

# shepherds of Christ



A SPIRITUALITY NEWSLETTER FOR PRIESTS  
AND OTHERS INTERESTED IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

REV. EDWARD CARTER S.J., Editor

## CONTENTS

The Church is the Bride of Christ .....	1
God With Us .....	2
The Eucharist .....	2
Spirituality Handbook .....	3
Our Time Here is So Short .....	5
Spouse of the Lamb .....	6

### The Sacraments and the Mass

1. The Sacraments in General .....	6
2. The Mass .....	7
a) Sacrifice in General .....	8
1) Interior Oblation .....	8
2) Exterior Offering .....	8
3) Immolation of the Victim .....	9
4) Acceptance of the Sacrifice by God .....	9
5) Partaking of the Sacrificial Victim .....	9
b) Christ's Sacrifice .....	9
1) The Interior offering of Our Lord .....	10
2) Ritual Oblation .....	10
3) Immolation of the Victim .....	10
4) The Father's Acceptance of Christ's Sacrifice .....	11
5) The Banquet in Christ's Sacrifice .....	11
c) The Sacrifice of the Mass .....	11
1) Interior Oblation of the Mass .....	12
2) Ritual Oblation of the Mass .....	12
3) Immolation of the Victim .....	13
4) The Father's Acceptance of the Eucharistic Sacrifice .....	14
5) Partaking of the Eucharistic Meal .....	14
d) The Christian's Participation in the Mass .....	15
1) The Baptized Christian and the Mass .....	15
2) The Mass lived out .....	16

Uniting Our Hearts to the Mass .....	18
Prayer Chapters .....	18
Act of Consecration .....	19
A Prayer for Priests .....	19

### Chief Shepherd of the Flock

## The Church is the Bride of Christ

*I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and runs away, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep; he runs away because he is only a hired man and has no concern for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for my sheep. (Jn 10:11-15)<sup>1</sup>*

As the bride of Christ we partake most fully in offering sacrifice with one another all day as we unite to the Mass and lay down our lives in union with Him.

The Church is sacrament. The Church is one with Christ. The Church is His Bride. As a body we unite in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and pray in union with Him. It is through His mediation that tremendous grace is released on the earth. We are the brides of Christ. He is the Chief Priest and Victim. We partake more fully in the sacrifice. We live the paschal mystery of death and resurrection in our lives. We tap the font of life. We unite to Him as His holy spouse. We are the members of His Church. We are the brides of Christ. We love Him. There is a holy union between us and our Spouse all through the day.

EVERY ACTION—EVERY PRAYER IN OUR LIVES IS UNITED TO THE MASS—IT IS A FONT OF GOD'S GRACE.

THE DIVINE BRIDEGROOM GAVE HIS LIFE ON THE CROSS AND HE ROSE FROM THE DEAD VICTORIOUS ON THE THIRD DAY. The sacrifice of Calvary is sacramentally made present in the Mass today. We unite to it pleading as a body for ourselves, the Church and the world. We beg for grace from our Divine Bridegroom. As members of the Church we live as His spouse our bridal union all day.

Christ is Chief Priest and Mediator. We are His flock, the ones He came to save.

EVERY PRAYER, EVERY ACT when done to serve our God should be united to the Mass, so that great grace will be released.

See *The Church...*, page 2

THIS NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE ON CD AND CASSETTE TAPE.

- ❖ Fr. Carter prays the Shepherds of Christ prayers.
- ❖ Fr. Mike Paraniuk reads Fr. Carter's powerful writing on the Sacraments and the Mass.

From the newsletter 1999 Issue 4:

## God With Us

The Son of God became Man for our salvation. Yes, He became incarnate. He took to Himself a real human nature. Because Jesus possessed a real human nature, He could die for us. As the Good Shepherd, He has laid down His life for us, His sheep.

There are indeed many thoughts which come to mind when we reflect upon the truth that the Son of God took to Himself a human nature and dwelt among us.

◆ St. John puts it very simply in his Gospel: *The Word was made flesh, he lived among us...* (Jn 1:14) Yes, John states it so succinctly, yet these few words contain a wealth of meaning. We should expect nothing else, since this brief statement of the fourth Gospel points out the central event of all human history. These words sum up God's creative and redemptive activity. They sum up God's process of self-communication to us.



## The Eucharist

*At the Last Supper, on the night He was betrayed, our Saviour 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 (Vatican II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, No. 17)<sup>2</sup>*

◆ *The Church, therefore, earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at this mystery of faith, should not be there as strangers or silent spectators. On the contrary, through a proper appreciation of the rites and prayers they should participate knowingly, devoutly, and actively. They should be instructed by God's word and be refreshed at the table of the Lord's body; they should give thanks to God; by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn to offer themselves too. Through Christ the Mediator, they should be drawn day by day into ever closer union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all. (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, No. 48)<sup>3</sup>*

◆ *Through the Eucharistic Sacrifice Christ the Lord desired to set before us in a very special way this remarkable union whereby we are united one with another and with our divine Head, a union that no word of praise can ever sufficiently express. For in this sacrifice the sacred ministers act not only as the representative of our Saviour, but as the representative of the whole Mystical Body and of each one of the faithful. Again, in this act of sacrifice, the faithful of Christ, united by*

## FATHER CARTER'S MISSION: NEWSLETTERS, PRAYER CHAPTERS, AND SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

A primary purpose of the Shepherds of Christ movement is to distribute this newsletter to priests and to begin prayer chapters praying for the priests throughout the world in all their needs and praying for the renewal of the church and the world. A coequal purpose is to provide a spiritual way of life for people interested in the spiritual life.

Father Carter edited this newsletter on October 20, 2000. His desire – this newsletter include the chapter from his book *Response in Christ* on the Sacraments and the Mass. Again this powerful writing is available on CD and cassette tape read by Father Mike Paraniuk. All of the newsletter is available on tapes and disks. A great help to the spiritual life is the prayers Father Carter gave to us for the priests and the renewal of the Church and the world. These prayers are available. Father Carter prayed them himself with great fervor and love. They are available on both cassette tape and CD.

The Shepherds of Christ Newsletter is currently being translated into Spanish, French and Portuguese. The prayers the people pray in prayer chapters were given by Fr. Edward Carter S.J. They can be found in the Shepherds of Christ Associates prayer manual. They have been translated into Spanish, French, and Portuguese. All these prayers have the *Imprimatur*. Prayer manuals are available free of charge. Newsletters and tapes of Father Carter delivering the newsletter are available free of charge.

The English and Spanish newsletter goes to approximately 75,000 priests and 8,500 religious. Internationally, over 245 bishops and 4 cardinals have requested it for their diocese. Funds are needed to help us distribute the newsletter to 90 foreign countries in the world.

The second Newsletter Book (with the *Imprimatur*) is completed and ready for publication. This includes the newsletters of Father Carter from September/October 1996 to Issue 5, 1999. Funds are needed for publication. This too will be distributed worldwide to priests and bishops and others interested in the spiritual life. A Spanish version of 12 (July/August 1997 to Issue 5, 1999) of the newsletters in book form will soon be available. Please help us in any way you can to distribute the newsletter. Help us by beginning prayer chapters, praying for the priests and the renewal of the Church and the world. For more information to order tapes or prayer manuals call or write us at:

Shepherds of Christ Ministries  
PO Box 193 Morrow, Ohio 45152-0193  
Tel: (toll free) 1-888-211-3041 or (513) 932-4451



the common bond of devotion and prayer, offer to the eternal Father through the hands of the priest, whose prayer alone has made it present on the altar, the Immaculate Lamb, the most acceptable victim of praise and propitiation for the Church's universal need. Moreover, just as the divine Redeemer, while dying on the Cross, offered Himself to the eternal Father as Head of the whole human race, so now, 'in this clean oblation' He not only offers Himself as Head of the Church to His heavenly Father but in Himself His mystical members as well. He embraces them all, yes, even the weaker and more ailing members with the deepest love of His Heart. (Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis* AAS. XXXV, 232-233)<sup>4</sup>

◆ Pope Paul VI instructs us in his encyclical, *The Mystery of Faith*: "The Catholic Church has always devoutly guarded as a most precious treasure the mystery of faith, that is, the ineffable gift of the Eucharist which she received from Christ her Spouse as a pledge of His immense love, and during the Second Vatican Council in a new and solemn demonstration she professed her faith and veneration for this mystery. When dealing with the restoration of the sacred liturgy, the Fathers of the council, by reason of their pastoral concern for the whole Church, considered it of the highest importance to exhort the faithful to participate actively with sound faith and with the utmost devotion in the celebration of this Most Holy Mystery, to offer it with the priest to God as a sacrifice for their own salvation and for that of the whole world, and to find in it spiritual nourishment.

For if the sacred liturgy holds the first place in the life of the Church, the Eucharistic Mystery stands at the heart and center of the liturgy, since it is the font of life by which we are cleansed and strengthened to live not for ourselves but for God, and to be united in love among ourselves...

"It is to be desired that the faithful, every day and in great numbers, actively participate in the Sacrifice of the Mass, receive Holy Communion with a pure heart, and give thanks to Christ Our Lord for so great a gift..."<sup>5</sup>

**Ephesians 1: 11-14**

And it is in him  
 that we have received our heritage,  
 marked out beforehand as we were,  
 under the plan of the One  
 who guides all things  
 as he decides by his own will,  
 chosen to be,  
 for the praise of his glory,  
 the people who  
 would put their hopes in Christ  
 before he came.

Now you too, in him,  
 have heard the message of the truth  
 and the gospel of your salvation,  
 and having put your trust in it  
 you have been stamped with the seal

of the Holy Spirit of the Promise,  
 who is the pledge of our inheritance,  
 for the freedom of the people  
 whom God has taken for his own,  
 for the praise of his glory.

Days pass and we grow older.  
 Some of us wither and die.  
 Some are killed in car wrecks.  
 Today is the day to turn our lives over to God.  
 Please help us pass out these little cards to all souls.

**Say daily**  
 God, I give You my life in union  
 with the Mass as an offering for  
 the souls, the Church and the  
 priests.  
 Help us!

Your life is so important for souls,  
 you can help bring down great grace.

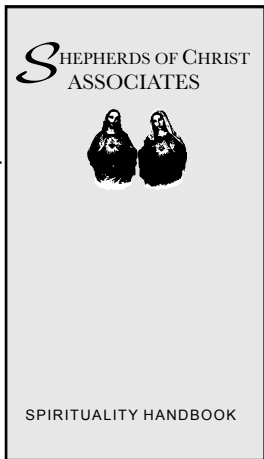
These are available from Shepherds of Christ free of charge.

