

leaders Piankhy and Shabako seized power in Egypt and established the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, which endured from around 715 to 663 B.C. Taharqa, a king of the dynasty, was an ally of King Hezekiah of Judah against the advance of Sennacherib of Assyria in 701 (2 Kgs 19:9; Isa 37:9). The alliance proved a failure, for the Ethiopian Dynasty in Egypt fell in 664 to the Assyrian army. The Ethiopian rulers thereafter maintained themselves at Meroe, and the dynasty survived into the fourth century A.D. By New Testament times, the Ethiopians were ruled by various queens bearing the title Candace. **Philip** the deacon baptized the **Ethiopian Eunuch**, a minister of one of the Candaces (Acts 8:27). Cush also figured in several prophecies (Isa 18:1-7, 20:3-4, 30:4-5, 38:5, 43:3; Zeph 2:12; Amos 9:7).

**ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH** An Ethiopian mentioned in Acts 8:26-40 who converted to the Christian faith through the efforts of **Philip**. He is described in some detail by Luke, with particular attention paid to his Ethiopian descent and the fact that he was a eunuch. According to Luke, he was a court official of **Candace**, queen of the Ethiopians, and was in charge of her entire treasury. He had journeyed to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home when he encountered Philip. Their ensuing conversation led to the baptism of the eunuch, an event of double significance for the readers of Acts. According to Deut 23:2, eunuchs were excluded from being followers of the Lord; in Isa 56:3 (cf. Isa 11:11) foreigners were excluded. Luke was thus making a clear statement on the universality of the Gospel. (See also **Ethiopia**.)

**EUBULUS** A Christian and disciple of Paul (2 Tim 4:21).

**EUCCHARIST** (Greek *eucharistia*, "thanksgiving") "The source and summit of the Christian Life" (LG §11); the sacrament in which Christ is really and truly present under the appearances of bread and wine. Other names for the Eucharist are Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper, the table of the Lord, the breaking of the bread, the unbloody sacrifice, our daily bread, the most blessed sacrament, the sacrifice of praise, and agape. The Sacrament of the Eucharist was described as follows by the Second Vatican Council:

*At the Last Supper, on the night when he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of his Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the Sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until he should come again, and so to entrust to his beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us (Sacrosanctum Concilium, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, §47) (CCC 1322-1419).*

- I. *The Last Supper*
  - A. *Where the Meal Took Place*
  - B. *Accounts of the Institution*
- II. *The Real Presence*
  - A. *The Bread of Life*
  - B. *Transubstantiation*
- III. *Eucharist as Sacrifice*



## EUCHARIST

- A. *A Renewal of the One Perfect Sacrifice*
- B. *The Eucharist Perfects Old Testament Sacrifices*
- C. *The Eucharist as Memorial*
- D. *The Nature of the Eucharistic Sacrifice*

### IV. *Eucharist as Sacrament*

#### V. *The Effects of the Eucharist*

- A. *Unites the Recipient to Christ*
- B. *Gives Life*
- C. *Gives a Share in the Life of Christ and the Trinity*
- D. *Unites the Church*

### VI. *The Heavenly Banquet*

## I. THE LAST SUPPER

### A. *Where the Meal Took Place*

The setting of the Last Supper was a large upstairs room, traditionally called the Cenacle (Latin *cenaculum*, "supper room"), in a house in Jerusalem (Mark 14:15; Luke 22:12), probably the same upper room where the apostles stayed and prayed after the Ascension and before Pentecost (Acts 1:13). There are accounts of the Last Supper in all four Gospels (Matt 26:20–29; Mark 14:17–25; Luke 22:14–38; John 13), but they provide few details about the physical circumstances of the meal. Jesus sent Peter and John to Jerusalem to make arrangements for the meal (Matt 26:17–19; Mark 14:12–16; Luke 22:7–13). The participants likely ate reclining at the table (John 13:25). (For the question of whether the Last Supper was a Paschal meal, see *Passion of Christ*; see also *Passover*.)

### B. *Accounts of the Institution*

The Eucharist was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper. In doing so, the Savior fulfilled

his own promise made earlier in his public ministry, to give himself as the "bread of life" (John 6:26–59).

The accounts of the institution are found in Matt 26:26–28, Mark 14:22–24, Luke 22:19–20, and 1 Cor 11:23–25. In John, the institution is omitted, although Jesus leaves no doubt that he is referring to the Eucharist in the "Bread of Life" discourse (John 6:35–65).

The accounts agree in their essentials: Jesus gave thanks, consecrated the bread and wine, and gave his body and blood as spiritual nourishment to his apostles and for the salvation of all. In this ritual, Christ anticipated the bloody sacrifice to take place on the Cross at Golgotha on the next day. The Eucharist instituted by Christ is both the commemoration of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and the sacrament of the Real Presence (CCC 1333–35).

