

"The object of consecration is, that *the bread and wine which have been offered and dedicated to Almighty God in the offertory may become the most blessed Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (1)

THE CONSECRATION.—"This is the most solemn part of the whole service. Standing at the head of the people in front of the Lord's Table, the earthly Priest stands there as the representative of the High Priest and Chief Shepherd, whose deputy he is, to act in His name and by His authority. That which this earthly priest does is, to use those ordained words and gestures by which 'the outward part or sign,' 'the elements of bread and wine, become united to the inward part or thing signified, the Body and Blood of Christ.' . . . His words and acts are adopted by the Congregation in the 'Amen' which they say at the conclusion of the Prayer, and they are ratified by Christ, who becomes really present under the form of the outward signs, and thus associates them with His Body in heaven. Little or nothing can be said in explanation of this great mystery. . . . Believing the fact of Christ's 'Real Presence,' we can however understand that the result must be that of bringing Him nearer to us than at any other time; and that while he is thus near to us we ought to be very humble and devout in all our gestures, thoughts and words, adoring Him whose Body and Blood are those of the man who is God." (2)

"If, moreover, we have any special prayers to offer up for the Church at large, for our friends, on earth or in Paradise, or for ourselves, this is the time when we may well believe they will most surely come before Him, whether or not it is His will to grant them." (3)

"After the celebrant has delivered the Body and Blood of Christ to himself, he delivers them to the Bishops, Priests and Deacons who are officially present. Then, in well regulated churches, the other Communicants receive in successive order; first, the Choir, as subordinate 'ministers' in the service, then the men, and lastly the women." (4)

"The omission of the ancient words led some persons to suppose that the Church of England had ceased to recognize the 'Real Presence' of our Lord; and by their restoration each communicant is separately reminded that what he receives is 'The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee,' and 'the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee;' so that no excuse is left for ignorant unbelief." (5)

(1) p. 63; (2) p. 64; (3) p. 65; (4) p. 65; (5) p. 65.

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