## Spirituality Handbook

We include the following excerpt and explanation from the Spirituality Handbook. This was written by Fr. Carter.

### A Way of Spiritual Life

The way of spiritual life proposed to the members of *Shepherds of Christ Associates* is centered in consecration to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. All aspects of the spiritual life discussed below should be viewed as means to help members develop their lives in consecration to Christ, the Sacred Heart, and to Mary, the Immaculate Heart.



### An Overview of the Spiritual Life

The Christian life is rooted in the great event of the Incarnation. We must consequently always focus our gaze upon Christ, realizing that everything the Father wishes to tell us has been summed up in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It only remains for us, then, to strive to understand with greater insight the inexhaustible truth of the Word Incarnate: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days He has spoken to us by a Son, Whom He appointed the heir of

See *Handbook*...page 4



*all things, through Whom also He created the world.”* (Heb. 1: 1-2) <sup>1</sup>

What was the condition of the human race at the time of Christ's coming? In some ways, people were much the same as we are today. There were those just being born into this world of human drama. There were those who, in death, were leaving it, some of whom had grasped but little of life's meaning. There were those who were healthy and vigorous. There were those who were sick and lame. Some especially felt the burdens, the grief, the suffering of the human condition. Others were ebullient and desired all the pleasures life could provide. There was some good being accomplished. Immorality, however, was rampant. What St. Paul tells us concerning the time that immediately followed Christ's existence certainly could also be applied to the time of His entrance into the world. It is, in short, an ugly picture that St. Paul depicts for us (Rom. 1: 22-32).

*Heart of Jesus,  
We place our trust in You.*

Into such a depraved condition Jesus entered, with a full and generous Heart, to lead the human race from the depths of sinfulness to the vibrant richness of a new life in Himself. Through His enfleshment, this Christ became the focal point of all history. The authentic hopes and dreams of the human family, now so overshadowed by the ugliness of sin, came converging upon this Christ. He would gather them up in Himself, give them a new luster and brilliance and dynamism, and would lead the human family back to the Father in the Holy Spirit.

Christ was radically to release us from the dominion of sin and elevate us to a new level of existence. This life Christ has given us is not a type of superstructure which is erected atop human existence. Although nature and grace are distinct, they do not lie side by side as separate entities. Rather, grace permeates nature. The Christian is one graced person. The Christian is one who has been raised up, caught up, into a deeper form of life in Christ Jesus. Nothing that is authentically human in the life of the Christian has been excluded from this new existence. Whatever is really human in the life of the Christian is meant to be an expression of the Christ-life. The simple but deep joys of family life, the wonderment at nature's beauty, the warm embrace of a mother for her child, the agony of crucial decision making, the success or frustration that is experienced in one's work, the joy of being well received by others, and the heartache of being misunderstood--all these experiences are intended to be caught up in Christ and made more deeply human because of Him.

Jesus has come, then, not to destroy anything that is authentically human, but to perfect it by leading it to a graced fulfillment. This is the meaning of the Word's becoming flesh, the meaning of the Incarnation. The more God-like we become through Christ, the more human we become.

We, through our incorporation into Christ which occurs at Baptism, are meant to relive the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In doing so, we are not only accomplishing our own salvation, but we are assisting in the salvation of others also. The Incarnation continues all the time. Christ, of course, is the one Who fundamentally continues the Incarnation. But He enlists our help. The world no longer sees Jesus, no longer is able to reach out and touch Him. We are the ones who now, in some way, make Christ visible and tangible. In union with the invisible, glorified Christ, and depending on Him as our source of life, we continue the Incarnation in its visible and temporal dimensions. This is our great privilege. This is our great responsibility.

The Christian is initiated into the mystery of Christ, into his or her role in prolonging the Incarnation, through Baptism. In the words of St. Paul: *“Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by Baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.”* (Rom. 6: 3-4).

It is not sufficient, however, that we be incorporated into Christ through Baptism. All forms of life require nourishment. So, too, our life in Christ must be continually nourished. How can we continually keep in contact with Christ? There are various ways. We contact Christ in a most special way through the liturgy, above all in the Eucharistic liturgy. Here the entire course of salvation history, as centered in Jesus, is sacramentally renewed and continued. Through our most special and most personal meeting with Jesus in the Mass, we are more deeply incorporated into Christ. Also, we should remember that all the sacraments make up part of the Church's liturgy.

The reading of Scripture provides another special opportunity for meeting Jesus. This is true for both Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament prefigures the New Testament and leads to it. It is obvious, however, that we meet Christ especially in the pages of the New Testament. How true it is to say that not to be familiar with Scripture is not to know Jesus properly. We should resolve to read from Scripture daily.

We also meet Jesus in our interaction with others. Everyone we meet, everyone we serve, is in the image of Jesus. We have to take the means to grow in this awareness. If I truly believe that everyone has been redeemed by the blood of Jesus, how should I treat everyone?

These, then, are some of the ways we keep in contact with Jesus. Common to the various ways of meeting Jesus is a certain degree of prayerful reflection. Our contact with Jesus in the liturgy, in Scripture, and in our interaction with others, and so forth, will not be all that it should be unless we are persons of

prayer. The light and strength of prayer enables us to keep in contact with Jesus as we should.

We live out our Christ-life in an atmosphere of love. Indeed, the life Jesus has given us is centered in love. It has its origins in the mysterious love of God: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life”* (Jn 3: 16).

Our new life in Jesus has arisen out of God’s fathomless love. Christ, in His descent into human flesh, has established a milieu of love. The life He came to give can flourish only in the framework of love. Indeed, we can summarize the meaning of the Christian life by stating that it is our loving response to God’s love. The pierced Heart of Jesus, this Heart which shed its last drop of blood in the greatest love for each one of us, is the symbol of God’s tremendous love for us. Christ’s Heart also calls us to respond by giving ourselves in love to God and neighbor. Yes, Jesus invites us to respond to God’s love by giving ourselves in love to Him in an ever closer union. The more closely we are united to Him, the greater is our capacity to love God and neighbor. The more closely we are united with Jesus, the more closely He unites us to the Father in the Holy Spirit, with Mary our Mother at our side.

1. Scripture quotations are taken from The Revised Standard Version of the Bible, Catholic Edition, St. Ignatius Press, San Francisco.

## Our Time Here is So Short

We must turn ourselves over to Jesus. Jesus is our Savior. We should never doubt Him. He is with us. The days go by with such rapidness, if we loved and served God we will be with Him forever in heaven.

There is an end to all of this and our reward awaits. It seems hard to think of this as ever ending, but time is so short. Soon our life here will be over.

We need to fight a good fight for Jesus. We need to help all we can to know Jesus. Our days here will not go on forever, life is so short compared to all eternity.



Some day if we love and serve God we will be with Him in heaven. Our life is so short compared to eternity. Here today, gone tomorrow. All that remains is how we choose to live, for God or against God!

We are responsible for all our time and our actions and how we lived in service of God. It sounds simple but people alive on earth in sin cannot see anything else but what they are doing now.

Satan blinds men into thinking this life will go on and on when, in fact, it is so short compared to eternity, just a short while. It is so easy to see. Why do we get so caught up in this life here? It is so short. The batting of an eye, the dropping of

a pin, and our life is over and eternity awaits. Do these short moments mean so much to us?



Time is so short. Our time is so precious because it determines our eternal life. So short, indeed. We must listen to the voice of our Savior. What we do, how we act, are so small when compared to eternity! This is no laughing matter. It is our soul that is at stake. It is our life forever and ever. Is a few years of life, holding on to such insignificant

“stuff” worth all eternity? It is so simple. Love God, love one another. We must put Him first and everything falls into line! It is so simple, but so hard to live by for so many.

*Sky and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.* (Luke 21:33)

Here today, gone tomorrow. We must follow the Good Shepherd. He will lead us. He is the Light of the World. He makes the crooked ways straight and He nourishes our souls. We do not know the glories that await him who serves the Lord. We must hold tight to Jesus. We will receive a divine reward forever. May the name of Jesus be exalted in heaven and on earth. The trumpet blares and the Lord ascends His throne. All know His glory. Their lives were not in vain who served Him while in their lives. Their rewards are as golden gems whose splendor no one can comprehend.

Heaven and earth may vanish like smoke, but our deeds will not be forgotten. We must store up treasures in the life hereafter by doing good works. We must keep our eyes on our Father in heaven. Our Father loves us so much. All will be made open in the end and our life will be spent in the hereafter. What a reward for such a short test!

Oh, Jesus, praise to You from the heights. You are so good and loving. We trust in You and Your mercy. Alleluia, Alleluia.

Sing the song *Turn to Me* written by John Foley, S.J.

*Mary, Queen of Peace,  
Pray for us.*



**Through Him, With Him  
and In Him**

dously as I am pressed on as I travel on my journey to the end of the day.

And then a day of glory comes and You look upon me, my Bridegroom, and give me great favors and allow me to have a day of resurrection from the doom and the struggle.

And how did He walk the earth? He walked it too, in dark and light days. Days in which they chased Him and wanted to kill Him, in which they called Him crazy, in which He sweat the saving Blood because of His anguish, in which He wept, in which He loved Mary His Mother and Mary Magdalene, in which He raised His dear friend Lazarus from the dead, in which He preached about the Kingdom to His followers.

Days of light, days of darkness, but He entered the tomb and came forth victorious in the end.

He rose to give us life, His wounds were glorified, the victory was won.

My Bridegroom, You give to me Yourself this day. I am one in the glorified Lord in the most intimate way. The banquet is prepared. The Lamb has been slain. Now we reap the glory of the risen Lord. We receive the gift of life in Him.

LIGHT and darkness. He is the Bread of Life, He comes to feed the starved soul with Himself. Our most treasured gift, our most treasured Friend, Jesus Christ, the Bridegroom of our soul, gives Himself as a sacrifice that we will share in His life most abundantly.

I love You, Jesus Christ my Bridegroom, come and possess my soul.

**Following is Father Carter's powerful writing on The Sacraments and the Mass from his book, *Response in Christ*.**

## The Sacraments and the Mass

The life of grace just described expresses itself most perfectly in the Church's liturgy, and at the same time it is from the liturgy that the Christian chiefly derives strength for his life in Christ. Central to the Church's liturgy are the sacraments, and, most especially, the eucharistic sacrifice.

