

THE HOLY EUCHARIST

REFERENCES

- ❖ Christ in Eucharist –Fr. Tadros Malaty
- ❖ Youth and Sacraments –H.G. Bishop Moussa
- ❖ Spiritual Theology notes-Theological College Sydney.

MAIN POINTS

- i. Perished food v's everlasting food
- ii. Jesus teaches His disciples about the Body and Blood (John 6) and practiced in the last supper(Matt. , Luke , Mark)
- iii. and the Church lives with it (Acts 2:46 , 1 Cor. 10 , 11)
- iv. The blessings of partaking the Eucharist.
- v. The warning of being unworthy.

MEMORY VERSE

*"Whoever 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." (John 6:54, 55)*

ACTIVITY

Attached is a brief explanation of what happens at the offertory and the meaning. To attract the interest of the class, choose a section of the offertory and explain it to the class. For example:

- ❖ The reason for yeast in the korbán
- ❖ The reason why the offertory is made up of 3, 5, 7, 9 or 11 korbans.
- ❖ Its anointment symbolising baptism
- ❖ The Lamb's processional round

Another activity is to have the class draw on the board what the holy korbán looks like. And explain its meaning.



Symbol	Meaning
The circle	Has no beginning and no end, just like the Lord Jesus who is the Alpha and the Omega.
The large cross in the centre	Represents the Lord Jesus who is the centre of our lives, and the basis of the 12 disciples
12 crosses on the perimeter of the korbán	Represents the 12 disciples

The 5 holes	Represent the crucifixion – the nails, crown of thorns and spear in the side.
Holy God, Holy Almighty, Holy Immortal	Confessing the divinity of the Lord Jesus

INTRODUCTION

The word Eucharist comes from the Greek word *efkharisstia*?? meaning *thanksgiving*.

It is a holy sacrament through which believers eat Jesus' holy body and drink His blood in the form of bread and wine.

Union With The Savior

Our Savior promised that He would set a union with His believers; He said in John 6

6:32 Then Jesus said to them, Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

6:34 Then they said to Him, Lord, give us this bread always.

6:35 And Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

6:36 But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. (Jn 6:32~36)

6:47 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

6:48 I am the bread of life.

6:49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

6:50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.

6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.

6:52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?

6:53 Then Jesus said to them, Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

6:54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

6:55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

6:56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

6:57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

6:58 This is the bread which came down from heaven--not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever. (in 6:47-58).

Through the Sacrament of Eucharist we unite with Christ; we eat Him and He abides in us and we abide in Him... and as the branch of a vine is joined to the tree by the juice coming to it from the origin (the trunk), the same is true with us, when we receive the Body and Blood of the Lord, we abide in turn and unite with Him. The more a believer receives the Holy Communion, the more he receives the gift of unity with the Lord according to the Lord's promise: "We will come to Him and make our home with Him." Step by step, the heart glows with bright light and the Lord reveals His glory and reveals Himself to the believer who unites with His Body and His Blood and through this unity, the believer feels the power of the Lord's resurrection... according to the words of St Paul the apostle: "I have been crucified with Christ" and rise with Him according to the words of the apostle of Struggle: "It is no longer I *who live*, but Christ *who lives* in me; and the life I now live in the flesh. I live by faith in the Son of the God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

St. Cyril of Jerusalem said: "Through Communion we become one body and one blood with Christ. In this way we bear Christ in us as His Body and Blood go through our members and fill them and thus we become partakers of the Divine Nature as Peter the apostle said (2 Peter 1:4)".

When Was It Founded?

The Lord founded it on the night of His sufferings and passed it on to His disciples. "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat, this is My body.'" Then He took the cup, and gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins' (Mt 26:26-28).

"For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgement to himself, not discerning the Lord's body (1Cor 11:23-29).

This commandment was given to the apostles to practice this Divine Sacrament and all the believers should partake in it so that Christ would be our salvation, our life and our resurrection. The person, who does not obey the Lord's Commandment and refrain from receiving Communion for a long time, cuts himself off from the holy fellowship and the holy Communion and becomes disobedient to the Commandment of God who gave that Sacrament to all believers.

Actual Body And Blood'

The time Jesus passed this sacrament on to His disciples was the last hour of His life, so we cannot accept the interpretation that He was speaking metaphorically and that the phrase "in remembrance of Me" here only means mere memories rather than actual remembrance, i.e. the actual body and blood of Jesus Himself. St. Paul the Apostle pointed out that this sacrament implies sharing in the body of Christ: "I speak as to wise men; judge for yourselves what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? ... The bread which we break,; is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" (1Cor 10:15-16). All the clergy in the east and west have accepted this belief ever since the church. was established. It has never been a mere symbol or remembrance, but the actual body and blood.

