



# "Real Presence"

"O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine! All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine!"

Volume 4

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Consecrated to Mary, Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament

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The goal of this newsletter and apostolate, Apostles of the Real Presence, is to make Jesus Christ Known, Loved, and Adored in the Blessed Sacrament.



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**Website:**  
[www.ApostlesOfTheRealPresence.com](http://www.ApostlesOfTheRealPresence.com)

**E-mail:**  
[Info@ApostlesOfTheRealPresence.com](mailto:Info@ApostlesOfTheRealPresence.com)



Apostles of the Real Presence  
PO Box 8260  
Cranston RI 02920  
USA  
(401) 943-4171

## "Ecclesia de Eucharistia"

by John Paul II

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 17 April, Holy Thursday, in the year 2003, the Twenty-fifth of my Pontificate, the Year of the Rosary.



*"Ave, verum corpus natum de Maria Virgine!* Several years ago I celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of my priesthood. Today I have the grace of offering the Church this Encyclical on the Eucharist on the Holy Thursday which falls *during the twenty-fifth year of my Petrine ministry.* As I do so, my heart is filled with gratitude. For over a half century, every day, beginning on 2 November 1946, when I celebrated my first Mass in the Crypt of Saint Leonard in Wawel Cathedral in Krakow, my eyes have gazed in recollection upon the host and the chalice, where time and space in some way 'merge' and the drama of Golgotha is in a living way, thus revealing its mysterious 'contemporaneity'. Each day my faith has been able to recognize in the consecrated bread and wine the divine Wayfarer who joined the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and opened their eyes to the light and their hearts to new hope (Lk 24:13-35).

The Church draws her life from the Eucharist . . . Through the changing of bread and wine into the body and blood of the Lord, she rejoices in this presence with unique intensity" . . . as the "Eucharistic sacrifice is 'the source and summit of the Christian life.' . . . the most holy Eucharist contains the church's entire spiritual wealth: Christ himself, our Passover and living bread. Through his own flesh, now made living and life-giving by the Holy Spirit, he offers life to men.

The Church was born of the paschal mystery. . . . At every celebration of the Eucharist, we are spiritually brought back to the paschal Triduum: to the events of the evening of Holy Thursday, to the Last Supper and to what followed it. The institution of the Eucharist sacramentally anticipated the events which were about to take place, beginning with the agony in Gethsemane. . . . when Christ in prayer was filled with anguish 'and his sweat became like drops of blood falling down upon the ground.

The blood which shortly before he had given to the Church as the drink of salvation in the sacrament of the Eucharist, began to be shed; its outpouring would then be completed on Golgotha to become the means of our redemption. . . . The agony in Gethsemane was the introduction to the agony of the Cross on Good Friday. . . . Every priest who celebrates Holy Mass, together with the Christian community which takes part in it, is led back in spirit to that place and that hour. . . . In this gift, Jesus Christ entrusted to his Church the perennial making present of the paschal mystery. With it he brought about a mysterious 'oneness in time' between that Triduum and the passage of the centuries. . . .

. . . The Eucharist is always in some way celebrated on the altar of the world. It unites heaven and earth. It embraces and permeates all creation. The Son of God became man in order to restore all creation, in one supreme act of praise, to the One who made it from nothing. He, the Eternal High Priest who by the blood of his Cross entered the eternal sanctuary, thus gives back to the Creator and Father all creation redeemed. He does so through the priestly ministry of the Church, to the glory of the Most Holy Trinity. Truly this is the *mysterium fidei* which is accomplished in the Eucharist: the world which came forth from the hands of God the Creator now returns to him redeemed by Christ.

"Ecclesia de Eucharistia" . . . cont'd on p.3

## HOLY FATHER CELEBRATES 25 YEAR PONTIFICATE

### ANNOUNCES 31 NEW CARDINALS

His Holiness Pope John Paul II plans to celebrate the occasion of his 25th Anniversary of his Pontificate on October 16, 2003 in a special concelebrated Mass to be held at 6 p.m. in St Peter's Square in Rome.

Due to delicate health, the Holy Father has recently ceased travel; prayers and sacrifices are requested that our Holy Father may be well for the celebration of the occasion of his Pontificate Anniversary, at which time Pope John Paul II will also announce the creation of 31 new Cardinals in a gathering of Bishops in Rome.