### 1. The Sacraments in General

A sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible, divine reality. Christ, therefore, is the primordial sacrament given to men by God. In His historical existence Christ was the visible, tangible manifestation that God has irrevocably entered the world of man with His merciful, salvific grace. At the same time Christ contained within Himself this divine reality which He externally manifested.<sup>6</sup>

We have previously described the Church as the continuation of Christ. Consequently, flowing from the idea

## Spouse of the Lamb

**First Friday, March 6, 1998  
10th Day**

My beloved Spouse, the Bridegroom of my soul,

The days go by with such swiftness, yet my focus is entirely on being one with Thee. The days fade in and out in shades of lights and darks, some days I receive



immense insight into Your mysteries, some days I am left to tremendous suffering, wanting You so deeply in my soul and not experiencing Your favor.

On this First Friday, I recall vividly the vision of Your precious Heart I hold in my heart. I see it clearly, red and filled with fire, and I know the warmth and glow of Your sacred divine love.

Oh, my Sacred Heart, indeed, Thy love is most sacred. Yet even though I do not ponder as I should on the endless fires of love emitted from your treasured Heart, I have a constant awareness of this love which leads me to march forth in this battle of helping to win souls over for the Kingdom.

Little is accomplished if I nurse my wounds on those dark days and sit in a corner waiting for a great favor from You.

I walk those shaded days as You walked with the cross on Your back, but my awareness of Your Father and His plan for salvation is so limited, and I struggle tremen-



of Christ as primordial sacrament, the Church is also a sacrament. The Church continues the visible presence of Christ which was attached to His historical existence. The Church, through her union with the glorified Christ, both externally symbolizes and contains within herself the divine reality of God's grace which has been irrevocably communicated to man.

The Church as sacrament is a perduring reality. This perduring sacramentality of the Church is actualized in a special manner through the seven sacraments. As the Church is the general, visible continuation of Christ's Incarnation, so the individual sacraments can be considered as particular, visible extensions of Christ's Incarnation.

It is evident, therefore, why the sacraments are special encounters with Christ. For Christ unites Himself with the sacramental sign as He offers His grace to the recipient of the sacraments. In this sense Christ and His sacraments become one. The sacrament and its minister are merely instruments which Christ employs to give Himself anew. The primary sacramental encounter is between Christ and the Christian.

Christ offers Himself to men through the Church and her sacraments so that men may become ever more united to Him. This incorporation into Christ begins at baptism, through which the Christian is made both a member of Christ and a member of His Church. This incorporation into the life of Christ means primarily to be incorporated into His paschal mystery, since death-resurrection was the essential and summary mystery of Christ's life. It was the central mystery whereby He gave us life. It is the central mystery which the Christian must relive in Christ.

Each of the sacraments deepens our incorporation into Christ's death-resurrection. Each achieves this in a somewhat different manner according to the primary purpose of each sacrament. Finally, and very importantly, each of the sacraments deepens this incorporation into Christ within an ecclesial framework. The sacraments, because they are the sacraments of Christ *and* His Church, intensify the Christian's relationship not only with Christ, but also with the members of the Church, and ultimately with all men.

The death-resurrection of Christ, encountered in a special way through the sacraments, is most especially renewed in the eucharistic sacrifice. Thus we can see the logical connection between the sacraments and the Mass. All of the sacraments point to the Mass. All of them, according to their own particular finalities, allow for a more perfect participation in Christ's paschal mystery as sacramentally renewed in the eucharistic liturgy.

## 2. The Mass

How is the paschal mystery and all the related mysteries of Christ renewed in the Mass? As a preliminary step to answering this question, let us first give a more detailed analysis of the mystery of Christ which was briefly described in the

chapter on the Church. Put very briefly, this mystery is God's concrete plan of redemption centered in Christ. The expansion of this idea leads to the theology of mysteries, a much discussed topic since the time of Casel.

The following is one manner in which we may conceive of the mystery of Christ. God Himself is ultimately the mystery – holy, completely transcendent, completely other. God in His inner life is thus hidden to man, unless He chooses to reveal and communicate Himself. He has so acted, giving Himself to man in word and action in Christ. Thus, because the ultimate mystery, God Himself, has communicated Himself in Christ, we have the mystery of Christ, the Christian mystery. It is legitimate to speak in the plural, designating the mysteries of Christ rather than simply mystery, because all that Christ did was part of the one unified mystery. In all the events of Christ's life God was communicating Himself and redeeming man in Christ. There are other ways of describing the mystery of Christ, yet we find a common denominator in our original statement: the mystery is God's concrete plan of redemption in Christ.

How is this mystery of Christ contained in the liturgy? We can explain this presence as follows.<sup>7</sup> Christ's mystery of redemption has a twofold aspect, one temporal and historical, the other eternal. We first consider the historical, temporal aspect of this mystery.

Christ is God present among us in human form, the entry of eternity into time. Because of Christ's humanity, the acts He performed while on earth were subject to the limits of temporal historicity. Consequently, the unique historicity of these acts of Christ cannot be repeated, even sacramentally; no, not even by God Himself. This would be asking the impossible of God, for to reproduce a *past* act *now* in its temporal historicity is a contradiction in terms. Hence Casel's theory of sacramental presence cannot be held if it posits an exact reproduction of temporal historicity.<sup>8</sup>

Granted, then, the temporal-not-to-be-repeated aspect of Christ's earthly life and actions, there is another aspect to be considered. Christ, although possessing two natures, is only one person, and that divine. Consequently, the historical redemptive acts of Christ are the acts of a divine person. Necessarily, then, these acts partake of the eternity of the divine person and therefore are perennial. They endure eternally in the glorified Christ.<sup>9</sup>

Through the medium of His glorified body, this eternal aspect of Christ's redemptive acts can be made present sacramentally. In the eucharistic liturgy the very person of the glorified Christ, containing within Himself all His redemptive acts, is sacramentally present. In very brief form we see the manner in which all the mysteries of Christ's life are reproduced in the eucharistic liturgy. It is within the Mass, then, the heart of the liturgy, that the

Christian encounters the person of Christ and His mysteries. This encounter takes place chiefly through the medium of the theological virtues. In faith, hope and love the Christian, encountering the eucharistic Christ, receives the supernatural strength to reproduce Christ in Himself. For through contact with Christ in the eucharist, the Christian receives the grace to relive Christ's mysteries in his own life. How true it is to say that the liturgy, centered in the Mass, is aimed at transformation in Christ.

Granted the primary importance of the Mass, we will now examine in greater detail the eucharistic sacrifice. In discussing the mystery of Christ and its presence in the eucharistic liturgy, we have already said much concerning the Mass. Yet we believe a schematically complete outline of the Mass will provide a more desirable framework for our purpose of demonstrating the Christian's eucharistic participation, a participation which is at the heart of contemporary spirituality.

Our presentation will necessarily be only relatively schematic. At the same time we hope it will not be superficial. We will make a fourfold division, for we believe this is necessary for an intelligent discussion of liturgical participation. First, we will treat of the notion of sacrifice in general. Then we will consider Christ's sacrifice within the framework of sacrifice in general. Next we will treat of the sacrifice of the Mass. Finally, we will consider in some detail the individual's participation in the eucharistic sacrifice.

### **a) Sacrifice in General**

There are various ways of developing the structure of sacrifice. Some authors include more constituent elements than others. We will give a structure which we believe includes the essential elements commonly given. This structure of sacrifice is a traditional one, yet it is one which can well be harmonized with modern theological, liturgical and scriptural studies. A leading scripture scholar, F. X. Durrwell, gives us assurance on this point by telling us of the value of considering Christ's redemptive activity within the traditional structure of sacrifice developed over the centuries: "But first it will be useful to look once more at the drama of the Redemption, placing it in a framework – a framework adequate to contain its rich reality which God Himself had prepared throughout the history of mankind: Sacrifice."<sup>10</sup> We enter upon our discussion of sacrifice in general by considering the first of five constituent elements.

#### **1) Interior Oblation**

The first duty of man is to surrender himself to God out of love. This fact flows from the truth that God is the Creator and man is His creature. Man, if he is ideally to fulfill his creaturely role must respond as perfectly as possible to the loving demands of His Creator. God asks that man give him-

self completely to Himself. This is only proper since everything that man has, whether of the natural or supernatural order, has been given to him by God. Man, in turn, perfects himself by developing these various gifts according to God's will or, in other words, by giving himself completely to God. Man's gift of self to God is centered in loving conformity to the divine will. Consequently, one can understand why the will with its decision-making capacity is the crucial faculty in man, a point emphasized by contemporary thought.

Man directs himself to God by the virtue of religion. This is not to say that this particular virtue ranks above the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. These are the most excellent, since they unite man directly to God. We are merely stating that the virtue of religion directs all man's actions to the honor of God.<sup>11</sup>

This virtue consists especially in acts of adoration, thanksgiving, petition and reparation. These interior acts can manifest themselves in many ways, but they are especially expressed through sacrifice. Here, then, we have the first constituent element of sacrifice: man's interior offering



of himself to God. This giving takes place chiefly in man's will, under the guidance of the virtue of religion. This first element of sacrifice is of prime importance, for it deals with interior dispositions. This importance can be recognized concretely in the history of religion. For example, the Jewish people were convinced that the principal value of sacrifice was centered in the dispositions of the people.<sup>12</sup>

#### **2) Exterior Offering**

Man is not a pure spirit. He is a rational animal, composed of body and soul. Consequently, he desires to manifest exteriorly and concretely the interior offering of himself which has been made to God in the first movement of sacrifice. He does this by the exterior offering to God of some material gift. Such a gift symbolizes the interior offering of man himself. St. Augustine says: "A visible sacrifice, therefore, is a sacrament or sacred sign of an invisible sacrifice."<sup>13</sup>

Justification of this exterior oblation is also found in the fact that man is not only in part a corporeal being, but also a social being. It is fitting therefore that man exteriorize his interior gift of self in order that he may give worship to God in a social manner. For his exteriorization enables many to partake in the sacrificial ritual.

This exteriorization of his inner offering also helps man to deepen his interior acts. Precisely because man is a composite being, his various exterior acts of worship can pro-



foundly influence, among others, his interior acts of love, adoration, thanksgiving, reparation and petition.

Here, then, we have the second constituent element of sacrifice: the external, ritual giving to God of some material gift which symbolizes man's interior offering of himself.

