

Alter Christus

*“As an **alter Christus** (another Christ) the priest is in Christ, for Christ and with Christ... Because he belongs to Christ, the priest is radically at the service of all people: he is the minister of their salvation” (Pope Benedict XVI)*

Monthly bulletin dedicated to all the Priests of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands

The Holy Mass and the Effects of the Eucharist

By Saint Pius X

[From the Book *Catechism*]

When did Jesus Christ institute the sacrament of the Eucharist?

Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist at the last supper, which He took with His disciples, the evening before His passion.

Why did Jesus Christ institute the Most Holy Eucharist? Jesus Christ instituted the Most Holy Eucharist for three principal reasons: (1) To be

the Sacrifice of the New Law; (2) To be the food of our souls; (3) To be a perpetual memorial of His passion and death and a precious pledge both of His love for us and of eternal life.

Why did Jesus Christ institute this sacrament under the appearances of bread and wine? Jesus Christ instituted this sacrament under the appearances of bread and wine, because, the Eucharist

being intended to be our spiritual nourishment, it was therefore fitting that it should be given to us under the form of food and drink.

What are the effects which the Most Holy Eucharist produces in us? The principal effects which the Most Holy Eucharist produces in those who worthily receive it are

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Saint Pius X (Giuseppe Sarto) was born in 1835 to a poor but faithful family in Italy. He never understood the importance that was placed on money. He was very content with what he already had and didn't want anything more. Giuseppe placed great value on his relationship with God. He held the belief that as long as he had his faith and the love of God, he had everything that he needed.

Giuseppe's devotion to his faith led him to pursue a career as a priest. He was ordained in 1858 and was considered to be a good and kind priest. His selfless nature and modesty earned him a great deal of positive attention. He worked with the sick and the poor and was involved in religious education of young people, especially those whose families could not afford to send them to church schools.

In 1903 Giuseppe was elected pope. He took the name Pius X. As pope, Pius began to share his belief in the importance of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. He always felt that going to communion often was one of the ways a person could be closest to God. Pius strongly felt that the younger a person could receive his or her First Communion,

the better. Pius enacted a law that made the age of a person's First Communion to be around seven years. He also collected all of the laws of the church into one book, which is called the Code of Canon Law.

Pius was pope for 11 years and is remembered with much love and fondness. He taught weekly catechism classes in a Vatican courtyard with children included. People who met him often said they felt they had met a saint, and it was said that several miracles credited to him occurred while he was still living. He will always be remembered for his simplicity and poverty.

Before he died in 1914, Pius was heard to say, "I was born poor and I will die poor." His canonization took place in 1954, just 40 years after his death.



these: (1) It preserves and increases the life of the soul, which is grace, just as natural food sustains and increases the life of the body; (2) It remits venial sins and preserves us from mortal sin; (3) It produces spiritual consolation.

Does not the Most Holy Eucharist produce other effects in us? Yes; the Most Holy Eucharist produces three other effects in (1) It weakens our passions, and in particular it allays in us the fires of concupiscence; (2) It increases in us the fervour of charity towards God and our neighbour, and aids us to act in conformity with the will of Jesus Christ; (3) It gives us a pledge of future glory and of the resurrection of our body.

The Dispositions Necessary to Receive Holy Communion Worthily

Does the sacrament of the Eucharist always produce its marvellous effects in us? The sacrament of the Eucharist produces its marvellous effects in us when it is received with the requisite dispositions

What conditions are necessary to make a good Communion? To make

a good communion three conditions are necessary: (1) To be in the grace of God (2) To be fasting; (3) To know what we are about to receive, and to approach Holy Communion devoutly.

What is meant by being in the grace of God? To be in the grace of God means to have a pure conscience And to be free from every mortal sin.

What should one who knows that he is in mortal sin do before receiving Communion? One who knows that he is in mortal sin must make a good confession before going to Holy Communion, for even an act of perfect contrition is not enough without confession to enable one who is in mortal sin to receive Holy Communion properly.

Why does not even an act of perfect contrition suffice to enable one who knows he is in mortal sin to go to Communion? Because the Church, out of respect for this sacrament, has ordained that no one in mortal sin should dare to go to Communion without first going to confession.

Does he who goes to Communion in mortal sin receive Jesus Christ?

He who goes to Communion in mortal sin receives Jesus Christ but not His grace; moreover, he commits a sacrilege and renders himself deserving of sentence of damnation.

What sort of fast is required before Communion? Before communion

there is required a natural fast which is broken by taking the least thing by way of food or drink.

If one were to swallow a particle that had remained between the teeth, or a drop of water while washing, might he still go to Communion?

If one were to swallow a particle that had remained between the teeth, or a drop of water while washing, he might still go to Communion, because in both cases these things would either not be taken as food or drink, or they

would have already lost the nature of either.

