

St. Mary's of the Lake, Watkins Glen, NY
St. Benedict's, Odessa, NY



The Greatest Gift: The Eucharist, Part III

Fr. Jeffrey S. Tunncliff
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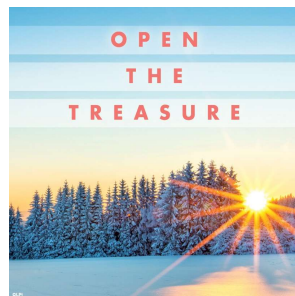
Webinar Tips

- All participants are muted to reduce background noise
- If slides are not fully visible, check at the top center of your screen for "fit to window" under arrow.
- If you would like to ask a question, at the bottom of your screen you should see a box with the letters "Q & A". Click it and you can type your question. It will show on my screen.
- In addition to the slides, you should see a video of me. It should appear in the upper right of your screen. It should not block any significant content on the slides. If it does, you can drag it around.

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Opening Prayer

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Recent studies show many Catholics don't believe it is Jesus.

I HAVE NO DOUBT IT IS JESUS.



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Review

- Why this series?
 - Why a Three-Year Eucharistic Revival?
- **It is Jesus**
 - New Testament on the Real Presence
 - The Old Testament points us to the Eucharist as the Bread of Life
- Names for the Eucharist
 - The word *Eucharist* means “thanksgiving”
 - Lord’s Supper
 - Breaking of the Bread
 - Holy Communion
 - Holy Sacrifice

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What does the word
“Transubstantiation”
mean?

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Transubstantiation

“As Cyril says: “Jesus once in Cana of Galilee turned the water into wine, akin to blood; is it incredible that He should have turned wine into blood” (Pitre, 146).

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The Eucharistic Prayer: The Epiclesis

GIRM 79

c) The *epiclesis*, in which, by means of particular invocations, **the Church implores the power of the Holy Spirit** that the gifts offered by human hands be consecrated, that is, become Christ’s Body and Blood, and that the unblemished sacrificial Victim to be consumed in Communion may be for the salvation of those who will partake of it.

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The Eucharistic Prayer: The Epiclesis cont'd

- In the Eucharistic Prayer we ask
 - Eucharistic Prayer II – “Make holy, therefore, these gifts, we pray, by **sending down your Spirit upon them** like the dewfall, so that they may become for us the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
 - We ask the Holy Spirit to transform us into the Body of Christ
 - Example – Eucharistic Prayer III – “**grant that we**, who are nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son and filled with his Holy Spirit, **may become one body, one spirit in Christ.**”

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The Eucharistic Prayer:

Institution Narrative and Consecration

GIRM 79

“d) The **institution narrative** and Consecration, by which, by means of the words and actions of Christ, that Sacrifice is effected which Christ himself instituted during the Last Supper, when he offered his Body and Blood under the species of bread and wine, gave them to the Apostles to eat and drink, and leaving with the latter **the command to perpetuate this same mystery.**”

(see Matthew 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, Luke 22:14-20, and I Corinthians 11:23-25)

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Jewish Tradition of a Change

“Moreover, we learn that certain rabbis believed that something special happened to the Bread of the Presence when it was offered by the priests as a sacrifice to God” (Pitre, 128).

They moved it from a marble to gold table after it had been consecrated (Pitre, 128).

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Jewish Understanding – More Than Bread

“According to the Jewish Talmud, during the reign of one particularly holy High Priest, even a small piece of the Bread of the Presence could provide miraculous sustenance.” (Pitre, 129)

- “so that every priest, who obtained a piece thereof as big as an olive, ate it and became satisfied with some eating thereof and even leaving something over. (Babylonian Talmud, YOMA 39A)” (Pitre, 129).

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Jews Forbidden to Drink Blood

- “Any living creature that moves about shall be yours to eat; I give them all to you as I did the green plants. Only meat **with its lifeblood still in it you shall not eat**” (Genesis 9:3-4).
- “As for anyone, whether of the house of Israel or of the aliens residing among them, who consumes any blood, I will set myself against that individual and will cut that person off from among the people, **since the life of the flesh is in the blood**, and I have given it to you to make atonement on the altar for yourselves, because it is the blood as life that makes atonement. That is why I have told the Israelites: **No one among you, not even a resident alien, may consume blood**” (Leviticus 17:10-12).
- “Only, **you shall not eat of the blood**, but must pour it out on the ground like water” (Deuteronomy 12:16).