### 3) Immolation of the Victim

In the history of religion there is contained a third element of sacrifice, that of immolation. In order to make the external offering worthy of God, man has been accustomed to accompany his offering with a ritual that removes the external gift from profane use. The victim is immolated so that its former existence might cease, and that it can thus become something sacred to God. This immolation should not be looked upon as a destruction, but as a fitting preparation of the external gift. Such a preparation is the negative element in the transferral process of the gift from profane use to divine ownership.<sup>14</sup> But because the external gift symbolizes the gift of man himself, the consecration to God of this external gift through immolation represents the consecration of man himself to God. In other words, the immolation has a special significance by indicating man's union with God.

Within this consideration of immolation it will be profitable for us to refer to three basic types of sacrifice common to the Jews of the Old Law. Such a consideration will have its special significance in our treatment of Christ's sacrifice. The three sacrifices in question are those of the paschal lamb, of the covenant, and of expiation or atonement. In our initial chapter we discussed the first two types. It is sufficient to recall here that each of these, through sacrificial blood, was instrumental in uniting the Jews with Yahweh as His people. The blood of the paschal lamb contributed to the Jewish exodus from Egypt, an exodus which attained upon Mount Sinai a central point of its progress toward the promised land. Here upon Mount Sinai the sacrifice of the covenant took place as the blood sealed the new life relationship between Yahweh and the Jews.

In the sacrifice of expiation or atonement we again see the key role of sacrificial blood. In this sacrifice the blood was sprinkled seven times over the propitiatory. The purpose of this was to purify the sanctuary from all the sins of Israel. In turn the altar was sprinkled seven times with blood in order to achieve its purification and sanctification.

The purpose of the sacrifice of expiation or atonement, then, was purification and divine reunion. The land of Israel together with the tabernacle, the altar, the sanctuary and the throne of Israel, had been stained by the sins of the Chosen People. Through these sins God had been driven from their midst. In the sacrifice of expiation God returns to Israel through the purification of the tabernacle. The tabernacle symbolized the souls of the Jews, so we note that God returns to a purified people. Here we see a simu-

larity of purification and reunion.<sup>15</sup>

Taking together these three main sacrifices of the pasch, covenant, and expiation, we see the role of the shedding of blood in the history of the Israelites. The shedding of blood purified and united to God, and indeed played a most positive role.

### 4) Acceptance of the Sacrifice by God

In order that the sacrifice might reach its extrinsic consummation God on His part must accept it. God's acceptance of sacrifice has been shown in various ways. Among the Hebrews assurance of the divine acceptance was seen in the phenomenon of fire falling from heaven and consuming the victim of sacrifice. In the absence of such a heavenly token, there was at least some assurance that God accepted the sacrifice because of the duly consecrated altar itself. The altar received the gifts of sacrifice, and in doing so symbolized God's acceptance of the same.

### 5) Partaking of the Sacrificial Victim

In the history of sacrifice men have habitually shown a desire to accept God's invitation to partake of the offered victim. God must invite men to participation in the sacrificial meal, for the victim of sacrifice becomes divine property, and the use of it contrary to the divine will is sacrilegious. If God is pleased to admit His friends to the divine banquet, this is a manifestation of the divine goodness.

Since the victim has in a certain way become divine through its being offered to God, the partaking of this victim has a deep significance. Through such a participation in the divine banquet one shares in the sanctity of the victim.<sup>16</sup> This sharing in the holiness of the victim is actually a participation in God's sanctity, since the victim is holy with the holiness of God to whom it has been offered.

Thus the cycle of sacrifice has been completed. The interior giving on the part of those offering the sacrifice, exteriorized and symbolized by the ritual offering of an immolated victim, has brought down from on high a divine communication.

We have briefly seen the general economy of sacrifice, the authenticity of which has been borne out by history. This structure of sacrifice is authentic because it is partly rooted in the very nature of man. At the same time, this structure has been modified by the demands of positive law. With this general structure of sacrifice serving as a background, we are now in a position to consider the sacrifice of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and finally, that of the Mass.

#### b) Christ's Sacrifice

We will consider Christ's sacrifice according to the same constituent elements of sacrifice already discussed. In this treatment we will follow the theory of the unicists, who hold that Our Lord offered only one complete sacrifice as

opposed to the dualist theory which says Christ offered two complete sacrifices, one at the Last Supper, and one on Calvary. The Church allows either position. We prefer to follow the position of the unicists, since this seems to give a greater unity to Christ's sacrifice, and indeed to the total mystery of Christ. This profound unity of Christ's mystery has become more and more apparent with the scriptural, liturgical and theological renewals.<sup>17</sup>

### 1) The Interior offering of Our Lord

The sacrifice which Christ offered for the redemption of the world was first and foremost an interior moral act. Christ's life possessed its great value because of His interior dispositions. His entire life was a constant gift of Himself in love to the Father and to mankind, and Calvary was the supreme expression of this gift. This gift of self was regulated by a perfect conformity to His Father's will.

Christ not only was constantly living out this interior disposition of sacrifice, but He strove to inculcate the necessity of it in the Jews of His time. He constantly opposed a false and legalistic concentration on the mere externals of Jewish purifications, for such an attitude tended to diminish the necessary internal dispositions. The synoptic theology of sacrifice stresses this attitude of Christ. Bernard Cooke states: "This insistence of Jesus on internal dispositions characterizes the Synoptic theology of sacrifice, which continues and completes the prophetic emphasis on the moral and individual aspect of sacrifice...One must be careful, however, not to exaggerate the opposition (either in the prophets or in the Synoptic Gospels) between cult and internal dispositions of soul."<sup>18</sup>

### 2) Ritual Oblation

As we have said, man, because of his corporeal and social nature, has always desired to express the interior oblation of sacrifice in an external, ritual oblation. So it was with Christ. Unlike the dualists, who maintain that Christ's interior offering was sufficiently exteriorized during the passion itself, the unicists maintain that the only place where we can locate a ritual oblation is at the Last Supper. This ritual oblation cannot be found in any other phase of Christ's sacrifice – from the Garden to the Cross – despite the efforts of some to do so. Notice, too, that in the case of Christ's sacrifice, the ritual oblation of the Last Supper is of a victim-to-be-immolated rather than of a victim already immolated... Christ's ritual oblation at the Last Supper possessed a many-faceted signification. We will comment on several aspects. We begin by recalling the social implications of the ritual oblation. This social element is present in Christ's actions at the Supper. He told

the Apostles to do what He was doing in commemoration of Him. This would assure that in the future the head *and* members of the Church would sacramentally renew Christ's redemptive, sacrificial act. In this manner the members of Christ's Body would not passively receive the graces of Christ's sacrifice, but rather would assimilate these graces by actively entering into Christ's act of atonement. Consequently, Christ's sacrifice, in its perennial, sacramental renewal down through the ages, was to be of a social, corporate nature.

Closely related to this social aspect of Christ's actions were the covenant significations of the Last Supper ritual. This is brought out by observing the connection of Christ's actions with two of the chief types of Jewish sacrifices we have previously mentioned, the sacrifice of the pasch and that of covenant. In both of these the concept of sacrificial blood enters in.

The Last Supper was a paschal meal, or at least had a paschal significance. The Jewish paschal meal commemorated the Jewish people's delivery from Egyptian slavery, which, in turn, symbolized their deliverance from sin. The enslaved Jews had been freed from Egyptian tyranny with the aid of the blood of the paschal lamb. For this blood, we recall, had exempted Jewish homes from the visit of the exterminating angel. How fitting, then, that at the paschal supper Christ instituted the eucharist in which His blood is sacramentally shed. He is the new paschal lamb whose blood frees us not from Egyptian slavery but from slavery to sin. The old pasch, a covenant communion between Yahweh and His chosen people whom He delivered from Egypt, gives way to the new pasch, the new covenant communion between God and His people.

These ideas concerning covenant lead us to a consideration of the second type of Jewish sacrifice linked with Christ's actions at the Last Supper. We recall that in the sacrifice of the covenant Moses sprinkled sacrificial blood on both the altar representing Yahweh and the people. This blood, considered to be source of life, united Yahweh and His people in a union, a common life, or, in other words, a covenant. We understand, consequently, the deep significance of Christ's words at the Last Supper when He referred to His blood as being that of the new covenant. This is the blood which establishes between God and men a new union, a new covenant.

### 3) Immolation of the Victim

The central importance of Christ's sacrificial blood is evident. It is the blood of the new paschal lamb. It is the blood of the new covenant, the blood which redeems man. The shedding of this blood occurred during the immolation of Christ's passion-death. Schillebeeckx points out the significance of this immolation in blood: "The Blood of Christ is a theme that is truly central in the primitive Church, as Scripture shows it to us. This death sanctifies mankind, reconciles, establishes peace, redeems, constitutes the Church,

and therefore unites man in communion with God and his fellow men. We are redeemed *in sanguine*, through the blood of Christ – this we find on almost every page of Scripture. It is impossible therefore to spiritualize Christ's sacrifice, to make it merely an internal act of love. There was indeed the act of love, but it was embodied in the sacrifice of blood."<sup>19</sup> At this point we also note the profound unity of Christ's sacrifice. We observe that priest and victim are one and the same. At the Last Supper, Christ is chiefly priest; on Calvary, He is chiefly victim. Yet He is always priest and victim. Christ does not perform the immolation. He rather endures it. However, this is sufficient since it is not necessary for the priest of the sacrifice to achieve the immolation himself.

#### 4) The Father's Acceptance of Christ's Sacrifice

We have demonstrated that one of the constituent elements of sacrifice is its acceptance by God. In the case of Christ's sacrifice, this acceptance by the Father was accomplished in a most glorious fashion—through Christ's Resurrection and Ascension. The Father glorified His Son for the perfect, whole-hearted sacrifice of Calvary. This glorification shall endure for all eternity, since Christ reigns at the right hand of the Father as eternal victim, as eternal, glorified victim. Through this glorified Christ the treasures of His sacrifice are distributed to all men: "Christ's glorification is the mystery whereby the treasures of his divinity flow to us, through the opening of his mortal life."<sup>20</sup>

In the union of these last two elements of Christ's sacrifice, His immolation in death and the acceptance of His sacrifice through the Resurrection and Ascension, lies the essence of Christ's redemptive act – of course, in saying this we presuppose the first element of Christ's sacrifice, His interior disposition or oblation; this is *the* essential element. This union of Christ's death and Resurrection is called His paschal mystery, His passover. In what did this passover or transition consist? In our initial chapter we briefly described this passover of Christ. We will now expand to some extent upon this basic reality of Christ's life.