Is it ever allowed to go to Communion after having broken the fast? To go to Communion after

having broken the fast is permitted to the sick, who are in danger of death, and to those who on account of prolonged illness have received a special dispensation from the Pope.

Communion given to the sick in danger of death is called *viaticum*, because it supports them on their way from this life to eternity.

In what does the preparation before Communion consist?

Preparation before Communion consists in meditating for some time on Whom we are about to receive, and on who we are; and in

making acts of faith, hope, charity, contrition, adoration, humility, and desire to receive Jesus Christ.

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In what does the thanksgiving after Communion consist? Thanksgiving after Communion consists in keeping ourselves recollected in order to honour the Lord who is within us; renewing our acts of faith, of hope, of charity, of adoration, of thanksgiving, of offerings, and of requests, especially for those graces which are most necessary for ourselves and for those for whom we are bound to pray.

How long does Jesus Christ abide within us after Holy Communion? After Holy Communion Jesus Christ abides within us by His grace as long as we commit no mortal sin; and He abides within us by His Real Presence until the sacramental species are consumed.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

The Essence, Institution and Ends of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass

Should the Holy Eucharist be considered only as a sacrament? The Holy Eucharist, besides being a sacrament, is also the permanent Sacrifice of the New Law, which Jesus Christ left to His Church to be offered to God by the hands of His priests.

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In what in general does a sacrifice consist? In general a sacrifice consists in the offering of some sensible thing to God and in some way destroying it as an acknowledgment of His Supreme Dominion over us and over all things.

What is this Sacrifice of the New Law called? This Sacrifice of the New Law is called the Holy Mass.

What, then, is the Holy Mass? The Holy Mass is the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ offered on our altars under the appearances of bread and wine, in commemoration of the Sacrifice of the Cross.

Is the Sacrifice of the Mass the same as that of the Cross? The Sacrifice of the Mass is substantially the same as that of the Cross, for the same Jesus Christ, Who offered Himself on the Cross, it is Who offers Himself by the hands of the priests, His ministers, on our altars; but as regards the way in which He is offered, the Sacrifice of the Mass differs from the Sacrifice of the Cross, though retaining the most intimate and essential relation to it.

What difference and relation then is there between the Sacrifice of the Mass and that of the Cross? Between the Sacrifice of the Mass and that of the Cross there is this difference and relation, that on the Cross Jesus Christ offered Himself by shedding His Blood and meriting for us; whereas on our altars He sacrifices Himself without the shedding of His Blood, and applies to us the fruits of His passion And death.

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What other relation has the Sacrifice of the Mass to that of the Cross? Another relation of the Sacrifice of the Mass to that of the Cross is, that the Sacrifice of the Mass represents in a sensible way the shedding of the Blood of Jesus Christ on the Cross, because, in virtue of the words of consecration, only the Body of our Saviour is made present under the species of the bread and only His Blood under the species of the wine; although by natural concomitance and by the hypostatic union, the living And real Jesus Christ is present under each of the species.

Is not the Sacrifice of the Cross the one only Sacrifice of the New Law? The Sacrifice of the Cross is the one only Sacrifice of the New Law, inasmuch as through it Our Lord satisfied Divine Justice, acquired all the merits necessary to save us, and thus, on His part, fully accomplished our redemption. These merits,

however, He applies to us through the means instituted by Him in His Church, among which is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

For what ends then is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered? The Sacrifice of the Mass is offered to God for four ends: (1) To honour Him properly, and hence it is called Latreutical; (2) To thank Him for His favours, and hence it is called Eucharistical; (3) To appease Him, make Him due satisfaction for our sins, and to help the souls in Purgatory, and hence it is called Propitiatory; (4) To obtain all the graces necessary for us, and hence it is called Impetratory.

Who is it that offers to God the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass? The first and principal Offeror of the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass is Jesus Christ, while the priest is the minister who in the Name of Jesus Christ offers the same Sacrifice to the Eternal Father.

Who instituted the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass? Jesus Christ Himself instituted the Sacrifice of the Holy

Mass when He instituted the Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist and said that this should be done in memory of His passion.

To whom is the Holy Mass offered? The Holy Mass is offered to God alone.

If the Holy Mass is offered to God alone why are so many Masses celebrated in honour of the Blessed Virgin And the Saints? Mass celebrated in honour of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints is always a sacrifice offered to God alone; it is said to be celebrated in honour of the Blessed Virgin and the Saints to thank God for the gifts He has given them, and through their intercession to obtain from Him more abundantly the graces of which we have need.

Who shares in the fruits of the Mass? The entire Church shares in the fruits of the Mass, but more particularly: (1) The priest and those who assist at Mass, the latter being united with the priest; (2) Those for whom the Mass is applied, both living and dead.