Cardinal Camillo Ruini, Vicar General of the Holy Father for the Diocese of Rome, wrote a letter to the entire Diocese asking each believer to prepare "spiritually for this moment of grace . . . for the Holy Father in your parishes and communities, in families and in the depths of your hearts," and he supplied each family with a selection of prayers for the Holy Father, Rosary meditations and passages for contemplation in Eucharistic Adoration, together with a series of prayer intentions to be included in the prayers of the faithful on the three Sundays preceding the celebration.

The Cardinal said: "Together with the Pope we will also pray for the Church of Rome so that all of us, her children, may live as true disciples of Jesus Christ and be his credible witnesses, courageously travelling, following the Pope's example, the way that leads from Christ to every man and woman."



Speaking to the Eucharist, Saint Ephrem said that Jesus "called the bread his living body and he filled it with himself and his Spirit...He who eats it with faith, eats Fire and Spirit...Take and eat this, all of you, and eat with it the Holy Spirit. For it is truly my body and whoever eats it will have eternal life."

## EARLY CHURCH FATHERS and THE REAL PRESENCE

### St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Lecture XXII (On The Mysteries, IV)  
On the Body and Blood of Christ (1 Cor. xi. 23)

I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, how that the Lord Jesus, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread . . .

1. Even of itself the teaching of the Blessed Paul is sufficient. . . For you have just heard him say distinctly, that our Lord Jesus Christ in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks He broke it, and gave to His disciples, saying, Take, eat, this is My Body: and having taken the cup and given thanks, he said, Take, drink, this is My Blood. Since then He Himself declared and said of the Bread, This is My Body, who shall dare to doubt any longer? And since He has Himself affirmed and said, This is My Blood, who shall ever hesitate, saying, that it is not His blood?

2. He once in Cana of Galilee, turned the water into wine, akin to blood, and is it incredible that He should have turned wine into blood? . . .

3. Wherefore with full assurance let us partake as of the Body and Blood of Christ: for in the figure of Bread is given to thee His Body, and in the figure of Wine His Blood; that thou by partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ, mayest be made of the same body and the same blood with Him. For thus we come to bear Christ in us, because His Body and Blood are distributed through our members; thus it is that, according to the blessed Peter, we became partakers of the divine nature.

4. Christ on a certain occasion discoursing with the Jews said, Except ye eat My flesh and drink My blood, ye have no life in you. They not having heard His saying in a spiritual sense were offended, and went back, supposing that He was inviting them to eat flesh.

5. In the Old Testament also there was shew-bread; but this, as it belonged to the Old Testament, has come to an end; but in the New Testament there is Bread of heaven, and a Cup of salvation, sanctifying soul and body; for as the Bread corresponds to our body, so is the Word appropriate to our soul.

6. Consider therefore the Bread and the Wine not as bare elements, for they are, according to the Lord's declaration, the Body and Blood of Christ; for even though sense suggests this to thee, yet let faith establish thee. Judge not the matter from the taste, but from faith be fully assured without misgiving, that the Body and Blood of Christ have been vouch-safed to thee.

7. Also the blessed David shall advise thee the meaning of this, saying, Thou hast prepared a table before me in the presence of them that afflict me. What he says, is to this effect: Before Thy coming, the evil spirits prepared a table for men, polluted and defiled and full of devilish influence; but since Thy coming, O Lord, Thou hast prepared a table before me. When the man says to God, Thou hast prepared before me a table, what other does he indicate but that mystical and spiritual Table, which God hath prepared for us over against, that is, contrary and in

opposition to the evil spirits? And very truly; for that had communion with devils, but this, with God. Thou hast anointed my head with oil. With oil He anointed thine head upon thy forehead, for the seal which thou hast of God; that thou mayest be made the engraving of the signet, Holiness unto God. And thy cup intoxicateth me, as very strong. Thou seest that cup here spoken of, which Jesus took in His hands, and gave thanks, and said, This is My blood, which is shed far many for the remission of sins.

