

THE THEOLOGY OF THE EUCHARIST: WORSHIP THAT MAKES US WHOLE

1. Eucharist, Agape, Holy Sacrifice, Mass, Divine Liturgy: What's in a Name? (October 26)

Names we give to the Eucharist shape the way we welcome God's healing, presence, and fellowship.

2. The Words of Institution (Consecration): Are They Magical? (November 2)

Jesus' words "This is my body" make sense if we become aware of the many ways Jesus is present in our celebrations.

3. The Invocation of the Holy Spirit (Epiclesis): The Eucharist's Forgotten Act? (November 9)

The Holy Spirit is called to sanctify bread, wine, and the community.

4. The Great Thanksgiving (Doxology): What Does the Eucharist Have to Do with Praise? (November 16)

The Eucharistic turns everything into praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

5. "Do This in Memory of Me" (Memorial): Are We Remembering or Re-Living? (November 30)

The Eucharist is more than remembrance - it unites us to Jesus' death and resurrection, until he comes again.

6. The Eucharist as Meal and Sacrifice: How Do These Fit Together? (December 7)

We become a sacrifice to God by being united in one body through the sharing of one bread.

7. One Bread, One Body (Communion): How United Do We Really Become? (December 14)

The Eucharist heals us from division and isolation by calling us into fellowship with each other and with God.

8. "Go in Peace to Love and Serve the Lord" (Mission): How Does the Eucharist Shape Our Lives? (December 21)

The Eucharist blends into everyday life as God sends us out to love, serve, and be his witnesses to the world.

2. THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION (CONSECRATION): ARE THEY MAGICAL?

1. See Table 1. **New Testament passages on the last supper**

John 6:51–58

2. ⁵¹I am the **living bread** that came down from heaven. If anyone **eats** of this bread, he will live forever. And the **bread** that I will give for the life of the world is **my flesh**.”
3. ⁵²The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” ⁵³So Jesus said to them,
4. “Truly, truly, I say to you,
 - 4.1. unless you **eat** the **flesh** of the Son of Man and **drink** his **blood**, you have no life in you.
 - 4.2. ⁵⁴Whoever feeds on my **flesh** and drinks my **blood** has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.
 - 4.3. ⁵⁵For my **flesh** is true food, and my **blood** is true drink.
 - 4.4. ⁵⁶Whoever feeds on my **flesh** and drinks my **blood** abides in me, and I in him.
 - 4.5. ⁵⁷As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever **feeds on me**, he also will live because of me.
5. ⁵⁸This is the **bread** that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.”

John 1:14

6. ¹⁴And the Word became **flesh** and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 13:1-20

7. ¹Now before the Feast of the **Passover**, [...]
 - 7.1. ³Jesus, [...]
 - i. ⁴rose from **supper**.
 - ii. He laid aside his outer garments, and
 - iii. taking a towel, tied it around his waist.
 - iv. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. [...]
 - 7.2. ¹²When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, [...]
 - i. “Do you understand what I have done to you?
 - ii. ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.
 - iii. ¹⁴If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.
 - iv. ¹⁵For I have given you **an example**, that you also should **do** just as I have done to you.

Luke 24:13-35

8. **30** When he was at table with them,
 - 8.1. he took the **bread**
 - 8.2. and **blessed**
 - 8.3. and **broke** it
 - 8.4. and **gave** it to them.
 - 8.5. **31** And their **eyes were opened**, and they **recognized** him.
 - 8.6. And he **vanished** from their sight.
9. **32** They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?” **33** And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, **34** saying, “The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” **35** Then they told what had happened on the road, and **how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.**
10. See the **2. Eucharistic Prayer 1 from the Book of Common Prayer**
11. Fundamental shifts in the understanding and practice of the Eucharist
 - 11.1. From *meal* to *wafer*
 - 11.2. From *Thanksgiving to the Father* to *Union with Jesus*

History of the introduction of Jesus’ words (“Consacration”) in the Eucharistic Prayer

12. 1st–2nd centuries: no quotation of Jesus’s words
 - 12.1. The earliest Eucharistic prayers (e.g. *Didache* 9–10) give thanks for the gifts of creation and redemption but do not explicitly quote the words of Jesus.
 - 12.2. *Justin Martyr’s First Apology* (67, c. 150 AD) describes how the president gives thanks “at some length” over bread and wine “according to his ability,” but again no explicit formula is recorded.
 - 12.3. The anamnesis (“remembrance”) of Christ’s passion and resurrection was central, but the exact *words of institution* were not yet integral to the anaphora text.
13. 3rd century: Emergence of explicit words of institution
 - 13.1. In Hippolytus’s *Apostolic Tradition* (c. 215 AD), the Eucharistic Prayer includes Jesus’ words:

“...taking the bread, giving thanks, saying: ‘Take, eat, this is my body which is broken for you; do this for the remembrance of me.’”
 - 13.2. This is the earliest surviving example of an explicit quotation of Jesus’ words in the Eucharistic Prayer itself.
14. 4th century: Jesus’ words become the ‘highlight’
 - 14.1. By the mid-4th century, nearly all Eucharistic prayers include Jesus’ words.
 - 14.2. The *Anaphora of Serapion* (c. 350 AD) explicitly quotes the words over the bread and the cup.
 - 14.3. One significant exception: the *Anaphora of Addai and Mari* (possibly from the 3rd century) remains in use without including Jesus’ words – and it is still in use in the Assyrian Church of the East (Iraq, Iran, Syria, Lebanon, India). The

Catholic Church (in 2001) recognized it as valid and affirmed that Jesus' words are *implicitly* present in the prayer as a whole.

15. "Probably from the time that the 'institution narrative' [Jesus' words] became part of the Eucharistic Prayer, the interest of participants shifted from the Father to Jesus. [...] For Gregory of Nyssa's (c. 330–95) the value, wonder and mystery of the Eucharist lay in its encounter with the Christ in the consumption of the elements."¹
16. Gregory of Nyssa *Catechetical Oration*, 37.7:
"Christ disseminates himself in every believer through that flesh, whose substance comes from bread and wine, blending himself with the bodies of believers, so that by this union with the Immortal, the human person too may be a sharer in incorruption."
17. The fixation on the *Eucharist as presence of Jesus* became such that especially in the Middle Age authors started to wonder at what precise moment this happened during the celebration. The obvious choice was for the words of consecration – at the precise instant the priest says the words "This is my body", Jesus is on the altar (hence bells, genuflection, and elevation of the host).

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¹ Thomas O'Loughlin, *The Eucharist*, 29.

1. NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES ON THE LAST SUPPER

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (A.D. 54–57)	Mark 14:22–25 (A.D. 65–70)	Matthew 26:26–29 (A.D. 80–90)	Luke 22:14–20 (A.D. 80–90)
			¹⁴ And when the hour came, he reclined at table, and the apostles with him. ¹⁵ And he said to them, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.
			¹⁶ For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”
			¹⁷ And he took a cup , and when he had given thanks he said, “Take this, and divide it among yourselves. ¹⁸ For I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” .
²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed	²² And as they were eating ,	²⁶ Now as they were eating ,	
took bread ,	he took bread ,	Jesus took bread ,	¹⁹ And he took bread ,
²⁴ and when he had given thanks ,	and after blessing it	and after blessing	and when he had given thanks ,
he broke it,	broke it and gave it to them,	it broke it and gave it to the disciples,	he broke it

and said, "This is my body , which is for you.	and said, "Take; this is my body ."	and said, "Take, eat; this is my body ."	and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body , which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."			Do this in remembrance of me."
<u>25</u> In the same way also he took the cup , after supper,	<u>23</u> And he took a cup ,	<u>27</u> And he took a cup ,	<u>20</u> And likewise the cup after they had eaten,
	and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, and they all drank of it.	and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying,	
saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood ."	<u>24</u> And he said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant ,	"Drink of it, all of you, <u>28</u> for this is my blood of the covenant ,	saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood ."
	which is poured out for many.	which is poured out for many	
		for the forgiveness of sins .	
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."			
<u>26</u> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.			
	<u>25</u> Truly, I say to you, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."	<u>29</u> I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."	

2. THE GREAT THANKSGIVING - EUCHARISTIC PRAYER I (BCP)

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says

The Lord be with you.

People And with thy spirit.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them up unto the Lord.

Celebrant Let us **give thanks** unto our Lord God.

People It is meet and right so to do.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, **give thanks unto thee, O Lord**, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

Celebrant and People

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:
Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

The people kneel or stand.

Then the Celebrant continues

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy

Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

"Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying,

"Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood,

we, and all thy whole Church, may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.

And here we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost,
all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end.

AMEN.