

of the Nativity. The event was of the greatest importance in the divine economy of man's salvation. Accordingly, it was foreshadowed by the manna in the desert, by the bread the angels brought to the starving and discouraged Elias, by the miraculous multiplication of bread to feed the five thousand followers of Jesus in the desert. Christ foretold it plainly and emphatically to the enthusiastic Galileans and His disciples, although He knew that they would murmur at it and abandon Him on account of it. For the realization of that old, oft repeated promise, Christ chooses a most solemn occasion in the great city of Jerusalem. It was the grand joyful feast of the Pasch. The Jews came from near and far. The Easter lambs were bought by the thousands and brought to the Temple to be sacrificed by the priests. Friends and relatives met, assembled, sang their Psalms, and celebrated the festival according to their ritual. While this was going on Jesus, in His own quiet way, ignoring the multitudes, without any public proclamation or demonstration, in the presence of the Twelve, abolished the festival, the Easter lamb, the whole of the Old Testament, by taking bread and saying: "*Take ye and eat: This is My Body,*" and taking the chalice and saying: "*This is my Blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins.. Do this for a commemoration of Me.*" These few creative, living words establish the whole new Church. The Blood for the sins of men is there. The Bread of eternal life is there. The eternal priesthood is there. The Eternal Victim is there. What sublimity in this simplicity!

The Apostles listen in silence, offer no objections, and ask no questions. They believe in Christ, the Son of the living God, who has "the words of eternal life." They accept with gratitude, they receive the consecrated Bread and Chalice with reverence and devotion. A new union, a complete union with Christ is established. They live, and Christ lives in them. Their silence and faith is a lesson for us, a lesson for all who believe. They who believe in the Nativity of Jesus Christ must also believe in the Real Presence of Jesus Christ. Both mysteries rest on the same solid, divine foundation.