## II. THE REAL PRESENCE

### A. *The Bread of Life*

In telling his apostles, "This is my body" (Luke 22:19), Jesus reveals that he is the High Priest offering the Eucharist, but he is also commanding his followers, "Take and eat" (Matt 26:26), an invitation to participate in his offering and partake of its benefits. The reception of the Eucharist—the reception of himself—is a source of salvation (cf. 1 Cor 11:27–29). The Bread of Life discourse in John is especially significant in attesting to the real presence:

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will*



*raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live for ever" (John 6:53-58).*

### B. Transubstantiation

The Catholic doctrine on the Eucharist was officially stated by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, and the Real Presence was examined in great detail by Saint Thomas Aquinas (*Summa theologiae* III, 75-77). The doctrine was then reaffirmed fully by the Council of Trent to counter the Protestant Reformers. The Council declared:

*Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation. (DS 1642; cf. Sacrosanctum Concilium, §7)*

## III. EUCCHARIST AS SACRIFICE

### A. A Renewal of the One Perfect Sacrifice

By the actions of the priest's consecration of the bread and wine at Mass, Christ becomes

really and truly present under the two elements; thus the Eucharist renews the same sacrifice that Christ made upon the Cross. Moreover, Christ joins to this offering the prayers and good works of the entire Church, especially the faithful who take part in the Mass and join with the priest in offering the sacrifice to God.

### B. The Eucharist Perfects Old Testament Sacrifices

Ritual sacrifice under the Old Law was the sign of the covenant between God and his people. In the New Testament, the sacrifice achieves perfection through Christ. Jesus's sacrifice is the new Passover that is carried forward in the Eucharistic meal and replaces all of the sacrifices of the past. In the Mass, Christ is at once the High Priest and the victim who offers himself, through the ministry of his priest, with the same offering he made upon Calvary. The Eucharistic Sacrifice is thus the most perfect act of worship that can be offered to God.

When, thereafter, the disciples renewed the ceremonial action of Christ in their Eucharistic celebrations, they recalled the sacrifice of Christ that sealed the New Covenant. In his death upon the Cross and his Resurrection, Jesus established the New Covenant just as Moses ratified the Old Covenant at Sinai with the sacrifice of the blood of bulls (cf. Exod 24:5-8; Matt 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25).

### C. The Eucharist as Memorial

Christ's intention, however, was that the Eucharist should be more than a mere ritual action or ceremony that recalled his death. Jesus commanded the apostles that when they cele-



brated the Eucharist they should do so in remembrance of him, but this order had a very important meaning to the Jewish mind of the time. A memorial ritual in Old Testament terms was more than remembrance; it involved a real presence of God's saving action, as was evident in the Passover, the commemoration of the deliverance from Egypt that was instituted by God (Exod 12:14). The feast celebrated not just God's saving action in bringing Israel to freedom, but also God's continuing protection of his people and his ongoing saving action.

#### *D. The Nature of the Eucharistic Sacrifice*

The sacrificial nature of the Mass was affirmed by the Council of Trent. The Council declared that the basis of the sacrifice of the Mass is the eternal priesthood of Christ and that it was instituted at the Last Supper. The instruments of the transmission of the sacrifice are the apostles and their successors. The sacrifice is guarded and offered by the Church through the priesthood; it is a commemorative and representative sacrifice of the Cross; it consists in the offering of the body and blood of Christ under the species of bread and wine.

The conciliar decree went on to declare that the OT sacrifices serve as the type of the Eucharist and that Melchizedek, the priest and king of Salem, was the OT's most profound type of the priesthood of Christ. In his words, "Do this in remembrance of me," Christ established the priesthood of the New Covenant and commanded that the apostles and their successors should offer his body and blood. The decree further affirmed that the Mass contains the unbloody immolation of the Cross and is distinct from the sacrifice on the Cross

only in the manner of the offering. On the Cross, the sacrifice was bloody and was made by Christ alone; in the Mass, the offering is unbloody and is made by Christ through the ministry of the priest. In addition, the Mass contains a propitiatory sacrifice that is efficacious for the living and the dead, and that is offered for the satisfaction of sin and the temporal punishment for sins (CCC 1362-72).

Through the actions of the priest, the Church repeats the Last Supper and thereby is united by Christ to his sacrifice. The Mass, then, is the sacrifice of the whole Church, but it would be a mistake to think that *two* sacrifices are being offered. The Church offers the sacrifice of the Cross, and Christ, being sacramentally present, offers his sacrifice in union with the Church; for this reason we call the Eucharist the sacrifice of the Church. But the Church does not add anything to the sacrifice except for what is derived from Christ.

#### IV. EUCCHARIST AS SACRAMENT

The Eucharist is a **sacrament** in that it is an efficacious sign of the sacrifice offered by Christ on the Cross. Christ offers himself to the Father in the Mass just as he did on the Cross, but the offering is made through the consecratory action of the priest. This is possible because when he instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper, Christ established at the same time the sacramental priesthood. The apostles, their successors, and the priests they appoint repeat Christ's actions at the Last Supper; their actions are as efficacious as Christ's, because Christ is using the priests as his appointed instruments.

The sacrament of the Eucharist is thus a

sign th  
nicant  
it is sir  
celebra  
unique  
under  
1373-75

#### V. THE

##### A. Unit

The Ch  
sacram  
ent that  
The fir  
recipien  
Christ  
promis  
6:56).

