

Take-Home 6 | Until the End of the Age

Do This Until He Comes

The Eucharist and Christ's one sacrifice

Keep this sheet for prayer, review, and practice this week.

What We Found

Jesus gave his Body and Blood inside a Passover meal and commanded, "Do this in remembrance of me." Paul handed that gift on to Corinthians who were not in the upper room, in the words "received" and "delivered," and extended it "until he comes." He called the cup a participation in Christ's Blood and warned that unworthy reception profanes the Lord's Body. Exodus 12 taught us what a memorial is: a rite that makes God's saving act present to a generation that was not there. Hebrews taught us what the Mass is not: a second sacrifice or a repeated death. The Mass makes the one sacrifice present, with the same Victim and Priest, in an unbloody manner. (Luke 22:14-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; 10:16-17; Exodus 12:1-14; Hebrews 10:10-14; CCC 1341; 1367; 1374-1376.)

Voices of the Church

St. Justin Martyr

Summary: Justin, writing around 155, says Christians do not receive the Eucharist as common bread or common drink. They receive it as the flesh and blood of the Jesus who was made flesh, changed by the word of prayer that comes from him. He then describes the Sunday assembly: readings from the apostles and prophets, a homily, prayers, the bringing of bread and wine, thanksgiving, and communion, with deacons carrying it to the absent.

First Apology, 66-67

St. Ignatius of Antioch

Summary: Ignatius, around 107, says certain heretics abstain from the Eucharist because they do not confess that it is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins. He adds that the Eucharist is to be celebrated by the bishop or by one the bishop entrusts. Real Presence and ordered ministry appear together in his letter.

Letter to the Smyrnaeans, 7-8

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Summary: The command of Jesus to repeat his actions and words "until he comes" asks more than remembering him. It is directed at the liturgical celebration, by the Apostles and their successors, of the memorial of Christ, of his life, death, resurrection, and intercession with the Father.

CCC 1341

Ready Response

If someone says: "Hebrews says once for all. The Mass says the cross was not enough."

You can say: The Church agrees with Hebrews completely; a priest who thought the Mass added to the cross would be wrong. The Mass does not repeat the sacrifice. It makes the one finished sacrifice present so its fruits reach us now. Hebrews also says Christ's priesthood continues forever. In the Mass, Christ exercises it sacramentally, for us.

Live It This Week

Prepare. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-29 before Mass this week and make a sincere examination of conscience.

Pray. Spend a few quiet minutes after Communion thanking Jesus for his self-gift. If you are unsure whether you can receive, ask a priest before Sunday.

Give. Choose one concrete act of self-giving service this week as a response to what Christ gives you.

Scripture Memory

"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

1 Corinthians 11:26 (RSV2CE)

A Personal Response

When I receive Communion, do I receive it as a reminder, or as the Lord?

Before Next Session

Read: Mark 7:6-13; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 2 Timothy 1:13-14. Notice the word "tradition" and who is using it.

Catechism: CCC 80-83, 85-86.

In the Catechism this week: 1334; 1340-1341; 1363-1367; 1374-1376; 1411; 1544-1547.