hands. Certain, and the Church's dogma: the Supper and the Cross are one single sacrifice; the victim is one and the same, only the manner of offering differs (CCC 1367). Proposed, and beloved: that the final cup of the open Passover was that sour wine, so that Jesus finished the seder itself from the cross, a reading the texts invite but do not compel, and which the Church has not defined. The doctrine never depended on the proposal.

Voices of the Church

St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430)

In summary of the *City of God*: Christ is both the priest who offers and the offering itself, and the Church's sacrifice is the sacrament of this one offering, in which she learns to offer herself in him.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

In the *Summa Theologiae* (III, q. 83, a. 1), in summary: the celebration of this sacrament is an image and a making present of the sacrifice of the Cross, in which the whole mystery of our salvation is comprised. One victim, one priest; the altar places us at the one offering.

St. John Henry Newman (1801-1890)

An honest attribution: in his novel *Loss and Gain*, Newman gave a character his own famous cry: nothing is so consoling, so piercing, so thrilling, so overcoming, as the Mass; it is a great action, the greatest action that can be on earth.

Live It This Week

- Keep your opened guess sheet somewhere you will see it, as a record that patient attention to Scripture pays what it promises.
- At Mass this Sunday, at the elevation of the chalice, pray the memory verse silently.
- Read John 19 start to finish once this week, alone, aloud, and slowly.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, "It is finished"; and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit. John 19:30

Before Next Session

Read Luke 24:1-12, Easter morning, so that next week's road begins where the tomb was left empty.

Catechism references for this session: CCC 1339-1340, 1364, 1366-1367.