

EAT GOD
or
DIE

**An examination of The Eucharist, Passover
Seder, and Last Supper**

By
Metropolitan Archbishop Paul, S.S.B. (Ret.)

EPILOGUE

Divine Liturgy and the Holy Eucharist are too precious to waste or ignore by not taking every opportunity to receive or give the benefits they are capable of providing.

Immediately before Divine Liturgy everyone, priest and laity, has the opportunity to focus intention for which Divine Liturgy is being offered, as well as their own individual intentions, in addition to and beyond the standard intentions.

In addition to a praying statement of the intention immediately prior to the Divine Liturgy, the following is a good, catchall end of prayer: “That (I, we, he, she, they) will be happy with You here and for all eternity in heaven; that (I, we, he, she, they) will acquire and never lose the Holy Spirit; that (I, we, he, she, they) will operate divinely and attain eternal salvation; that (I, we, he, she, they) will love You with all (my, our, his, her, their) heart(s) and assist others to do the same.”

Immediately following the Consecration,. when the Priest elevates the Sacred Body and Blood, praying, “Thine of Thine Own we offer unto Thee, on behalf of all and for all,” one may add, “and especially for (whomever or whatever special intention).

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death and also been richly rewarded if they had simply stopped talking about Christ's death and resurrection.

But none of them took advantage of that potential. Not taking advantage of the offers to avoid torture and death, and to receive temporal riches and wealth, is totally illogical, **UNLESS** each one actually saw and engaged with the Risen Christ.

The Risen Christ is so real and so overwhelming real that they could not abandon this truth even in the face of horrible suffering, torture, and death.

People simply do not undergo such horrors in support of a lie especially when escaping the horrors and receiving rewards would be so easy. People simply do not die for things in which they do not believe when they are able to escape death by stating they do not believe. People simply do not die for that which they know is false when they are able to not only escape death but also be handsomely rewarded for stating it is false, or for just keeping quiet.

Ref: Col. 3:1-4; Mat 28:1-7

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PREFACE

Why the title, “Eat God or Die”?

Because that is what God said, what He has told us.

Perhaps, considering what Our Lord Jesus Christ God actually said, grammatical correctness would recommend the title be “Eat God or Be Without Life” or “Eat God or Be Dead”. However, this little book is intended first, for those who do believe Jesus Christ is God the Only Begotten of the Father, then, for those who do not so believe but do believe in God, or god (s), and then for those who state they are agnostic, or atheists. Since the prime intendees (prospective users and readers) are Christians, they presumable were validly Baptized, and therefore at Baptism received eternal life - which they can loose. To regain it, or to keep it, worthily eat God, because that is what God said to do.

Why use or read this work?

Out of Love, or out of fear - or a little of each.

We hope this little book will serve as a spiritual aid during retreats, and also during the liturgical period beginning The Sunday of the Prodigal Son,

horrible, torturous, deaths. But not only did the Risen Christ appear to and interact with those who believed Him to be God, He also appeared to and interacted with many who did not believe Him to be God. Most notably amongst those non-believers was the chief prosecutor of Christians, of the followers of Christ - Saint Paul.

Each one of these who was martyred was tortuously killed except Saint Paul, who was beheaded without torture because he was a Roman Citizen. But he still lived a hard and harsh life, much more harsh than if he would have abandoned being a follower of Christ.

Of the Twelve Apostles, only Saint John, the youngest, was not martyred, and died a natural death. But life for him would have been much more easy had he abandoned Christ, and his appointment to Mary the Ever Virgin Mother of God. Remember, he probably was thrown into boiling oil before the Latin Gate, which was, miraculously, not fatal.

Every one of these hundreds of people who were martyred were tortured and killed because they claimed to be eyewitnesses of Christ’s death and resurrection. They all died because each made an unwavering and unrelenting claim that Christ rose from the grave. Each could not only have saved their own life, but also been richly rewarded, had they recanted Christ’s death and resurrection. Many of them would have avoided torture and

thousand years ago, a reasonable person will know that God did it.

But we remain in the somewhat miraculous. Is there any cold, hard logic, to support the resurrection? Yes.

The Apostles could not have stolen Christ's body, nor could the Roman soldiers have allowed the Apostles to take Christ's body. The soldiers were charged with, commissioned with, making sure Christ's body was not removed. If the Apostles took it by force, the Roman soldiers would have suffered severe punishment - probably death - for failure to be able to defeat a handful of Jews. If the soldiers were bribed to allow Christ's body to be removed, they would have violated their orders and been subject to severe punishment and execution. Remember, the soldiers who were bribed by the Jewish leaders to say the Apostles stole Christ's body were not happy with the punishment Pontius Pilate dealt out. And Saint Longinus and his companions refused to recant the resurrection, and were executed because they refused to recant. If they had not witnessed the resurrection, logic dictates they would not have persisted in a course of action which must result in their tortured murder.