The divine love, or agape, descended into this world for the salvation of men. This saving force manifested itself to men through the redemptive activity of the Word made flesh.

By becoming man, Christ, although free from sin, submitted Himself to the conditions and circumstances of a sinful world. His redemptive activity consisted in a struggle with the forces of evil. As this struggle developed, Christ at the same time was returning to the glory of His Father. He finally conquered completely through His paschal mystery. Through His death He liberated Himself completely from a world impregnated with sin and passed over into the new order of the Resurrection. Moreover, Christ experienced this transition process not just for Himself. By His own passover Christ achieved for all men the opportunity to pass from death to life, from a life of sin to a new life as sons of God. In the words of Lyonnet, "The redemption is essentially the return of humanity to God. The return is accomplished first of all in Christ who died and rose again as the first fruits of this humanity (objective redemption), and then in each Christian who dies and rises again with Christ in baptism (subjective redemption)."<sup>21</sup>

Consequently, we have observed, in terms of sacrificial elements, the most intimate union which exists between Christ's death and Resurrection. They are inseparable, and lie at the heart of the total mystery of Christ. This paschal mystery is central, therefore, to the liturgy and to the whole Christian life.

#### 5) The Banquet in Christ's Sacrifice

The cycle of sacrifice is strikingly completed by God graciously extending an invitation to partake of the offered victim. This element of sacrifice is miraculously fulfilled in Christ's oblation. By the words of consecration the bread and wine become Christ. In this manner Christ gives Himself to His disciples at the Last Supper. We will further develop these ideas of eucharistic communion in our consideration of the Mass.

We hereby complete the consideration of the elements of Christ's sacrifice. According to the unicists there was but one sacrifice of Christ. The Last Supper, death and Resurrection each contributed essential elements. This one sacrifice of Christ endures in its efficacy for all time. In itself it is not to be repeated. Its sacramental renewal, however, is repeated daily on our altars in the Mass.

#### c) The Sacrifice of the Mass

Some contemporary authors, while not necessarily de-emphasizing the sacrificial nature of the Mass, are giving a renewed emphasis to the concept of the Mass as banquet or meal. This is all to the good, as long as the sacrificial structure is not allowed to recede to the background. In this regard it is well for us to recall the mind of the early Church. Jungmann says: "The first centuries of Christianity, which had built the framework for the celebration of the Eucharist which is still followed today, had laid down two basic thoughts: The Mass is the memorial of the Lord, and it is the sacrifice of the Church. These two thoughts are expressed just as clearly and simply today: '...calling to mind the blessed passion – we offer to your sovereign majesty – this pure sacrifice.'<sup>22</sup> We should always unite the concepts of the Mass as sacrifice and the Mass as meal by realizing that the eucharistic meal is an integral part of the sacrifice. It is its conclusion.

We should also be aware that the Mass is a covenant sacrifice. It is the sacramental renewal of Christ's covenant sacrifice. The Mass is the central act of our covenant life in Christ, and therefore it embraces the



four great dimensions of covenant love. In Christ, by the action of the Holy Spirit, we open ourselves in a special manner during the eucharistic liturgy to the Father's love and we respond to that love. In Christ and His Spirit we also pledge ourselves at Mass to go out in a deeper love to the members of the People of God and to all men. We also commit ourselves anew to be open in receiving the love of others. According to these various perspectives, the Mass above all is an action of love.

### 1) Interior Oblation of the Mass

The chief priest and victim of the Mass is the same as the priest and victim of the Last Supper and Calvary, Christ Himself. Christ makes this interior offering of Himself in the Mass for the same ends as were present in His own unique sacrifice – adoration, thanksgiving, petition and satisfaction. However, Christ is not the only priest at the Mass as He was at the Last Supper and upon Calvary. All the members of the Mystical Body are priests along with Christ. To be sure, there is a difference between the hierarchical priesthood of bishops and priests and the universal priesthood of the faithful. This difference is one of essence and not merely degree. The point we wish to stress, however, is that the universal priesthood is a real participation in Christ's priesthood given through the sacraments of baptism and confirmation.

This concept of the priesthood of all the Church's members is being stressed today in a special manner.<sup>23</sup> Jungmann, the outstanding liturgical theologian, gives us reasons why this concept of universal priesthood became relatively obscure for so many years. He states that the concept of the Mass as the Church's sacrifice faded into the background as a result of the Reformation. The Reformers maintained that there was only one sacrifice, the one which Christ offered upon Calvary. To counteract this heresy the Council of Trent and the theology consequent to it had to clarify that the Mass is a true sacrifice, but not an absolutely independent one. It is a sacrifice relative to the absolute one of Calvary and a representation of it. It was emphasized that the priest of Calvary is also the chief priest of the Mass. Because of such doctrinal controversies, the concept that Christ offers the Mass was alone considered important. The concept that the Mass is *also* the sacrifice of the Church practically disappeared. Finally, Jungmann notes that today we are returning to the balanced view which meaningfully recognizes that the Mass is not only the sacrifice of Christ, but also that of the Church.<sup>24</sup> This stress on the Church's part in the Mass is logically connected with the contemporary emphasis on the priesthood of all the members of the People of God.

As Christ is not the only priest of the Mass, neither is

He the only victim. Again, all the members of the Church are victims along with Christ. Various Church documents attest to this. For instance, Pope Paul VI officially calls attention to this: "It is a pleasure to add another point particularly conducive to shed light on the mystery of the Church, that it is the whole Church which, in union with Christ functioning as Priest and Victim, offers the Sacrifice of the Mass and is offered in it."<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the members of the People of God, united as priests to Christ the high priest, offer a combined victim to the Father: Christ and themselves. Such then in all its deep meaning and beauty is the first sacrificial element of the Mass.

### 2) Ritual Oblation of the Mass

Just as Christ's interior offering of Himself was externalized in a ritual oblation at the Last Supper, so is there an external, liturgical rite of the Mass. The importance of this many-faceted exteriorization is brought out by Vatican II's *Constitution on the Liturgy*.

As mentioned before, this exteriorization of the internal oblation is according to man's social and corporeal nature. That it is in harmony with the social part of man is evident from the fact that the external rite assembles the People of God to worship together as a community. The individual members are consequently enabled to help one another to achieve the proper worship of God. The *Constitution* gives stress to this social aspect of the liturgy. It states that the very nature of the liturgy demands that *all* the faithful be led to a full and active liturgical participation. Such is in keeping with their vocation as "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation" (1 P 2:9). The *Constitution* emphatically states that such full and active participation on the part of all the people is the chief aim of the liturgical renewal.<sup>26</sup>

As also previously observed, the external rite is likewise according to man's bodily nature. In the case of the Mass (and the sacraments also) we observe that the very validity of the sacrifice depends on having the proper materials for the offering – bread and wine – and on the use of the proper form of consecration. The external, the ritual, the sensible, are indeed indispensable. In all this we note the great law of incarnation. The Incarnation established a set pattern for the redemption of the world, redemption taken both objectively and subjectively. Christ redeemed the world through His sacred humanity. This humanity is, then, the gateway to the divinity, to eternal life.

As Christ's created humanity was indispensable for accomplishing the sacrifice of the objective redemption, so are created things necessary for the eucharistic sacrifice of the subjective redemption. This fact calls to mind the thought of Teilhard de Chardin. Teilhard holds a world concept in which all things, natural and supernatural, spiritual and material, are united in a single and organic unity. The pole of this unity is the person of the Incarnate Word,

towards whom the whole of creation converges.<sup>27</sup> In such a concept the law of incarnation is developed to the utmost, a fact brought out by the following words of Teilhard: "Let us remember that the supernatural nourishes itself on everything."<sup>28</sup>

At various times in the history of Christian spirituality, the Church has been plagued with an exaggerated spiritualism rising out of various sources. Such a spiritualism, looking upon material things as more of a hindrance than a help, is foreign to the true Christian spirit. A true theology of the Incarnation, a theology which the Church so well concretizes in her liturgy, can lead to no other conclusion.

It is no accident that a meaningful incarnation spirituality is developing concomitant with the liturgical renewal. Although we would not want to say that the incarnational element outweighs the transcendent element in the Church's portrayal of the Christian life, yet she is leading the faithful of all vocations to a deeper incarnationalism. The Church is accomplishing this through a variety of ways. She is achieving this incarnationalism, for instance, through the great social encyclicals, through the documents of Vatican II, and, in reference to our present topic, through a revived liturgy.

There is a deep significance, and a rich world of thought connected with the second sacrificial element of the Mass: the ritual oblation which incarnates the interior oblation.

### 3) Immolation of the Victim

Christ, the chief victim of the Mass, has been immolated once and for all in the offering of His own unique sacrifice. And yet, since the Mass is a true sacrifice in its own right, we logically look for an unbloody immolation of Christ the victim. Where do we find this immolation? Traditionally it has been seen to be present in the double consecration of bread and wine. This double consecration symbolizes the separation of Christ's blood from His body, and, consequently, symbolizes His death. Pius XII's encyclical, *Mediator Dei*, states: "Thus the commemorative representation of His death, which actually took place on Calvary, is repeated in every Sacrifice of the altar, seeing that Jesus Christ is symbolically shown by separate symbols to be in a state of victimhood."<sup>29</sup> Jungmann reminds us of the importance of this sacramental immolation of Christ. While admitting and even stressing the importance of giving the "meal symbolism" its proper place in the Mass, Jungmann calls for a priority of sacrificial symbolism: "It is quite another question whether or not it is necessary or even correct to regard the meal symbolism as the decisive and fundamental thing in the outward transaction of the Mass. If the Mass is a sacrifice then

this must find appropriate expression in the outward picture too; for sacrifice is essentially a demonstrative action, the symbolic representation of inward readiness to give oneself."<sup>30</sup>

Durrwell, a biblical theologian, also highlights the importance of the Mass's immolation. He seems to say that Christ's immolation is symbolized by the very words of consecration. He says that the Last Supper and its commemoration, the Mass, are sacrificial meals. Consequently, "...Christ appears in the victim state. He gives them to drink 'the blood of the new covenant, shed for many' (Matt, Mark), blood of sacrifice as the establishment of the old covenant required (Exod xxiv, 8) shed at the moment of drinking."<sup>31</sup>

However, as we have said, Christ is not the only victim of the eucharistic sacrifice. The members of His Body, the Church, are also victims along with Christ. Those members must also be in a state of victimhood. As with Christ, they cannot undergo a bloody immolation. Their immolation must also be a mystical one. How is this accomplished? We can look to two passages of the encyclical *Mediator Dei* for thoughts on such a mystical immolation. In one passage we read that pride, anger, impurity and all evil desires are to be mystically slain. As the Christian stands before the altar, he should bring with him a transformed heart, purified as much as possible from all trace of sin.<sup>32</sup> Positively considered, such a transformation means that the Christian is striving to grow in the supernatural life by all possible means, so as to present himself always as an acceptable victim to the heavenly Father.