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Eucharistic Miracles

- **Routine** tests show no change
 - My own non-miraculous experiences
 - As a child sensed something special at church
 - First Mass presiding as a priest
 - Blessed Carlos Acutis – website on Eucharistic Miracles - <http://www.miracolieucaaristici.org/> lists over a 100 documented miracles in last 1,000 years
 - 1263 Germany – the bread turned into flesh after the consecration
- (<http://www.miracolieucaaristici.org/galleria/en/galleria.html?wh=italia>)

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Eucharistic Miracles cont'd

- 1996 Argentina – Santa Maria Church in Buenos Aires – A consecrated host was found on the floor and placed in Holy Water and placed in the Tabernacle- did not dissolve → reddish stains – tests on it showed it to be heart muscle
- (<http://www.miracolieucaaristici.org/galleria/en/galleria.html?wh=Argentina>)

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Who Can Receive This Awesome Gift?

- Why can't everyone receive Holy Communion?
 - Baptism as the gateway to the Sacraments
 - The meaning of the word “communion”

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Who Can Receive This Awesome Gift? Cont'd
Why can't everyone receive Holy Communion?

Again, we turn to the Old Testament and receive instruction from the Lord himself.

“**The LORD** said to Moses and Aaron: This is the Passover statute. **No foreigner may eat of it.** However, every slave bought for money **you will circumcise; then he may eat of it...** If any **alien** residing among you would celebrate the Passover for the LORD, all his males **must be circumcised**, and then he may join in its celebration just like the natives. But no one who is uncircumcised may eat of it” (Exodus 12:43-44,48).

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Baptism and Confirmation are received **once** in a lifetime.

Understanding what the Eucharist is,
how often can we receive it?

Can you believe popes have had to encourage frequent reception?

“In 1742, Pope Benedict XIV decreed that the laity should **be encouraged to receive communion frequently**, a theme that is taken up forcefully in the early twentieth century (at least in theory) by **Pope Pius X**.” (Irwin, *The Sacraments*, 137).

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How Often is “Frequent”?

- Should desire to receive at least weekly
 - The Sunday Obligation (Third Commandment – Keep the Sabbath holy) is to come to Mass not to receive Communion.
 - However, you should desire it as often as possible
 - Should not receive in a state of mortal sin
- Daily Mass
- Can it be received more than once in the same day?

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Preparing to Receive the Eucharist

- One hour Fast and demeanor at Mass
 - “First, the consumption of the Passover lamb was to be preceded by several hours of fasting, from the time of evening sacrifice (about 3 p.m.)” (Pitre, 150-151).
- Why fast before receiving Communion?
 - Some medicines require an empty stomach
 - Anticipation of what we are to receive, what we hunger for
- Penitential Rite and Liturgy of the Word precede the Liturgy of the Eucharist

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Who Can Worthily Receive the Eucharist?

We need to be in a state of grace:

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1384-1387
- USCCB, *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church*

“50. Before we receive Holy Communion, we should make a good examination of conscience to ensure that we are properly disposed to receive the Body and Blood of the Lord.” (cf. 48-49)

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Who Can Worthily Receive the Eucharist? Cont'd

It's in the Bible:

“Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord **unworthily** will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord. A person **should examine himself**, and so eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.” (1 Corinthians 11:27-29)

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Who Can Worthily Receive the Eucharist? Cont'd

- Venial sins forgiven in celebrating the Eucharist (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1394)
 - “All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that is not **deadly**.” (1 John 5:17)
 - Penitential Rite
 - Lord, I am not worthy...

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Who Can Worthily Receive the Eucharist? Cont'd

USCCB *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church*
 45. ...Venial sins are those sins and **everyday faults** that, although they reflect a degree of selfishness, **do not break the covenant with God**. They do not deprive the sinner of friendship with God or of sanctifying grace. Venial sins are not to be taken lightly, but they do not destroy communion because they do not destroy the principle of divine life in us. Indeed, reception of the Eucharist strengthens our charity and wipes away venial sins, while also helping us to avoid more serious sins. Pope Francis brought attention to this medicinal character of the Eucharist when he pointed out that it “is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak.””

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Who Can Worthily Receive the Eucharist? Cont'd

- Mortal sins need to be confessed before receiving Communion
 - “Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, **go first** and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23-24)
 - USCCB, *The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church* – “46. There are some sins, however, that do rupture the communion we share with God and the Church, and that cause grave offense to human dignity. These are referred to as grave, or mortal, sins (see 1 Jn 5:16-17). One commits a mortal sin by **freely, knowingly, and willingly** choosing to do something that **involves grave matter** and that is opposed to charity, opposed to love of God and neighbor.”

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Questions From Past Evaluations:

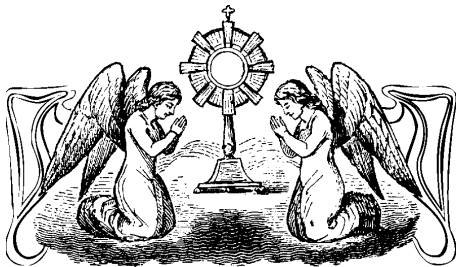
- “I have heard some priests have refused Communion for a person they felt should not receive. I also heard a priest can not refuse Communion for a person. Could you clarify the teaching?”
- “Are priest allowed to refuse to hear a confession? Are they allowed to refuse absolution?”