Then there are the lives of the Twelve Apostles, the seventy-two disciples, and the hundreds of Christ's followers, all of whom saw and interacted with the Risen Christ, many of whom died

which is the ninth Sunday before Pascha (Easter) [Septuagesima Sunday in the Gregorian or Western Rite] and ending Pascha Sunday. Though Meat Fast Sunday does not begin until the Sunday after the Sunday of the Prodigal Son, the Prodigal Son introduces us to the benefits of living in God's house, which is a good time to begin "spiritual exercises".

It has the potential of being of assistance in a time of discernment.

Hopefully the contents of the various chapters will assist in developing or strengthening love of God.

But if all else fails, perhaps fear will be an inducement to establishing a better relationship with God *in accordance with His terms and instructions*. To that end, below is the Sequence from the Gregorian / Western Rite Requiem Divine Liturgy.

REQUIEM SEQUENCE

Dreaded day, that day of ire,
When the world shalt melt in fire,
Told by Sibyl and David's lyre.

Fright men's hearts shall rudely shift,
As the Judge through gleaming rift
Comes each soul to closely shift,

Then, the trumpet's shrill refrain,

Piercing tombs by hill and plain,
Souls to judgment shall arraign.

Death and nature stand aghast,
As the bodies rising fast,
Hie to hear the sentence passed.

Then, before Him shall be placed,
That whereon the verdict's based,
Book wherein each deed is traced.

When the Judge His seat shall gain,
All that's hidden shall be plain,
Nothing shall unjudged remain.

Wretched man, what can I plead?
Whom to ask to intercede,
When the just much mercy need?

Thou, O awe-inspiring Lord,
Savine e'en when unimplored,
Save me, mercy's fount adored.

Ah! Sweet Jesus, mindful be,
That Thou cam'st on earth for me:
Cast me not this day from Thee.

Seeking me Thy strength was spent
Ransoming Thy limbs were rent:
Is this toil to no intent?

Thou, awarding pains condign,
Mercy's ear to me incline,

say Christ's Apostles had taken Christ's body. Several of the soldiers took the bribes, falsely so reported, and suffered the consequences for allowing a bunch of rag tag civilian Jews to take the body. Saint Longinus and two of his companions refused the bribe and reported Christ's rising from the dead. Pilate instructed them to keep quiet about it, but they resigned their commissions and returned to their homes in Cappadocia after having been Baptized by one of the Apostles. In Cappadocia they preached The Way taught by Christ, and the death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, winning great numbers of followers to Christ. They were so effective the Jewish elders persuaded Pilate to have them killed if they would not stop. They refused to stop, and Pilate had them killed. Quite simply the actions of Saint Longinus and his companions, and their refusal to recant the Resurrection, were completely illogical if they had not witnessed Christ's Resurrection.

Then, there is the veil of the sanctuary, which separated the holy from the holy of holies where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. It was torn in two from top to bottom. If humans were going to tear into two pieces a thirty foot veil - curtain - hanging from the ceiling, they would grab it and would tear it from the bottom up. But this veil was torn from the top to the bottom. Either there were a couple of very tall men around who decided to tear the veil in two from top to bottom, or God had it done. Since we have no mention of forty foot tall Jews wandering around Jerusalem a couple of

charge of Christ's crucifixion, and also in charge of guarding His tomb after the crucifixion. Saint Longinus had to certify Christ as being dead, to Pilate. If he certified falsely, he would have been subject to horribly tortured punishment and death. We therefore are able to be assured Christ died on the cross. We also have reports of numerous historians of that time to the same.

We also have not only Biblical relations of events which coincided with Christ's death, but also have, as it were, travelers' "reports" and correspondence which relate some of those events.

One of the most widely reported occurrences is people who had died - some many years before, and some of more recent demise - rising from the dead both as Christ died and after His resurrection, and even apparently up to the time of His Ascension. While this is not a proof of His resurrection, it is worth mentioning, if for no other reason than this: Imagine good old Amos and his wife Hannah working around their house. Then they see Uncle Jedediah, who died eight years ago, and cousin Rachel, who died last week, walking towards their house. OoooKkkk (OK). There were many such instances reported.