8. Therefore Solomon also, hinting at this grace, says in Ecclesiastes, Come hither, eat thy bread with joy (that is, the spiritual bread; Came hither, he calls with the call to salvation and blessing), and drink thy wine with a merry heart (that is, the spiritual wine); and let oil be poured out upon thy head (thou sees he alludes even to the mystic Chrism); and let thy garments be always white, for the Lord is well pleased with thy works; for before thou camest to Baptism, thy works were vanity of vanities. But now, having put off thy old garments, and put on those which are spiritually white, thou must be continually robed in white: of course we mean not this, that thou art always to wear white raiment; but thou must be clad in the garments that are truly white and shining and spiritual, that thou mayest say with the blessed Esaias, My soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with a garment of salvation, and put a robe of gladness around me.

9. Having learn these things, and been fully assured that the seeming bread is not bread, though sensible to taste, but the Body of Christ; and that the seeming wine is not wine, though the taste will have it so, but the Blood of Christ; and that of this David sung of old, saying, And bread strengtheneth man's heart, to make his face to shine with oil, "strengthen thou thine heart," by partaking thereof as spiritual, and "make the face of thy soul to shine." And so having it unveiled with a pure conscience, mayest thou reflect as a mirror the glory of the Lord, and proceed from glory to glory, in Christ Jesus our Lord:--To whom be honour, and might, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

(This teaching of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, A.D. 315-386, speaks to the Eucharist and the prefigurations of the sacraments in the Old Covenant rituals, fulfilled in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ by His perfect and living Sacrifice (Mal 1:11) from which flow spiritual graces available to believers in the daily perpetuation of the Sacraments in the Catholic Church. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the Old Law and the Prophets.)



### THE REAL PRESENCE = JESUS CHRIST, BODY, BLOOD, SOUL AND DIVINITY

St. Augustine writes: 'Our Lord has bequeathed to us His Body and Blood under the form of substances in which a multitude of things have been reduced to unity, for one of them, namely bread, consisting as it does of many grains is yet one, and the other, that is to say wine, has its unity of being from the confluent juice of many grapes; and therefore St. Augustine elsewhere says: 'O Sacrament of mercy, O sign of unity, O bond of charity!'" (*Summ. Theol. P. III., q. lxxix., a.1.*)



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P.O. Box 8260 Cranston RI 02920 (401) 943-4171

Website: www.ApostlesOfTheRealPresence.com Email: Info@ApostlesOfTheRealPresence.com



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"Ecclesia de Eucharistia" . . . cont'd from p.1

The Eucharist, as Christ's saving presence in the community of the faithful and its spiritual food, is the most precious possession which the church can have in her journey through history. . . .

In many places, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is also an important daily practice and becomes an inexhaustible source of holiness. The devout participation of the faithful in the Eucharistic procession on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ is a grace from the Lord which yearly brings joy to those who take part in it.

In some places the practice of Eucharistic adoration has been almost completely abandoned. In various parts of the Church abuses have occurred, leading to confusion with regard to sound faith and Catholic doctrine concerning this wonderful sacrament. At times one encounters an extremely reductive understanding of the Eucharistic mystery. Stripped of its sacrificial meaning, it is celebrated as if it were simply a fraternal banquet. Furthermore, the necessity of the ministerial priesthood, grounded in apostolic succession, is at times obscured and the sacramental nature of the Eucharist is reduced to its mere effectiveness as a form of proclamation. This has led here and there to ecumenical initiatives which, albeit well-intentioned, indulge in Eucharistic practices contrary to the discipline by which the Church expresses her faith. How can we not express profound grief at all this? The Eucharist is too great a gift to tolerate ambiguity and depreciation.

It is my hope that the present Encyclical Letter will effectively help to banish the dark clouds of unacceptable doctrine and practice, so that the Eucharist will continue to shine forth in all its radiant mystery.

The Church has received the Eucharist from Christ—the memorial of her Lord's death and resurrection; this central event of salvation becomes really present and 'the work of our redemption is carried out'. This sacrifice is so decisive for the salvation of the human race that Jesus Christ offered it and returned to the Father only after he had left us a means of sharing in it as if we had been present there. Each member of the faithful can thus take part in it and inexhaustibly gain its fruits. This is the faith from which generations of Christians down the ages have lived. . . . I wish once more to recall this truth and to join you, my dear brothers and sisters, in adoration before this mystery: a great mystery, a mystery of mercy. What more could Jesus have done for us? Truly, in the Eucharist, he shows us a love which goes 'to the end' (cf Jn 13:1), a love which knows no measure. . . .