The words of Jesus about this sacrament have been dear and need no explanation and the apostles understood them as such; while 'the Jews argued amongst themselves: "The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves saying, 'How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?'... From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, 'Do you also want to go away?'" (Jn 6:52,66,67) '

St. Paul *the* Apostle also pointed out that whoever has this sacrament in a way that dishonors him will be guilty of sin against the Lord's body and blood: "Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself; and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who

eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgement to himself; not discerning the lord's body." (1 Cor 11:27-29)

The Materials Used

We must have it in the form of bread and wine the same; way Jesus Lord did it when He gave His disciples the bread followed by the wine without mixing them together. This sacrament must be prepared by using leavened bread as Jesus did it before. The scriptures say "He took bread", so it is a sign that our Lord had carried our sins with Him to the cross to save us. "Therefore, purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us." (1Cor 5:7)

"Who Himself (ie. Christ) bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness -by whose stripes you were healed" (1Pet 2:24). '

Finally, nothing must be left of this sacrament to the next, day just like the Passover Lamb and the Crucified Redeemer

Fruits Of The Holy Communion

- a. 'To live in Jesus Christ and be united with Him and to grow in the grace of the Lord "He whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him" (Jn &56).
- b. To be united to each other. "For we, being many, are one bread and one body for 'we all partake of that one bread (1 Cor 10:17)
- c. It gives us the eternal life and the glorious resurrection 'Whoever 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 feeds on Me 'will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down form heaven - not as your fathers ate the manna and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever." (Jn 6:54 - 58)
- d The Lord Himself said about His Body, "This is My body, which is broken for you and is given for you for **forgiveness of sins**" (Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, 1 Corinthians 11) - He is the unlimited expiation of the cross, which exists and extends through the ages.
In the prayers of the Holy Liturgy the priest prays: "Permit, O Lord, that this sacrifice for the sins and ignorance of your people will be acceptable unto You" and after bowing down and the invocation of the Holy Spirit (The Epiclesis) the priest prays: "Permit, O our Master, that we shall be worthy to partake of Your holy Body and honoured Blood for the purification of our souls, bodies and Spirits."

THE WARNING OF BEING UNWORTHY.

Before Communion in the mass the priest warns the congregation of the sanctity of the Holy Eucharist by proclaiming "*The Holies are for the holy, blessed be the Lord Jesus Christ ...*"

During the communal recitation of the Apostolic Creed of faith, the priest washes his hands. He then stands before the sanctuary's door and shakes his hands from the water before the whole congregation to alert and warn them that he is innocent of the sin of anyone who dares to receive the Holy Communion while in an unworthy state

St. Paul warns the Corinthians of this very point and explains that it is the basis of their illnesses and indeed the death (referred to as sleep) of some (1 Cor 11:17-34):

1 Cor 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks [this] cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this reason many [are] weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

Questions:

- ⌚ How did the Lord Jesus prepare the minds of the apostles for receiving the Holy Eucharist?
- ⌚ Why were the words of Christ about His Holy Body and Blood too difficult for the Jews to understand?
- ⌚ What did the Lord say on the night of the last supper?
- ⌚ What is the relation between the mystery of Eucharist and the remission of sins?
- ⌚ “Through the Holy Oblation we unite with the Lord” What does this statement mean?
- ⌚ How can we attain the power of the Lord's death and resurrection?
- ⌚ Why is one who does not receive communion mistaken?

Discussion:

A non-orthodox young man may ask you and say: “It is better for us to feed on Christ through the Gospel and prayers only”, what will you say to him according to your study of the Lord's commandment concerning the mystery of Eucharist?

APPENDIX MEANING OF THE OFFETORY
(Ritual Theology - Coptic Theological College Sydney Australia)

CHAPTER TWO

Lamb Offering

He who offers the Lamb must be the highest in rank among all those present, in honour of the Lamb.

The priest has to declare the innocence of the lamb (i.e. he examines it to choose the good and innocent, he smells the wine and shares same with the co—priest and the serving deacon, to ensure its purity, undistilling, and that it is not any of the wines prepared on fire)

The best holy bread is selected, the best in appearance, despotikon, the number and correctness of holes, without any object sticking as a result of baking, also in regard to its fermentation and absence of cracks.

After the bread selection he brushes it with a kerchief from above and below over because it acquires the same respect of a sacrifice —like a crown prince before coronation, or a patriarch during the interim period between his selection and his coronation ceremony.

From the mouth of the bottle, the priest dips his thumb and draws the sign of the arose on the chosen bread saying “*sacrifice of glory*”, and then blesses the other loaves on the tray with the sign of the cross saying “*sacrifice of blessing*”, “*Abraham’s sacrifice*”, “*Isaac’s Sacrifice*” then he turns and blesses the chosen bread saying “*elschisedek’s sacrifice*”.

Rubbing the perfect loaf with the remaining loaves indicates that all the sacrifices under the Old Testament to the sacrifice of the cross and touched it, and the sacrifice of the cross was the culmination of all the Old Testament sacrifices. The perfect loaf takes the first and final blessings because it becomes the body of God’s Son who said about Himself “I am the alpha and the omega the beginning and the end, the first and last.”