But let us by-pass the miraculous type of events and return to Saint Longinus and two of his companions. After the resurrection the Jewish leaders attempted to bribe the Roman soldiers who had been guarding Christ's tomb, to get them to

Ere the reconing Thou assign.

I felon-like, my lot bewail,
Suffused cheeks my shame unveil:
God! O Let my prayer prevail.

Mary's soul Thou madest white,
Didst to heaven the thief invite:
Hope in me these now excite.

Prayers of mine in vain ascent:
Thou art good and wilt forefend,
In quenchless fire my life to end.

When the cursed by shame opprest,
Enter flames at Thy behest,
Call me then to join the blest.

Place amid Thy sheep accord,
Keep me from the tainted horde,
Set me in Thy sight, O Lord.

Prostrate, suppliant, now no more,
Unrepenting, as of yore,
Save me dying, I implore.

Mournful day that day of signs,
When from dust shall man arise,
Stained with guilt his doom to know,

Mercy, Lord, on him bestow.
Jesus, kind! Thy souls release,
Lead them thence to realms of peace.

Amen.

There are twelve chapters in this book plus the Preface and the Epilogue to be used during a basically nine week liturgical period, nine day novena, or a day or few days retreat. The first three chapters are intended as an introduction or reminder as to purpose as well as priority in and propriety of relationships. Chapters four through eleven focus on worship from different avenues. Chapter twelve introduces a few logical concepts regarding the Resurrection for further exploration by the reader. This, the Preface, is an attempt to induce the reader . . . To what? . . . Well, to read. The Epilogue presents suggested formats for prayer other than the Divine Liturgy, simple, yet totally dependent on the Divine Liturgy.

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CHAPTER TWELVE
IS THERE ANYTHING INDEPENDENT OF
FAITH WHICH SUPPORTS THE
RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST AS
BEING TRUE, AS BEING FACT?
How about rational thought, reason, logic,
correlated to human behavior?

The existence of a man named Jesus Christ, a Jew born in Bethlehem who for about three years traveled throughout Israel and Judah, Roman Palestine, preaching and teaching, and was crucified to death with the approval of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, is an established historical fact. That same Pontius Pilate was recalled to Rome and removed from office for many reasons, amongst which was the fact that the crucifixion of Christ was contrary to Roman Law. The main reason Pilate was reassigned to Gaul and not more severely punished was that his wife, Claudia [Saint Procula (also spelled Proculla or Procla), Saint Claudia, Claudia Procles or Claudia Procula], was a niece of the emperor.

Is there anything independent of Faith which supports the resurrection of that same Jesus Christ as being true, as being fact?

Yes, there are a multitude. But we will be very brief in exploring only a few of them.

Saint Longinus was the Roman Centurion in

have studied insufficiently, or, if they have studied sufficiently, do not wish it to be true, and therefore refuse to acknowledge the truth.

Ref: Phili 2:5-11; The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew.

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CHAPTER ONE OUR “JOB” AND EFFECTS OF DOING IT

In the most simple of terms and language, when Our Lord began His public life He began the formal teaching of what people must be to get to Heaven. He also began the formal process of His being the Supreme Sacrificial Offering which makes possible reconciliation for man with God.

It is correct in a simplistic manner to state that His job was to make it possible for each human being to get to Heaven, with the final determination of whether or not any particular person gets to Heaven being in the hands of that particular human being.

That also is the job of every Priest: first, to get himself to Heaven and then, to get as many other people to Heaven as he is able.

Not only is it that simple, but also that is the only job any Priest has. Remember, every Bishop, every Patriarch, every Pope, is a Priest. All of them have the same job: to get himself to Heaven and also to get as many other people to Heaven as he is able.

Though they may have differing administrative duties which they must perform in conjunction with their job, their actual job remains the same and nothing must be allowed to interfere with that job.

Seeking social justice, living wages, pursuit of environmental matters, stopping wars, working to achieve good government, caring for the poor, sick, and disabled, and the multitude of other matters which are of concern in normal life may only take on an ancillary role and importance in the life of a Priest.

To the extent a Priest is successful in getting himself and others into Heaven, he will be successful in assisting in curing these and the myriad of other ills which beset humankind. But a Priest who neglects to exert full focus and effort in pursuit of getting himself and others to Heaven will never be successful in attempting to cure the various conduct ills of mankind. That is because those ills are founded in evil, and evil is only overcome by the same holiness which is necessary for a person to attain eternal salvation - which is more simply stated as getting to Heaven.