The Eucharist thus applies to men and women today the reconciliation won once for all by Christ for mankind in every age. 'The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice'. Saint John Chrysostom put it well: 'We always offer the same Lamb, not one today and another tomorrow, but always the same one. For this reason the sacrifice is always only one... Even now we offer that victim who was once offered and who will never be consumed'.

. . . Saint Ambrose reminded the newly-initiated that the Eucharist applies the event of the resurrection to their lives: "Today Christ is yours, yet each day he rises again for you".

The sacramental re-presentation of Christ's sacrifice, crowned by the resurrection, in the Mass involves a most special presence which — in the words of Paul VI — 'is called 'real' not as a way of excluding all other types of presence as if they were 'not real', but because it is a presence in the fullest sense: a substantial presence whereby Christ, the God-Man, is wholly and entirely present'.

. . . Through our communion in his body and blood, Christ also grants us his Spirit. Saint Ephrem writes: 'He called the bread his living body and he filled it with himself and his Spirit . . . He who eats it with faith, eats Fire and Spirit . . . Take and eat this, all of you, and eat with it the Holy Spirit. For it is truly my body and whoever eats it will have eternal life'. . . .

"Ecclesia de Eucharistia" . . . cont'd on p.4

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

Lord, Jesus, Lamb of God, grant that my love for the Eucharist may grow ever stronger. It is through Your sacrifice and the mystery of Your Resurrection that those who believe in You have received the gift of eternal life. Increase my appreciation of Mass so that I always approach Your altar humbly and prayerfully. May I accept every opportunity to spend time in contemplation before Your presence in the Eucharist as Your Blessed Mother did at Knock. Like the pilgrims at Knock, may I make the Eucharistic celebration the center of all my devotions. Amen.

(Taken from "Prayers to Our Lady of Knock," Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, Belleville Illinois 62223 www.snows.org)



"You ask how the bread becomes the Body of Christ, and the wine. . . the Blood of Christ. I shall tell you: the Holy Spirit comes upon them and accomplishes what surpasses every word and thought. . . . Let it Be enough for you to understand that it is by the Holy Spirit, just as it was of the Holy Virgin and by the Holy Spirit that the Lord, through and in himself, took flesh."

(St. John Damascene, De fide orth. 4, 13: PG 94, 1145A.)

"APOSTLES" NEWS

Thank You again ...for your donations to the apostolate. May God bless you all.



On October 19, 2003, World Mission Sunday, in Rome, Pope John Paul II will beatify Mother Teresa of Calcutta. †



CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

"The Lord, having loved those who were his own, loved them to the end. Knowing that the hour had come to leave this world and return to the Father, in the course of a meal he washed their feet and gave them the commandment of love. In order to leave them a pledge of this love, in order never to depart from his own and to make them sharers in his Passover, he instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and Resurrection, and commanded his apostles to celebrate it until his return; 'thereby he constituted them priests of the New Testament.' No. 1337

"In the New Testament, the memorial takes on new meaning. When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ's Passover, and it is made present: the sacrifice Christ offered once for all on the cross remains ever present. 'As often as the sacrifice of the Cross by which 'Christ our Pasch has been sacrificed' is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried out.'" No. 1364

SPIRITUAL CORNER. . .

Pope John Paul II . . . In His Own Words:

"DOMINICAE CENAE" ("On The Mystery And Worship Of The Eucharist") Promulgated On 24 February 1980

"The Eucharist is above all else a sacrifice. It is the sacrifice of the Redemption and also the sacrifice of the New Covenant, as we believe and as the Eastern Churches clearly profess: 'Today's sacrifice,' the Greek Church stated centuries ago, 'is like that offered once by the Only-begotten Incarnate Word; it is offered by Him (now as then), since it is one and the same sacrifice.' Accordingly, precisely by making this single sacrifice of our salvation present, man and the world are restored to God through the paschal newness of Redemption. This restoration cannot cease to be: it is the foundation of the 'new and eternal covenant' of God with man and of man with God. If it were missing, one would have to question both the excellence of the sacrifice of the Redemption, which in fact was perfect and definitive, and also the sacrificial value of the Mass. In fact, the Eucharist, being a true sacrifice, brings about this restoration to God.

