

from God to teach. Our Lord Himself declares His mission is from God "He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath life everlasting" (St. John V. 24), and again He says "You have heard not my word but the word of the Father who hath sent me." (St. John XIV. 24).

Jesus chose, from the disciples who had followed Him in His many journeys and had listened with joy to His preaching, twelve, whom He named apostles. These He prepared for the mission He was to give them. He taught them the mysteries of God, His divine doctrine, not only publicly whilst preaching to the multitude but privately. They became His family. They were always with Him. They were witnesses of the holiness of His life, of His nights of prayer, of His miracles, of His death and of His Resurrection. To them only "was it given to know the mystery of the Kingdom of God: but to the rest in parables." (St. Luke VIII. 10). They believed in Him and made profession of their faith, that He was Christ the Son of the living God to whom all must come for the words of eternal life.

When Jesus had fully prepared the apostles to continue His work, and was about to return to His Father who had sent Him, before He delivered Himself to the Jews to be crucified and had accomplished the work which the Father had given Him to do, He conferred on the twelve His threefold office of Priest, Sanctifier of souls and Teacher. It was at the time of the feast of Passover. He bade them prepare the Pasch in a large upper chamber, and said to them "With desire have I desired to eat this pasch with you before I suffer" (St. Luke XXII. 15). When they had eaten the pasch He took bread blessed it, broke it and said "This is my body take ye and eat" and in like manner the chalice of wine blessed it and said "This is the chalice of My Blood of the new testament take ye and drink." Thus did Christ offer sacrifice according to the order of Melchisedech. He then said to them, "This do for a commemoration of me" and they were ordained priests, made partakers of His holy priesthood. The apostles received not only the power to consecrate the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ but the power and authority to ordain and consecrate others to the same office and thus perpetuate the priesthood of the new law. Thus was the prophecy of Malachias fulfilled "From the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, My name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered in my name a clean oblation." (Mal. i. 11.).

When Christ ordained His apostles, He gave them power over of His real body and as a consequence authority over His mystical body, the faithful. They were not only to consecrate the Body and Blood of Christ, they were to dispense it to the faithful that they might have eternal life. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life." (St. John VI. 55). They must, therefore, teach the truths they received from their Master—the mysteries of the Trinity of God, of the Incarnation, of the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, of the real presence in the Eucharist, that they may be able by faith to "discern the Body of the Lord," prepare for its worthy reception and obtain everlasting life. They must also have power to sanctify the faithful, to banish sin from their souls that the faithful may not eat the Body of the lord unworthily to