Interestingly, every lay person - all those who are not Priests - have the same job as every Priest: to get themselves to Heaven and also to get as many other people to Heaven as he or she is able. The difference between Priests and laity in pursuit of and in accomplishing the job is, that Priests have the responsibility of being the ones who administer the Sacraments by which everyone has access to the Grace needed to accomplish the job. Priests also have the added responsibility of being the repository of God's instructions and insuring

was desirous of a long time to see him, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to see some sign wrought by him. And he questioned him in many words. But he answered him nothing. And the chief priests and the scribes stood by, earnestly accusing him. And Herod with his army set him at nought and mocked him, putting on him a white garment: and sent him back to Pilate.)

The very garment which Our Lord wore at the Last Supper, and for which the soldiers cast lots, was the same type as the vestment with which Moses clothed his brother Aaron for entering into the presence of the Ark of the Covenant, and for offering the most special of sacrifices. This tunic was seamless, being woven in one piece, as was the vestment worn by the High Priest for entering into the Holies of Holies. It was expensive, not something which even a wealthy person was likely to own, unless he expected to have an occasion to use it and to use it regularly.

Quite simply, every aspect of the birth, life, and death, of Jesus Christ, proclaim Him to be the spotless, Supreme Sacrificial Victim, offered by He Himself as the Eternal High Priest, for the purposes and with the effects He so clearly stated. The facts and circumstances of His life, from birth to death, preclude any deviation from this, and therefore require His Resurrection also be true.

Those who express disagreement with this either

Jesus Christ was certified as spotless, without blemish, as totally blameless, without evil or wrong, by the two highest ranking officials in the place: Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, and Herod, the Jew who governed Galilee and related territories.

(John 19:4. Pilate therefore went forth again and saith to them: Behold, I bring him forth unto you, that you may know that I find no cause in him.

(Mat. 27:22-24. Pilate saith to them: What shall I do then with Jesus that is called Christ? They say all: Let him be crucified. The governor said to them: Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying: Let him be crucified. And Pilate seeing that he prevailed nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, taking water washed his hands before the people, saying: I am innocent of the blood of this just man. Look you to it.

(Luke 23:4-11. And Pilate said to the chief priests and to the multitudes: I find no cause in this man. But they were more earnest, saying: He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place. But Pilate hearing Galilee, asked if the man were of Galilee? And when he understood that he was of Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him away to Herod, who was also himself at Jerusalem in those days. And Herod seeing Jesus, was very glad: for he

God's instructions are promulgated without alteration.

God has given us very simple guidelines which if we internalize and follow will guarantee successful performance of our job as regards ourselves. Those guidelines are absolutes - they do not change and they apply to everyone. They also apply in full measure in every context, and in every situation, to everyone.

Far too often Priests and others who are concerned about the injustices or the readily observed inequalities in life focus on those injustices and those inequalities and seek to obtain what they think of as remedies. But remedy is only possible if those who inflict injustice decide to pursue eternal salvation - if they decide to try to get to Heaven. In pursuit of getting to Heaven they must of necessity abandon inflicting injustice.

And as for inequality, inequality often may be considered as existing by what is called "the luck of the draw". True, inequality exists in great measure because someone inflicted injustice. But it also must be recognized that much of the inequality which exists is due to the extra effort exerted by those who have more, and also by the lack of effort by those who have less. And, of course, in many instances, good planning or the lack of good planning.

Some will attempt to use the parable of the master

who hired laborers at various times during the day with the result that some labored all day and others for a half day and others for an hour or so, but all received the same pay, as indicating God wants everyone to have the same standard of living. But what it states is that everyone who labors in God's field receives the same reward - that of attaining eternal salvation, of going to Heaven. But there are varying ranks in Heaven, Our Lord having told the Twelve Apostles they would sit on twelve thrones, judging (ruling) the twelve tribes of Israel. He also informed us that there would be greater and lesser in Heaven.

From these we must realize and acknowledge that inequalities which occur because one with more successfully exerted greater morally acceptable effort are not improper.

It also stands to reason that if everyone attained the same result without regard to the level of morally proper effort they exerted, then there would be no greater in the Kingdom of God - and that is contrary to what Our Lord stated is the reality.

Some believe that even though someone properly earned "more" in this world, that they also have an obligation to share their wealth. Those who attempt to dictate how those who have more should share their wealth, are in that attempt to dictate how the wealth should be shared, attempting to usurp God's authority. Perhaps those who morally acquired "more" utilize their wealth

Jerusalem. The Lamb of God was born in the same town where the Pascal Lambs were born.