##### B. Give

The Eu  
rial foo  
proving  
the Eu  
drink"-  
habitua  
power  
against  
souls of

##### C. Give and the

The lif  
a share  
extends  
will cul  
body (I



sign that actually gives grace to the communicant who is worthy to receive it. In that way it is similar to the other sacraments that are celebrated by the Church. But the Eucharist is unique because of the real presence of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine (CCC 1373–75).

## V. THE EFFECTS OF THE EUCHARIST

### A. Unites the Recipient to Christ

The Church proclaims that each of the seven sacraments produces its effects in the recipient that also are symbolized by the sacrament. The first effect of the Eucharist is to *unite the recipient to Christ*, for the Eucharist contains Christ himself. This union was what Christ promised in the Bread of Life Discourse (John 6:56).

### B. Gives Life

The Eucharist also *gives life*, for just as material food and drink assist in maintaining, improving, and building up our life, so too does the Eucharist—the “true food” and “true drink”—bestow life (John 6:54). It increases habitual grace in the recipient and has the power to remit venial sins and to fortify against mortal sins; it also brings joy to the souls of the devout.

### C. Gives a Share in the Life of Christ and the Trinity

The life that is nourished by the Eucharist is a *share in the life of Christ*. The life bestowed extends to the spiritual life, to eternal life that will culminate in the future resurrection of the body (John 6:55). This life is also a *share in the*

*communion of the Holy Trinity* (John 6:58; cf. Matt 5:23–24; 1 John 3:19–24).

### D. Unites the Church

The social or communitarian aspect to the Eucharist *builds up the mystical body of Christ*: “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (1 Cor 10:16–17). Jesus prayed at the Last Supper, “I do not pray for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word, that all may be one as you, Father, are in me, and I in you” (John 17:20–21). Just as the Christian faithful are united to each other in faith and baptism, so too are they united in Christ through the Eucharist. The Eucharist brings the union of the individual with Christ and through him brings as well the union of Christians among themselves (CCC 790, 1003, 1074, 1212, 1275, 1322, 1370, 1391, 1398, 1436, 2837).

## VI. THE HEAVENLY BANQUET

The Church has long been faithful to Christ’s command “Do this in remembrance of me” and will continue to celebrate the Eucharist as the center of her life. The fidelity to Christ’s command will continue as the Pilgrim People “proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes” (1 Cor 11:26) and move forward toward the heavenly banquet (CCC 1000, 1326, 1402–5, 1419).

Jesus taught of the future Kingdom of God in terms of a meal or banquet, saying to his apostles, “I tell you I shall not drink again



## EUMENES

of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt 26:29; cf. Matt 22:2; Luke 14:16, 22:18; Mark 14:25). The prophets had already cast the Messianic hopes of Israel in terms of a banquet (Isa 65:13; Ps 23:5). The Last Supper was a prophetic announcement of the Messianic meal and its fulfillment: first in the Eucharist, celebrated by the Church, and then in its complete realization at the time of Jesus's return at the end of all things. The Eucharist is the pledge of future glory, and in the celebration of the sacrament the Church remembers Christ's promise (Rev 1:4, 22:20; 1 Cor 16:22; cf. *Didache* 10.6). The Eucharist is the pledge of the Christian hope in the new heaven and the new earth (2 Pet 3:13). The Second Vatican Council expressed this in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*:

*At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross through the ages until he should come again, and so to entrust to his beloved Spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us. (§§47-48)*

(See also **Liturgy; Priesthood; Redemption; Sacrament; Sacrifice.**)

**EUMENES** Specifically, Eumenes II Soter, the son of Attalus I, the brother of Attalus II, and the king of **Pergamum** from 197 to 159 B.C. (1 Macc 8:8). He entered into alliance with

Rome against the Seleucid **Antiochus III** and was granted extensive territories in return.

**EUNICE** A Jewish-Christian woman of the city of Lystra in Lycaonia. She was a convert from Judaism and was the mother of **Timothy** (2 Tim 1:5; Acts 16:1).

**EUNUCH** A man who has been castrated or who is otherwise incapable of fathering children. Eunuchs in the Near East were customarily in charge of the women's quarters in palaces and households. Maintaining eunuchs was not customary in ancient Egypt, nor was it common in ancient Greece and Rome. It was largely an eastern development, with eunuchs trusted especially to administer the harem, and so forth. The very name "eunuch" later was associated with various court officials or chamberlains (Gen 37:36, 39:1, 40:2; cf. 2 Kgs 24:12-15, 25:19).

According to the Old Law (Deut 23:2; Lev 22:24), the eunuch was outlawed, and the eunuch was considered excluded from the community of faith. Anticipating the New Law, Isa 56:3 announced that both foreigners and eunuchs would share in the redeemed community. Wisdom 3:14 promised an honored place in the Temple of the Lord for virtuous eunuchs. In the New Testament, the **Ethiopian Eunuch** was a court official of the queen of Ethiopia (Acts 8:27). His baptism confirmed Isaiah's prophecy. Jesus called those who chose not to marry out of love of God "eunuchs" (Matt 19:12).

**EUPHRATES** The chief river of Mesopotamia. The Euphrates emerges from its source