

THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

(Rev. Father Muller, in "God the Teacher of mankind.")

During the three year and a half in which our Lord Jesus Christ manifested Himself as the Saviour of mankind, He drew all hearts after Him, of the just and even the hearts of the sinner. This wondrous power came from the effect of Our Lord's appearance upon those around Him. A majestic sweetness shone forth in His every look, word, and gesture. He chose for his emblem the lamb, the gentlest of all creatures, and so brightly did this gentleness beam forth from His Divine countenance that, as soon as the holy Baptist beheld Him, he cried out: "Behold the Lamb of God!" A certain nun, having reflected on this lovely sweetness of Our Lord, said to St. Teresa: "I wish that I had lived at the time when Jesus Christ lived on earth. What a joy to see our Lord's blessed countenance, to be near Him, to witness His miracles, to hear from His lips the words of eternal life, to follow him from place to place, to be able to receive him into our houses, and to assist him in his temporal wants! Surely then I would become a saint." St. Teresa, on hearing this, laughed outright. "What! said she, 'do you know, dear sister, that the same Jesus is still with us on earth, that He lives quite near us, in our churches, on our altars, in the Holy Eucharist?"

What is the Holy Eucharist?
The Holy Eucharist is the Body and Blood, the Soul and the Divinity, of Jesus Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine.

Indeed, the Holy Eucharist, or the Blessed Sacrament, is the true Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity, of Jesus Christ, who is truly, really and substantially present under the outward appearances of bread and wine. This is a great mystery: and, in order the more to confirm our faith in it, we must consider:

I. How Jesus Christ prepared the minds of the people to believe in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist.

II. How Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist.

III. Why Jesus Christ hides Himself in his great mystery.

IV. How Jesus Christ confirmed his followers in their faith regarding this great mystery.

V. How this faith is preserved and increased.

VI. Why Jesus Christ instituted the Blessed Sacrament.

VII. What virtues Jesus teaches us in the Holy Eucharist.

VIII. How Jesus Christ prepared the people to believe in the Holy Eucharist.

Our Saviour knew that if He were to teach the Jews and His disciples the new and wonderful doctrine of this mystery without having first prepared them for it, there would be scarcely found one to believe him. When God intends to do something very extraordinary, He generally prepares men for it by revealing to them before hand what He is about to do.

Thus we know that, when He intended to destroy the world by the deluge, He made the destruction known through Noah, a hundred years before it took place. Again, when the Son of God had become Man, and was about to make himself known as the Redeemer of the world, He sent St. John the Baptist to prepare the people for His coming. Finally, when He intended to destroy Jerusalem, He foretold by the prophets the destruction of the city, and Jesus Christ has also described the signs by which men may know when the end of the world is at hand. God acts thus with men because He does not wish to overwhelm them by his strange and mysterious dealings. Hence, when our Divine Saviour was about to tell the people that He intended to give them His flesh and blood as food and drink for their souls, He prepared them for this mysterious doctrine by working an astounding miracle—the feeding of five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes. Those who witnessed this miracle were so filled with reverence for Jesus Christ that they wished to take Him by force and make Him their King. But Jesus, perceiving this, fled from them. They found him again, however, on the following day; and then He took occasion, from the impression the miracle had made on them, to introduce the subject of the heavenly food which He was about to give to the world. "Amen, I say to you; ye seek Me, not because you have seen signs, but because you have eaten of the loaves and were filled. Labors not for the meat which perisheth; but for that which endureth the life everlasting, which the Son of Man will give you." Here Our Lord declares that the food He was to give them would confer eternal life. Their curiosity being excited by these words, they desired to know more about this heavenly food, and asked what sign He would give them, and whether the food He spoke of was better than the manna from Heaven, which God had given their fathers in the desert. Before giving any further explanation, Our Lord speaks of the absolute necessity of faith in His Divine person. "This is the work of God that you believe in Me as your Divine Redeemer. But you have seen Me and believe not. This is the will of My Father that sent me: That every one who seeth the Son, and believeth in Him, may have life everlasting, and I will raise him up in the last day. Amen, amen, I say unto you, he that believeth in Me hath life everlasting." (John xix., 47.)

In ordinary words Our Lord would say: "You must believe that I am your Redeemer and your God, and that, therefore, it is in My power to give you such bread as bestows upon your life everlasting. Then having required of them an unwavering faith, He promises to give them a heavenly bread. He had just given them miraculous bread, a kind of bread far

superior to ordinary bread. The Jews thought that He would perhaps give them something like manna, but Jesus assured them that the heavenly bread, which He intended to give, was far superior even to manna. "Your fathers," He said to them, "did eat manna in the desert, and are dead; but he that eats of the bread that I will give, shall live forever."

Now, manna was called bread from Heaven, the bread of angels. It was better than the miraculous bread, with which Jesus had fed the Jews, and consequently far better than ordinary bread. But Jesus Christ promises to give us a kind of bread far superior even to manna. This he calls the true bread from Heaven, to show us that the manna was but a figure of heavingly bread. He calls it also the Living Bread, to show us unmistakably that it is far more than ordinary bread, for ordinary bread is not a living bread. Now what is this bread that Jesus Christ promises to give us. This Bread, far superior to the ordinary bread, to the miraculous bread, to manna, the Bread of Angels, this Bread from Heaven, this Living Bread, must indeed be very extraordinary, something which had never yet been given to man, since, before promising it, before telling us what it is, Our Lord insists so earnestly upon the necessity of faith. What, then, is this extraordinary Bread? Our Lord no longer conceals it; He tells us in the strongest, clearest language: "I am the Bread of Life, I am the living Bread, which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this Bread, he shall live forever; and the Bread that I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world." (John vi. 48, 51, 52.)