In another passage of the same encyclical this mystical immolation of Christ's members is further developed. To be a victim with Christ means that the Christian must follow the gospel teaching concerning self-denial, that he detest his sins and make satisfaction for them. In brief, the Christian's victimhood means that he experiences a mystical crucifixion so as to make applicable to his own life the words of St. Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ..." (Ga 2:19)<sup>33</sup>

Jungmann has a beautiful passage concerning the Christian's eucharistic immolation. He states: "Every sacrament serves to develop in us the image of Christ according to a specified pattern which the sacramental sign indicates. Here the pattern is plainly shown in the double formation of the Eucharist; we are to take part in His dying, and through His dying are to merit a share in His life. What we here find anchored fast in the deepest center of the Mass-sacrifice is nothing else than the ideal of moral conduct to which the teaching of Christ in the Gospel soars; the challenge to an imitation of Him that does not shrink at sight of the Cross; a following after Him that is ready to lose its life in order to win it; the challenge to follow Him even, if need be, in His agony of suffering and His path of death, which are here in this mystery so manifestly set before us."<sup>34</sup>

Summarily, then, we become victims with Christ by lovingly conforming our wills to the Father's will in all things. Such conformity was the essence of Christ's sacrifice, of His victimhood,

and of His immolation. A similar conformity must be in the victimhood and the immolation of Christ's members. This mystical immolation is a lifelong process. The ideal is that each Mass participated in by the Christian should mark a growth in his victimhood. The true Christian desires to die more and more to all which is not according to God's will so that he may become an ever more perfect victim with Christ.

#### **4) The Father's Acceptance of the Eucharistic Sacrifice**

It has been observed that if sacrifice is to have its desired effect, it must be accepted by God. That the Father always accepts the eucharistic sacrifice is certain. For the principal priest and victim is Christ Himself, always supremely acceptable to the Father. As for the subordinate priests and victims, they are, taken together, the People of God, the Church herself.

There is always an acceptance on the Father's part even as regards this subordinate priesthood and victimhood of the Mass. For even though the Mass may be offered through the sacrilegious hands of an unworthy priest, there is always a basic holiness in the Church pleasing to God. Because of such holiness the Father always accepts the Church's sacrificial offering, for the Mass is the sacrifice of the whole Church, and cannot be fundamentally vitiated by the unworthiness of any particular member or members, even if that member be the officiating priest.

What do we say concerning the Father's acceptance of the sacrificial offering of the individual Christian? Such an offering will be acceptable in proportion to the Christian's loving conformity of will to the Father's will. Speaking of the Christian's participation in the Mass, Jungmann says: "It follows that an interior immolation is required of the participants, at least to the extent of readiness to obey the law of God in its seriously obligatory commandments, unless this participation is to be nothing more than an outward appearance."<sup>35</sup>

Having considered in successive sections the immolation and acceptance elements of the Mass, we should consider the vital link between these two. For just as the two are inseparably connected in Christ's sacrifice, so are they also united in the Church's sacrifice of the Mass.

In Christ we equated the immolation of His sacrifice with His passion-death, and the acceptance element with His Resurrection. Uniting these two mysteries of death-resurrection, we spoke of Christ's paschal mystery. We have seen that this mystery had

been prefigured by the Jewish pasch and exodus, component parts of the Jewish people's transition to a new and more perfect life. In the case of Christ, we considered His pasch—His passover—to be a transition from the limitations of His mortal life to the state of resurrected glory. We speak of Christ's mortal humanity as having exercised limitations upon Him in this sense, that, although He Himself was completely free from sin, He had exposed Himself to the conditions of a sin-laden world through His human nature. In His death-resurrection He changed all this as He conquered sin, as He redeemed us, as He *passed* to the state of glory with His Father.

What happened in Christ also occurs in His Mystical Body, the Church. The Church and Her members experience their own transition from death to resurrection. The entire Church and the individual Christian express, through the Mass, a willingness to grow in the participation in Christ's death. The Father accepts this willingness and gives an increase in the grace-life, a greater share in Christ's Resurrection. This process happened within a short span of time in Christ's life. In the life of the Church it continually takes place until Christ's second coming. The Church, with her grace-life of holiness, has already partially achieved her resurrection, but not completely, even though she continues to grow in grace. St. Paul bears witness to this: "...but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free." (Rm 8:23).

Vatican II's *Constitution on the Church* beautifully portrays this fused state of death-resurrection which the Church in her members experiences here below as she awaits the fullness of the resurrection in the world to come: "For this reason we, who have been made to conform with him, who have died with him and risen with him, are taken up into the mysteries of his life, until we will reign together with him... While still pilgrims on earth, tracing in trial and in oppression the paths he trod, we are anointed with his sufferings as the body is with the head, suffering with him, that with him we may be glorified..."<sup>36</sup>

#### **5) Partaking of the Eucharistic Meal**

The cycle of the eucharistic sacrifice is completed as the priest and faithful partake of Christ the paschal lamb. The People of God have given Christ to the Father. Now the Father gives Christ to the Church's members in the eucharistic meal. Although the priest alone must communicate to assure the integrity of the sacrifice, it is highly desirable, of course, that all present partake of the eucharist.

In the sacrifices of old, the victim of the sacrificial banquet was considered in some sense divine by the fact that it had been offered to the divinity. In the sacrifice of the new covenant we receive divinity itself through the sacred humanity. With such a marvelous conclusion to the eucharistic sacrifice, the fruits of Christ's sacrifice of Calvary are continually experienced.

There are other truths to be considered under the paschal meal aspect of the Mass. One of these is the concept of the eucharist as sign and cause of unity. Von Hildebrand comments on this: "All receive the one body of the Lord, all are assimilated into the one



Lord. Even if we leave aside the supreme ontological supernatural unity which is realized here, the very act of undergoing this experience represents an incomparable communion-forming power.<sup>37</sup>

Through the sharing of the one paschal lamb, the Christian assembly has thus been vividly reminded of their oneness in Christ. Yet this is a oneness in plurality. For each Christian is a member of the one Body of Christ in his own unique way. He has been called upon to assimilate Christ according to his own personality, vocation and graces. Consequently, just as the members of the People of God are reminded of their unity at Mass, so are they made aware of their own uniqueness as they depart from the eucharistic assembly, each carrying Christ to his own particular environment according to his own individual personality.

We have considered the Church's eucharistic sharing in the mystery of Christ according to a sacrificial structure. With the general structure of the Mass established, we will now enlarge upon the concept of the participation of the individual.

#### **d) The Christian's Participation in the Mass**

God has created man a social being. This fact has relevance as regards man's salvation and perfection. Man does not go to God alone, but rather is saved and perfected with and through others. This is evident in the study of salvation history as one observes God communicating Himself to man in the framework of community. As we have seen, this social dimension is also readily evident in the liturgy.

As we now discuss the individual's participation in the liturgy, we in no way intend to underestimate the communal aspect of the eucharistic sacrifice. We constantly presuppose it and its importance. Liturgy as communal is the indispensable framework and background for any discussion of the individual's liturgical participation.

Granted all this, it is still useful and necessary to speak of the individual's participation in the Mass.<sup>38</sup> Ultimately it is the individual as individual who accepts or rejects God's offer of salvation and sanctification. Therefore, to speak of the individual's response to God in the liturgy is highly significant. Despite all the communal helps the individual receives in the liturgy, despite the fact that the individual must always be deeply aware that he is a member of the community, the People of God, it is still true to say that it is within the depths of his own mysterious, individual personality that the Christian either becomes a mature Christian through the liturgy or fails to do so. With such preliminary ideas established, let us now consider the Christian and his role in the Mass.

### **1) The Baptized Christian and the Mass**

Once again the reader is reminded that through baptism the Christian becomes incorporated into Christ and His Church. Confirmation perfects this incorporation. Although baptism incorporates us primarily into Christ's death and Resurrection, we again stress that it also unites us with Christ in all His mysteries. This is so because all Christ's mysteries are essentially one mystery, for none of them stands separately by itself. Consequently, one cannot be initiated into Christ's paschal mystery without simultaneously being incorporated into all of His mysteries.

The fact that all of Christ's various mysteries are contained in the total mystery of Christ enables the Christian to encounter the entire Christ in the liturgy. Mention of this fact brings us to our next point.

In baptism the Christian first encounters and relives the mystery of Christ. He thereby receives a new life. But this life must be nourished. The Christian must constantly re-encounter the mystery of Christ, and this he does chiefly through the eucharistic liturgy. Here the Christian is daily privileged to encounter Christ in the most intimate fashion. Here above all he exercises his priesthood and consequently grows in supernatural vitality. We use the word exercise purposely, since the liturgy is primarily an action, an *exercise* of the priestly office of Christ.

Since the baptized Christian is sacramentally participating in the mystery of Christ at the Mass, his priestly act must be modeled after that of Christ's. This is true because the life of grace flowing out of the seals of baptism and confirmation is structured according to certain modalities or characteristics based on the life of Christ. This truth was developed at some length in the previous chapter. There we stated that Christ, the head of the Mystical Body, has determined, through His own life of sanctifying grace, the general lines of development according to which His members' lives of grace grow and mature.

Therefore it is evident that the whole of the Christian's life must be orientated to the Mass and be centered about it; for in Christ we see His entire life centered around His priestly act of Calvary. This is true because His interior sacrificial disposition, the essence of His priestly act, permeated everything in His life.