Notes about offering of the Lamb:

- The Church did not get confined to putting the yeast in the bread only, but it was necessary to send the bread to the fire so that the yeast is dead, the same way sin died in the body of Christ resurrected from the dead. Yeast .a present in the bread of the mass but is dead by the action of fire, the Bane way fire annulled the action of the yeast, so did Jesus annul sin by sacrificing Himself.

The bread is circular like the sun, on its rim is written in Greek

(Agins 0 Theos) — Holy God

(Agios Ischeros) — Holy Almighty

(Agios Athanatos) — Holy Immortal

It is being circular, sun like, refers to the true lamb, the sun of goodness —Jesus Christ. Also, in its circular endless form, it refers to the Lord Jesus eternal with no beginning days or end of life.

The seal present on the loaf and containing the above inscriptions also contains within it twelve squares each enclosing a small cross in commemoration of the twelve disciples the central square is called in Greek (decpdokon) i.e. “Lordly” in Arabic it is pronounced Aspadikon it refers to teh Lord Christ (His is the Glory) around the Despotikon are made five holes in reference to the three nails, the garland of thorns, and the spear, Lord Christ’s suffering for us.

The loaves have to be always in odd numbers 3, 5, or 7 so as to enable the priest to select the best.

Three symbolises the Holy Trinity and the election of one signifies the incarnation of the eternal word, one number of the Holy Trinity. Five symbolises the Old Testament Sacrifices i.e.

1. Burning Sacrifice
2. Sin Sacrifice
3. Iniquity Sacrifice
4. Safety Sacrifice
5. Sacrifice Offering— comprising of any five kinds of living creatures: goats, cows, rams, doves, turtles (Lev. 1:3, 10, 14)

Seven— refers to these five offerings added to them the two kinds of the
• leper's purification (Lev. 14:4)

Lamb's Baptism*

After placing the kerchief on the Altar,, the priest holds the bread between his hands after wetting his right—hand finger tips, he then rubs the holy bread from above, below and around all sides in the manner of our Saviour's baptism

when He was immersed in the water of the River Jordan by John the Baptist Lamb's Round:

When the priest places the lamb on his hands and raises it above his head he follows the example of Simeon the elder who carried the Lord in his arms and went around the altar of the Lord. Like Simeon praising the Lord for His salvation I prepared before all nations,, so does the priest go around the altar glorifying God who sent His Son for our redemption.

The lamb's round is done only once symbolising the coming to the Temple with his parents according to the Law and also His offering the thanksgiving — sacrifice in the form of the sacrament of the eucharist, their Christ is alive in his Deity even though He corporally experienced death. This is a proof that Jesus died as a human but was alive in his divinity.

Grandeur of the Sacrament of the Eucharist

It is not given for soul healing and sin forgiveness, but is also beneficial for psychological and bodily illnesses even chronic, if taken with remorse, *i~éddi~W~,~'büt* if taken without this attitude, the result would be exactly the opposite, it might lead to illness or often to death (1 Car. 11:29—30) "for whoever eats and drinks without due appreciation of body of Christ, eats and drinks to his own condemnation. For this reason many among you are weak and sick and a number have died".

Covering of the Tray and Cup:

Covering the tray and cup refers to the shrouding of the Saviour's body when he was brought down from the cross, following His death, in preparation for burial.

The priest holds the end of the Proavarin, the deacon opposite holds the other end and they cover the sacrament. The Proavarin represents the stone that was put at the tomb's door after the Saviour's burial, Over the Proavarin is placed a triangular kerchief (the same one by which the lamb was rubbed following its selection); it refers to the seal by which the tomb door was sealed,

The priest and the opposite deacon wearing the white service garments represent the two angels in white seen by Mary Magdalene when they were sitting one at the head end the other at the feet where Jesus was laid.

Absolution of the serving members

The serving priest gives the cross to the most senior of the present priests. He stands facing east behind the priests and serving deacons kneeling with faces touching the

ground before the sanctuary's door saying the servants' absolution comprising five blessings.

1— Priests 2— Deacons 3— Clergy 4— All the congregation
5— PLy weakness

It is noted that the priest mentions the congregation in the absolution as they are considered among those serving the Holy Sacrament together with the priest*, the deacon and the rest of the clergy (those with clerical ranks). This is because the attending congregation are not mere listeners or audience with regard to the holy sacrament, but they are servants who have their responses and hymns which they say during the whole mass from beginning to end.

It is hoped that the whole congregation participate in responsorial hymns with the choir, thus the whole church becomes one body and soul in prayer and worship,

Footnote:

- * The Greek word (Presvyteroia) translated to "priest" is derived from — (Presvia) meaning intercession i.e. priest stands for interceder.