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying: "How can this Man give us His Flesh to eat?" St. Cyril of Alexandria; who lived in the fifth century, asks here: "O Jew, how can you ask this question? Let me also ask you: How did you go out of Egypt? Tell me how the rod of Moses was turned into a serpent, how was his hand made leprous, and again restored, as it is written. How was water changed into the nature of blood. How did you pass through the midst of the sea, as through a dry plain. How was the bitter water of Merriah changed into sweet by a piece of wood. How was water given you from the bosom of the rocks. How was the manna brought down from Heaven for you. How did the Jordan stand still in its bed? Or how, by a mere shout, did the impregnable wall of Jericho fall. And will you not cease to utter that how. Therefore it becomes you to believe in Christ's word and to strive to learn the manner of the Eucharist, rather than say inconsiderately, like men drunk with wine: How can this Man give us His Flesh to eat!"

"The Jews understood Our Lord as inviting them to a barbarous action. They thought it something horrible to order them to eat human flesh and drink human blood. Hence they thought: How can a human body introduce eternal life into us. How can this Body, which is of the same nature as ours, bestow immortality."

"It is the spirit that quickeneth, says Our Lord to them; 'The flesh profits nothing.' That is to say; there is no absurdity in saying that the flesh is unable to bestow life; the nature of the flesh is such that of itself it cannot vivify in any way. On the contrary, it stands in need of a vivifying power. Now, were you to believe that I am your God and Saviour; were you to consider the mystery of the Incarnation, were you to believe that the divinity is united to my humanity in one person, you would also understand that my flesh is food indeed and that my blood is drink indeed. You would understand that he who eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood; abideth in me and I in him, and thus hath everlasting life. It is therefore very foolish on your part to be scandalized at my words. If you think that my flesh cannot infuse life into you, how shall it ascend to Heaven? And yet this spectacle shall be placed before your own eyes."

What shall you say then? When you see my flesh ascend to Heaven, which, to all seeming, is contrary to its nature, will you still say that my flesh contains no vivifying power? "Amen, amen, I say to you, he that believeth in Me, hath everlasting life."

"You must, then, believe me to be what I have so often told you. 'The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life.' My flesh is not flesh only, it is spirit also, because it is perfectly united to my divinity, and assumes the entire vivifying power of my Godhead. Although your human body is subjected to death by sin, and forced to yield to corruption, yet if I am in you by means of my own proper flesh, you shall assuredly rise again. For it is incredible, yes, rather, it is impossible, that life should not vivify those in whom it lives. It is by means of my own flesh that I wish to hide life within you, and to introduce into you, as it were, a certain seed of incorruption, which destroys what is corruptible in you. For, receiving within yourselves both my human and divine nature, you will become glorified by becoming sharers in that which is above all things." It is thus that St. Cyril confounds the Jews for daring to say: "How can this Man give us His Flesh?"

In the sixteenth century some apostate Catholics—calling themselves Protestants—in their pride and ignorance sought to imitate the Jews in contradicting Our Saviour. They said that He spoke only figuratively when he promised, and commanded us to eat His Flesh. Now such an assertion is as absurd and ridiculous as it is false and blasphemous. In Hebrew, and in all the Oriental languages, the expression, "to eat one's flesh," when taken figuratively, means to backbite, to slander, to persecute, and nothing else. To say, then, that Our Saviour spoke only figuratively, would be to say that He commands us, under pain and eternal damnation, to backbite and to slander Him.

When Our Lord Jesus Christ had made this extraordinary promise to the Jews, did they really understand Him to say that He would give them His flesh to eat and His Blood to drink? They clearly did understand Him so, and for this reason asked in astonishment: "How can this man give us His Flesh to eat." And some of them said: "This is a hard saying, who can hear it." And even many of His disciples were so shocked at the idea of eating flesh of Jesus, and drinking His Blood, that they went away from Him altogether, and never went with Him any more. They, then, did not understand Our Lord to have spoken figuratively, for, had they done so, there was no reason for being shocked at His words. The whole Jewish religion was made up of types and figures; so that if Our Lord had spoken figuratively, it would have been nothing new to them. No, the Jews understood Him to speak of eating His very Flesh and drinking His very Blood.

To Be Continued.

LOVE HONOR AND OBEY.
On the whole, married women, that is real women, prefer being ruled to ruling. It is natural to a woman to seek advice. It is scarcely in her nature to go speechlessly on doing what she has to do without aid or counsel. Almost any one of the fair sex is happier if she can 'talk over things' with some man upon whose discretion she relies; and in married lives most wives do, even in the smallest things, what 'he' likes, and fancy that the like it themselves.

Since independence has become the fashion, and strong-minded women have sneered at their more gentle sisters there is a great affection of despising the opinion of the gentlemen, but it is all sheer pretence. Almost every wife chooses her gloves and her ribbons of the tint her husband admires, and the man she loves almost inevitably gives her political opinions, and biases even her social views. Her speech, her dress her manner changes, under his influence. What he desires her to do she does, in nine cases out of ten.

You may rule your wife as you please, good married reader, if you only love and pet her enough. Haughtiness and fault-finding alone will make her restive. And you, dear girls, remember that it will be well to choose a husband good and noble and upright, so that you may obey him to your hearts content without losing your own self-respect; for you will obey him if you love him, and if he be low and mean, you will sink to his level slowly, but surely, in the course of years.

AND THEN

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W. W. McLEOD,
P. O. Inspector,
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Postoffice Inspector,
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