The baptized Christian should also bring his daily life, his whole life, to the eucharistic sacrifice. The Church which assembles about the altar is not a nebulous, ethereal entity, but the Church of this earth. It is the Church of men and women who are immersed in the work of this world. As they gather for the eucharistic sacrifice, they are therefore not removed from the world of their ordinary daily lives to an unreal world of ritual which has no connection with their temporal cares and activities. Rather it is the reality of this ordinary daily life which they bring to offer as priests and victims in union with Christ, priest and victim. In such a manner, then, the eucharistic sacrifice looks to the past life of the Christian.<sup>39</sup>

Yet the Mass also looks to the future of the Christian. By his participation in the Mass he receives grace to assimilate in a more perfect manner the mystery of Christ. Ideally, each Mass participated in by the Christian should mean that he leaves the eucharistic assembly with a greater Christ-likeness. Thus he takes up his daily life as a more fervent Christ-bearer.

The Mass as it looks to both the past and future embraces the Christian's entire life. It is meant to be lived each minute of the Christian's life. Durrwell says: "The Mass is said in order that the whole Church and the whole of our life may become a Mass, may become Christ's sacrifice always present on earth. St. Francis of Sales resolved that he would spend the whole day preparing to say Mass, so that whenever anyone asked what he was doing, he might always answer, 'I am preparing for Mass'. We also could resolve to make our whole lives a participation in the divine mystery of the Redemption, so that when anyone puts the question to us, we can always answer, 'I am saying Mass.'"<sup>40</sup>

## 2) The Mass lived out

As the Christian lives out the Mass, he is consequently daily laboring with Christ in furthering the work of the subjective redemption. This is so because Christ's sacrifice was a redemptive act, and the Church's reliving of this act in the Mass is also redemptive. In this regard we must remember that the entire universe – not merely man – has been redeemed. The nonrational and rational world alike await the furthering of the redemption. St. Paul tells us: "From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free." (Rm 8:22-23). How does the Christian help Christ redeem the world? (Henceforth the term "world" is to be understood as including both rational and nonrational creation.) As previously stated, the Christian helps Christ redeem the world by reliving Christ's mysteries. The same "events" or mysteries which accomplished the objective redemption further the subjective redemption also. Since at the heart of Christ's mysteries are His death and Resurrection, it is especially these that the

Christian must relive. As the Christian dies mystically with Christ through loving conformity with the Father's will, he rises with Christ to an ever greater share in the Resurrection, in the newness of life, in the life of grace. As the Christian in this manner relives the paschal mystery of Christ, he is accomplishing not only his own redemption, but he is also, in a mysterious yet real manner, helping Christ redeem the world.

Although Christ's life was summed up in death-resurrection, it also included various other "events" or mysteries. Each of these in its own manner contributed to the redemption. So it is with the Christian's life. His participation in Christ's death-resurrection must be "broken down" into the other mysteries of Christ's life.

The Christian must always remember that he carries away from the Mass not only the Christ of the death and the Resurrection, but also, for example, the Christ of the hidden life and the Christ of the public life. As the Christian lives out his Mass in the exercise of his Christ-life, all these various mysteries should therefore be present.

Before we give examples of how the Christian can relive these saving events of Christ's life, it is well that we first distinguish the two different levels on which the Christian assimilates the mystery of Christ.

Christ, through His death and Resurrection, has transformed us. This transformation is a "new creation," a new life of grace. Through our baptism we are initiated into this life and consequently we *exist* as new creatures. As long as we possess the life of sanctifying grace, which is our share in the mystery of Christ, we are living according to this new existence whether or not this life here and now incarnates itself in a concrete, supernatural act. In this sense the life of grace, the "new creation," is fundamental, radical and transcendent, a share in the transcendent holiness or mystery of God Himself.

However, God expects that our life of transcendent holiness incarnate itself in concrete supernatural acts. It is in this respect that we speak of reliving the various mysteries of Christ through specific supernatural attitudes and acts. This may also be called imitation of Christ, but with a certain precaution, namely, that the imitation in question is to be considered primarily as interior rather than exterior. By this we mean that although the Christian can to a certain extent imitate Christ according to what was His external mode of conduct, it is primarily through adopting the mind of Christ—His interior dispositions—that the Christian puts on Christ. With this said we now offer suggestions as to how the Christian relives the mysteries of Christ whose presence and transforming influences have been encountered in the eucharistic liturgy. For instance, each member of Christ, whether he be bishop, priest, religious or layman, can accomplish much of his redemptive work by an intense reliving of Christ's hidden life. Certainly our heavenly Father would have us learn a great lesson from this fact, namely, that His Christ lived out so many years of His earthly life in a hidden manner, doing the ordinary tasks of the ordinary man. In assimilating this particular mystery of Christ the Christian must say with Rahner: "Let us take a good look at Jesus Who had the courage to lead an apparently useless life for thirty years. We should ask Him for the grace to give us to understand what His hidden life means for our religious existence."<sup>41</sup>

Christ did not lead only a hidden life, but a public life also. All vocations within the Church are likewise called upon to reproduce this part of Christ's life in some manner. One aspect of Christ's public life that

should be common to all Christian vocations is the selflessness, the constant concern and love for others which Christ constantly and vividly displayed. This concern for others cost Christ much in fatigue of body and mind. Nevertheless, He continuously gave Himself completely to others.

Another characteristic of the public life which all can imitate is that of Christ as witness. Here, then, we reemphasize within our present context that which was stated in an earlier chapter concerning the Church's continuation of Christ's prophetic role. Christ was a witness to the Father, a perfect manifestation of the Father's truth and love. He bore this witness not only through His formal teaching but also through His actions, His attitude, His gestures. All members of Christ are called to give witness also. The Christian's entire life should be a witness to the truth he holds. The world comes to know Christ through the Christian. Schillebeeckx comments on this aspect of being witness: "Our life must itself be the incarnation of what we believe, for only when dogmas are lived do they have any attractive power. Why in the main does Western man pass Christianity by? Surely because the visible presence of grace in Christians as a whole, apart from a few individuals, is no longer evident."<sup>42</sup>

St. Paul sums up the redemptive work of Christ under the mysteries of death-resurrection.<sup>43</sup> These are the principal mysteries which the Christian must assimilate from the eucharistic liturgy and reproduce in his own life. More and more the Christian spiritual life is being considered as a process of death-resurrection. It is obvious why this is so, for if Christ's entire life was summed up in His death-resurrection, so also is that of His members.

Christ's death and Resurrection are so closely united that they are two facets of one mystery rather than two separate mysteries.<sup>44</sup> It is likewise with the Christian. The death aspect of his supernatural life is intimately connected with his life of resurrection, and in various ways. For instance, his very life of grace is his life of resurrection, but his con-

tinual growth in spiritual death – death to selfwill in all its numerous manifestations – is achieved through grace. Consequently, the Christian's life of resurrection always accompanies his life of death. We also see the two connected more obviously in the sense that a growth in the death element always results in a growth in the resurrection element. The daily life of the Christian, then, is a combination and antithesis of death-resurrection. As he gives himself in love to the Father's will, manifested to him in so many ways, the Christian is achieving both death and resurrection. Christ's ultimate goal, as man, was His Resurrection. Resurrection, a greater share in the divine life through grace, is also the goal of the Christian.

These few remarks give examples of how each member of the People of God is called upon to relive Christ's entire life as centered in death-resurrection. More could be said. But we think our remarks have sufficed to indicate how the Christian is to live out these various mysteries of Christ. Moreover, let it be recalled that all the mysteries ultimately make up the one mystery of Christ.

What we have said thus far applies in general to all vocations. But since there are different vocations within the Church, we must also say that each of these projects Christ in a somewhat different manner. Each

Christian must study how in particular he is called to put on Christ. Essentially, of course, all put on Christ in the same manner. Yet there are accidental differences according to the vocation, work and individuals involved. For instance, the lay person, in general, is called to a deeper involvement in temporal affairs than is the religious.

Each member of Christ, according to his particular vocation, work and personality, has something special to take away from the Mass.<sup>45</sup> Each Christian, as he lives out the mystery of Christ, projects Christ to the world in his own way. Each Christian, as he himself grows in Christlikeness, is also helping Christ to redeem the world in a manner commensurate with his total Christian person. For holiness is necessarily apostolic whether the Christian at any particular time is engaged in an external apostolate or not.

Each Christian, according to God's plan for him, must have a vital and dynamic desire to help Christianize the whole world. Perhaps he can do very little through direct, external apostolate. But his prayers and sacrifices – indeed, his entire life – can touch the whole world. Through an intense Christian life the individual can help Christ further the redemption of the family, the business world, the social structure and the like. The Christian is called to have this deep desire: to see the whole universe imprinted with the name of Christ. How true it is to say that the Christian's vocation, rooted in the liturgy, calls for deep involvement in this sacred activity.<sup>46</sup> In schematic outline we have discussed the manner in which the baptized Christian extends his Mass to his daily existence. As he so lives out his Mass, he is becoming more Christlike. He becomes a more perfect priest and victim for his next participation in the eucharistic sacrifice.<sup>47</sup> The beautiful cycle which the Mass contains lies exposed before us. As part of this cycle the Christian





is intimately involved in the process of continued redemption. The Mass is the center of the Christian life: "...the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all her power flows."<sup>48</sup>

## Uniting Our Hearts to the Mass

I give my heart to Jesus and Mary with you in love. I want to pray united to you as a body all day. Yesterday as I prayed I realized how important it is we stay united to the Mass the whole time we are praying. Great grace is released as we stay united to the Mass and pray in union with the Masses being offered around the world. Whenever we do the hourly prayers or pray the rosary or do God's will in our activities we are so consciously aware of our union to the Mass being celebrated at that moment. There is such grace that can be released from our union with the Mass. Here is Lucia's vision.



Whether I am at the Mass so actively present or I am in my home or my car or in a church, I want to be so united to the Masses going on around the world. I realized as never before that so much grace could be released. This deep connection to the Mass is so important so tremendous grace will be released. The sacrifice is being offered through the hands of a priest. I pray and tremendous grace can be released. I want to be so connected to this font of grace as the Mass is being celebrated. I want my prayer to be most pure so I unite myself to the pure and holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary. I want all I do to be a sacrifice united to their pure and holy Hearts. I want the most tremendous grace possible to be released from the

offering of my life and my prayers so I unite so deeply to this font of grace. I realized more than ever before in my life how Jesus is Chief Priest and Victim. The priest is the instrument God uses. But in every Mass, Christ Himself is celebrating through the priest. The Mass is so powerful because it is Christ Who is the Chief Priest. We stand with Mary under the cross and we beg God to release grace. Our every action should be cognitively united to the Masses going on around the world. Great grace will be released from our prayers and offerings.