Eucharistic Teaching Aids

Be sure to view our new website:

www.ApostlesOfTheRealPresence.com

There you will find twelve teachings of the Catholic Church, such as: the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, the significance of the Mass, developing a personal relationship with Jesus, confession and much more.\*

Consequently, the celebrant, as minister of this sacrifice, is the authentic priest, performing—in virtue of the specific power of sacred ordination—a true sacrificial act that brings creation back to God. Although all those who participate in the Eucharist do not confect the sacrifice as He does, they offer with Him, by virtue of the common priesthood, their own spiritual sacrifices represented by the bread and wine from the moment of their presentation at the altar. For this liturgical action, which takes a solemn form in almost all liturgies, has a 'spiritual value and meaning.' The bread and wine become in a sense a symbol of all that the eucharistic assembly brings, on its own part, as an offering to God and offers spiritually." †

"Ecclesia de Eucharistia" . . . cont'd from p.3

A causal influence of the Eucharist is present at the church's very origins. . . . The Apostles 'were both the seeds of the new Israel and the beginning of the sacred hierarchy'. By offering them his body and his blood as food, Christ mysteriously involved them in the sacrifice which would be completed later on Calvary. By analogy with the Covenant on Mount Sinai, sealed by sacrifice and the sprinkling of blood, the actions and words of Jesus at the Last Supper laid the foundations of the new messianic community, the People of the New Covenant.

. . . Incorporation into Christ, which is brought about by Baptism, is constantly renewed and consolidated by sharing in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, especially by that full sharing which takes place in sacramental communion. We can say not only that each of us receives Christ, but also that Christ receives each of us. . . . Indeed, it is because of him that we have life: 'He who eats me will live because of me' (Jn 6:57). Eucharistic communion brings about in a sublime way the mutual 'abiding' of Christ and each of his followers: 'Abide in me, and I in you' (Jn 15:4).

. . . The two sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance are very closely connected. Because the Eucharist makes present the redeeming sacrifice of the Cross, perpetuating it sacramentally, it naturally gives rise to a continuous need for conversion . . . . If a Christian's conscience is burdened by serious sin, then the path of penance through the sacrament of Reconciliation becomes necessary for full participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice. . . .

If we wish to rediscover in all its richness the profound relationship between the Church and the Eucharist, we cannot neglect Mary, Mother and model of the Church. . . . Mary can guide us towards this most holy sacrament, because she herself has a profound relationship with it.

. . . In the 'memorial' of Calvary all that Christ accomplished by his passion and his death is present. Consequently all that Christ did with regard to his Mother for our sake is also present. To her he gave the beloved disciple and, in him, each of us: 'Behold, your Son!'. To each of us he also says: 'Behold your mother!' (cf Jn 19:26-27)

. . . Every commitment to holiness, every activity aimed at carrying out the Church's mission, every work of pastoral planning, must draw the strength it needs from the Eucharistic mystery and in turn directed to that mystery as its culmination. In the Eucharist we have Jesus, we have his redemptive sacrifice, we have his resurrection, we have the gift of the Holy Spirit, we have adoration, obedience and love of the Father.

. . . By giving the Eucharist the prominence it deserves, and by being careful not to diminish any of its dimensions or demands, we show that we are truly conscious of the greatness of this gift. We are urged to do so by an uninterrupted tradition, which from the first centuries on has found the Christian community ever vigilant in guarding this 'treasure'.

. . . Let us take our place, dear brothers and sisters, at the school of the saints, who are the great interpreters of true Eucharistic piety. In them the theology of the Eucharist takes on all the splendour of a lived reality; it becomes 'contagious' and, in a manner of speaking, it 'warms our hearts'.

. . . In the humble signs of bread and wine, changed into his body and blood, Christ walks beside us as our strength and our food for the journey, and he enables us to become, for everyone, witnesses of hope. If, in the presence of this mystery, reason experiences its limits, the heart, enlightened by the grace of the Holy Spirit, clearly sees the response that is demanded, and bows low in adoration and unbounded love."

(The previous excerpts are from the Encyclical letter "Ecclesia Eucharistia" - view it in its entirety at [http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENGO821/\\_\\_\\_P3.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENGO821/___P3.HTM))