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Ocular Communion and Adoration



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Adoration – Historical Development

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1379

“The tabernacle was first intended for the reservation of the Eucharist in a worthy place so that it could be brought to the sick and those absent, outside of Mass. As faith in the real presence of Christ in his Eucharist deepened, the Church became conscious of the meaning of silent adoration of the Lord present under the Eucharistic species. It is for this reason that the tabernacle should be located in an especially worthy place in the church and should be constructed in such a way that it emphasizes and manifests the truth of the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.”

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The Jewish Roots of Adoration

“Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the LORD God, the God of Israel” (Exodus 34:23, 23:17). According to both the Jerusalem Talmud and Babylonian Talmud, at each of these feasts, the priests in the Temple would do something remarkable. They would remove the Golden Table of the Bread of the Presence from within the Holy Place so that the Jewish pilgrims could see it. When they removed the holy bread, the priest would elevate it...” (Pitre, 130).

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Eucharistic Processions



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Knowing What the Eucharist Is Leads Us to Reverence

Comments from Past Evaluations:

- “One thing I love about the Catholic Church IS the reverence - upon entering and praying before Mass, during the Liturgy and throughout the service.”
- “I love the reverence we have in the Catholic Church. We are entering His Holy sacred church and He is right there in the church and I love how we are mindful of Him when we enter the Catholic Church.”

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Reverence – Genuflection What are we genuflecting to?

“A genuflection, made by bending the right knee to the ground, **signifies adoration**, and therefore it is reserved for the **Most Blessed Sacrament**, as well as for the **Holy Cross** from the solemn adoration during the liturgical celebration on Good Friday until the beginning of the Easter Vigil” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM, 274).

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Reverence – Bow

What are We Bowing to?

“A bow signifies reverence and honor shown to the persons themselves or to the signs that represent them. There are two kinds of bow: a bow of the head and a bow of the body.

a) A bow of the head is made when the three Divine Persons are named together and at the names of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Saint in whose honor Mass is being celebrated” (GIRM, 275).

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Reverence – Bow

What are We Bowing to? Cont'd

“b) A bow of the body, that is to say, a profound bow, is made to the altar; during the prayers *Munda cor meum* (Cleanse my heart) and *In spiritu humilitatis* (With humble spirit); in the Creed at the words *et incarnatus est* (and by the Holy Spirit . . . the Priest bows slightly as he pronounces the words of the Lord at the Consecration (GIRM, 275).

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Reverence – The Value of Silence

- Before Mass
- After Communion
 - Taking time to reflect on what we have received
 - Individual prayer of thanksgiving
- After Mass?

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We are the Body of Christ.

We are his hands and feet in the world.

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your lives.

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Resources for the Eucharistic Revival can be found at:

- Diocese of Rochester - <https://eucharisticrevival.dor.org/>
- USCCB - <https://www.eucharisticrevival.org/>

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“Homework”

- Go to Mass every week
- “For reflection: How do I prepare myself to receive the gift of Jesus Christ into my heart and my life? What does the gift of Jesus Christ mean for me?” (bulletin 2-20-11, OLOL)
 - Don’t take the Eucharist for granted (Coronavirus)
- “For reflection: What does it mean to take the Eucharist into the world? How am I Jesus for another? How are others Jesus for me? What one thing can I do this week that will embody Jesus for others?”

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Future Schedule

- **Upcoming sessions - ????**
- When you exit this webinar a short evaluation questionnaire should come up to invite your feedback.
- The slides for this presentation will be available online at <http://www.renewaloffaith.org/greatestgift>

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Resources

Catechism of the Catholic Church. Second Edition. Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997.

St. Francis De Sales, *Introduction to the Devout Life.* Ignatius Press: San Francisco/Augustine Institute: Greenwood, CO. 2015.

Irwin, Rev. Kevin W., *The Sacraments: Historical Foundations and Liturgical Theology.* Paulist Press: New York. 2016.

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Resources cont'd

Longenecker, Fr. Dwight, "Beware the term 'Real Presence'" Catholic Answers. 12/1/98. Online at <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/beware-the-term-real-presence>

Pitre, Brant, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*. Image: New York. 2016.

Rolheiser, Ronald, *Our One Great Act of Fidelity: Waiting For Christ in the Eucharist*. New York: Image. 2011.

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Resources cont'd

St. Joseph Edition of The New American Bible Revised Edition. New Jersey, Catholic Book Publishing Corp. 2010.

USCCB, *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. Washington, DC: USCCB. 2011.

USCCB, "The Mystery of the Eucharist in the Life of the Church." Accessed online 12/10/22 at <https://www.usccb.org/resources/mystery-eucharist-life-church-0>

USCCB, *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. Washington, DC: USCCB, 2006.

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