### Morning Offering

My dear Father, I offer you this day all my prayers, works, joys, and sufferings in union with Jesus in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in the Holy Spirit.

I unite with our Mother Mary, all the angels and saints, and all the souls in purgatory to pray to the Father for myself, for each member of my family, for my friends, for all people throughout the world, for all the souls in purgatory, and for all other intentions of the Sacred Heart.

I love You, Jesus, and I give You my heart. I love you, Mary, and I give you my heart. Amen.

*Imprimatur:* Most Reverend Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, January 22, 1997. (applies to this prayer only)

## Prayer Chapters

We wish you to join with us in praying the prayers for the priests, the Church and the world. We gather as a body praying especially at 6:30 daily, but some pray at different times all day.

We unite in our morning offering especially praying for the priests, the Church and the world.

Prayer manuals are available free of charge. Father Carter desired these prayer chapters to be begun all over the earth to help bring about the Reign of the Sacred Heart in all hearts.

Let there be peace on earth and love and joy, please pray with us for the priests, the Church and the world. Tapes and disks are available with Father Carter praying the prayers.

SHEPHERDS OF CHRIST ASSOCIATES



PRAYER MANUAL

**We Pray for Priests  
and  
Renewal of the Church  
and World.**

## Act of Consecration

“Jesus, You show us Your Heart as symbol of Your life of love in all its aspects, including Your most special love for each of us as unique individuals. Out of Your great love for us, You died a brutal death, nailed to the wood of the cross. Out of Your great love for us, You rose gloriously from the dead.

“From Your pierced Heart the Church with her life-giving Sacraments was born. In the Eucharist, Crown and Center of the Church’s life, You continue to give Yourself to us with the deepest, most tender, most on-fire, most complete love.

“Jesus, since in Your great love You give Yourself so completely to us, it is only fitting that we make a gift to You in return. It is entirely fitting that we give ourselves completely to You. Yes, we consecrate ourselves to Your most loving Heart. Each of us says to You, O Lord, our Savior and our Friend: ‘Jesus, take me wholly, take me completely to Your magnificent Heart. Out of love I give myself to You. Live in and through me. In love You give Yourself completely to me. In love and in a spirit of reparation, I want to give myself, with the help of Your grace, entirely to You. Take me, Jesus, to an ever closer union with the Father, in the Holy Spirit, with Mary my Mother at my side. Pierced, Glorified, Eucharistic Heart of Jesus I place my trust in You.’”

“Dear Blessed Virgin Mary, I consecrate myself to your maternal and Immaculate Heart, this Heart which is symbol of your life of love, including your most special love for me as this unique individual. You are the Mother of my Savior. You are also my Mother. In a return of love, I give myself entirely to your motherly love and protection. You followed Jesus perfectly. You are His first and perfect disciple. Teach me to imitate you in the putting on of Christ. Be my motherly intercessor so that, through your Immaculate Heart, I may be guided to an ever closer union with the Pierced, Glorified, Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the flock.”

## A Prayer for Priests

Many of the laity pray for us priests, and consistently so. Is it not also fitting that we priests pray for all our brothers in the priesthood, and consistently so? There follows a prayer that can aid us in this endeavor.

“Lord Jesus, Chief Shepherd of the Flock, we pray that in the great love and mercy of Your Sacred Heart You attend to all the needs of Your priest-shepherds throughout the world. We ask that You draw back to Your Heart all those priests who have seriously strayed from Your path, that You rekindle the desire for holiness in the hearts of those priests who have become lukewarm, and that You continue to give Your fervent priests the desire for the highest holiness. United with Your Heart and Mary’s Heart, we ask that You take this petition to Your heavenly Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit. Amen”.

*The above prayer is taken from the prayer manual of Shepherds of Christ Associates, a facet of Shepherds of Christ Ministries. The associates are members of prayer groups which meet regularly to pray for all the needs of the entire human family, but most especially for priests. If you would like a copy, or copies, of this prayer manual, and further, if you would like information on how to begin a Shepherds of Christ prayer chapter, contact us at:*

Shepherds of Christ

P.O. Box 193

Morrow, Ohio 45152-0193 U.S.A.

Phone (toll free):1-888-211-3041 or 1-513-932-4451

Fax: 1-513-932-6791



**We make rosaries for schools. Do you know anyone who can help us get more rosaries for the schools? Last October we had orders for more than 80,000 rosaries.**

### NOTES

1. Scripture quotations are taken from *The New Jerusalem Bible*, Doubleday.
2. The *Documents of Vatican II*, “*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*”, America Press Edition, No. 17.
3. *Ibid.*, No. 48.
4. Pope Pius XII, Encyclical Letter, *Mystici Corporis*, AAS, XXXV, pp. 232-233.
5. Pope Paul VI, Encyclical Letter, *Mysterium Fidei*, St. Paul Books and Media, pp. 5, 25, 26.
6. Cf. Karl Rahner, *The Church and the Sacraments* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1963), p. 15.
7. Casel has given the great impetus to the theological rediscovery of the reality of mystery presence in the liturgy. Therefore, when we disagree with Casel we in no way intend to detract from the greatness of his contribution.
8. Cf. Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1963), pp. 55-56.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 58-60.
10. F. X. Durrwell, *The Resurrection* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1960), p. 59.
11. St. Thomas Aquinas, *S.T.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 4, ad 1.
12. Cf. S. Lyonnet, “La Sotériologie Paulinienne” in Robert and Feuillet, *Introduction à la Bible*,



website: <http://www.sofc.org>  
E-Mail: [info@sofc.org](mailto:info@sofc.org)

2001, ISSUE 2

# shepherds of Christ

Shepherds of Christ Ministries  
P.O. Box 193  
Morrow, Ohio 45152-0193  
U.S.A.

Non-Profit  
Organization  
**U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID**  
Shepherds of Christ  
Ministries

Shepherds of Christ, a spirituality newsletter for priests, is published four to six times a year by Shepherds of Christ Ministries, P.O. Box 193, Morrow, Ohio 45152-0193. While distribution is free of charge, donations are still very much appreciated. Inquiries and comments are welcome, as are address changes and addresses of the newly ordained. Permission to reproduce intact is granted for non-commercial use. Editor Father Edward Carter S.J. was Professor of Theology at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio. John Weickert is President. Good Shepherd illustration is by Brother Jerome Pryor, S.J. Layout and design are by Joan Royce. Also dedicated to the spiritual advancement of priests is a worldwide network of lay/religious prayer chapters, Shepherds of Christ Associates, headquartered at 2919 Shawhan Road, Morrow, Ohio 45152, U.S.A., telephone toll free 1-888-211-3041, fax 513-932-6791.

## Notes, continued from page 19

- Vol. II (Tournai, Belgium: Desclée, 1959), p. 874.
13. St. Augustine, *City of God* (New York: Fathers of the Church, 1954), Vol. 14, p. 123.
  14. Cf. Durrwell, *Op. cit.*, p. 61.
  15. Cf. Lyonnet, *Op. cit.*, pp. 871-872.
  16. Cf. Durrwell, *Op. cit.*, p. 126.
  17. Cf. Bernard Cooke, *Christian Sacraments and Christian Personality* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1965), pp. 132-133.
  18. Bernard Cooke, "Synoptic Presentation of the Eucharist as Covenant Sacrifice" in *Theological Studies*, Vol. 21 (1960), p. 12.
  19. Schillebeeckx, *Op. cit.*, pp. 21-22.
  20. Durrwell, *Op. cit.*, pp. 68-69. This "acceptance" element of Christ's sacrifice is an extremely important one, a fact being shown through contemporary scriptural, theological and liturgical studies. Two outstanding works which treat of the role of Christ's Resurrection in God's redemptive plan are F. X. Durrwell's *The Resurrection* and L. Cerfaux's *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul*.
  21. S. Lyonnet, "La valeur sotériologique de la résurrection du Christ selon saint Paul" in *Gregorianum*, Vol. 39 (1958), pp. 312-313. Translation taken from *Theology Digest*, Vol. 8 (1960), p. 92.
  22. J. Jungmann, "Eucharistic Piety" in *Worship*, Vol. 35 (1961), p. 416.
  23. Cf. Second Vatican Council, *Constitution on the Liturgy*, No. 48, and *Constitution on the Church*, No. 10.
  24. Cf. Jungmann, *Op. cit.*, p. 417.
  25. Paul VI, *Mysterium Fidei*, N.C.W.C. edition, Paragraph 31.
  26. Second Vatican Council, *Constitution on the Liturgy*, No. 14.
  27. Cf. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Divine Milieu* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965), p. 123. Cf. also Christopher Mooney's commentary, "The Body of Christ in the Writings of Teilhard de Chardin" in

- Theological Studies*, Vol. 25 (1964), p. 607.
28. From a lecture of Teilhard de Chardin given in 1930, cited in Mooney, *Loc. cit.*
  29. Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, N.C.W.C. edition, Paragraph 34.
  30. J. Jungmann, *Pastoral Liturgy* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1962), p. 284.
  31. Durrwell, *Op. cit.*, pp. 324-325.
  32. Cf. *Mediator Dei*, Paragraph 100.
  33. Cf. *Ibid.*, Paragraph 81.
  34. J. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite* (New York: Benziger, 1959), p. 146.
  35. *Loc. cit.*
  36. *Constitution on the Church*, No. 7.
  37. Dietrich von Hildebrand, *Liturgy and Personality* (Baltimore: Helicon, 1960), p. 33.
  38. Cf. Karl Rahner, *Nature and Grace* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1964), pp. 23f.
  39. Cf. Jungmann, "Eucharistic Piety" in *Worship*, Vol. 35 (1961), p. 419.
  40. F. X. Durrwell, *In the Redeeming Christ* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1963), p. 63.
  41. Karl Rahner, *Spiritual Exercises* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1965), p. 160.
  42. Schillebeeckx, *Op. cit.*, p. 209.
  43. Cf. L. Cerfaux, *Christ in the Theology of St. Paul* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1959), pp. 190-192.
  44. Durrwell, *The Resurrection*, p. 48.
  45. Cf. Karl Rahner, *The Christian Commitment* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1963), p. 168.
  46. Cf. Second Vatican Council, *Constitution on the Church*, No. 36.
  47. For a current treatment of the varied richness of the Eucharist, cf. J. Wicks, "The Movement of Eucharistic Theology" in *Chicago Studies*, Vol. 10 (1971), pp. 267-284.
  48. *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, No. 10.

I Give My Heart to  
Jesus and Mary  
With You in Love.