The common meaning for the word "Bethlehem" is House of Bread. Bread was another essential element in worship and sacrifice for the Children of Israel. The Bread or Loaves of the Presence were always before the Holy of Holies. Bread was an essential part of the Passover Seder / Supper. Bread was also used as an offering, as a sacrifice.

When Our Lord said we must eat His flesh and drink His blood He was saying we must do something which was against Mosaic law and really against the religious laws of most of the world - cannibalism, that is. At the Last Supper, Our Lord substituted Himself as the permanent, to be offered but once, Supreme Sacrificial Victim, in place of the Pascal Lamb. And He made it possible for us to eat His flesh and to drink His blood by changing bread into His flesh and wine into His blood, and giving His Apostles and their successors the power to do the same.

Therefore Bethlehem, a place of origin for meat and for bread to be used in sacrifice, was also the place of origin of the Divine Sacrificial Lamb of God on the Cross and in Holy Communion.

The sacrificial lamb had to be spotless, without blemish. It had to be certified as such by someone in authority.

CHAPTER ELEVEN
EVEN THE EVENTS OF THE BIRTH AND
DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST PROCLAIM
HIM TO BE THE LAMB OF GOD

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, God, during His life and even to today, is acknowledged as a teacher, and a worker of miracles - even thought today, just as in His day, there are many who attempt to discredit His miracles.

There are so many facets to the life of Jesus Christ, that we sometimes fail to be aware or conscious of the many correlations between the facts of His life and the spiritual and religious practices of that time and culture. The Jews and even the Pagans, the Gentiles, of that day, were very conscious and aware of them; *as are the religious Jews of through to this very day*. We can not here cover all of them, but we are able to begin with the first, with the place and nature of the place of His birth.

Christ was born in Bethlehem. Even if there had been no prophecies predicting the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, His place of birth would have been prominent in the minds of everyone, for Bethlehem was for all practical purposes founded by shepherds. The sheep raised by these shepherds were essential to worship and sacrifice by the Children of Israel. Hundreds of thousands of lambs were required every year just for Passover. Every day all day there were sacrifices in the Temple at

to assist others using avenues of which those who attempt to supplant God are not aware.

But none of these extraneous matters or situations are able to change or modify the main job of each person - that of getting their sorry selves to Heaven, and of getting as many other people to Heaven as possible as well.

In performing his job a Priest helps other people to become holy, maintain holiness, increase in holiness, love as God wishes us to love, be God's good and faithful servants, to not sin, to overcome sin and temptation, to assist those who can not help themselves and those who have difficulty helping themselves, and to assist others to do likewise.

The greater the success in doing this job which God has given us to do, the better this world will become.

Ref: Rom 12:6-16; John 2:1-11

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CHAPTER TWO BECOMING LIKE SAINT PAUL

~~~~~ BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

Very few people experience as dramatic an introduction to Our Lord as was experienced by Saint Paul. We do, however, experience parallels with Saint Paul in what ever relationship we establish with Jesus Christ.

Saint Paul was a contemporary of Our Lord, and a fellow student with Saint Stephen. While Saint Stephen became a disciple of Christ, Saint Paul either was away from Jerusalem when Our Lord was active, or for some other reason does not appear to have been interested in becoming informed about Christ. But after the resurrection, as significant numbers of Jews, as well as some Gentiles, began to become followers of Christ, Saint Paul perceived the Christ movement as being a blasphemy since Christ was being presented as the Son of God and therefore as God. Being a devout Jew, Saint Paul vehemently opposed the Christ movement.

Similarly, none of us is born knowing about Christ. Those who are eventually introduced to Christ very often find themselves desiring something which is not approved by Christ and His teachings. This often results in their being in opposition to Christ, in a manner similar to Saint

Humans are incapable of comprehending the importance of The Holy Eucharist to God. Not only is The Holy Eucharist God; it is specifically God the only begotten Son of God the Father who became incarnate, endured the Passion, was Crucified, and died, to make salvation available to all humans who accept salvation according to God's terms.

With this in mind, there must be a different reception God the Father gives to those prayers offered in spiritual union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Divine Liturgy (Mass) throughout the world, or while physically attending and participating in the Divine Liturgy, in comparison with those prayers by people who abandon, do not associate with, or do not personally participate in the Divine Liturgy even though they are able so-to-do.

It makes one wonder whether or not God even considers accepting the alms or the offerings made by those who know of The Holy Eucharist, but who chose to ignore The Holy Eucharist.

As for those Priests and laity who do not believe The Holy Eucharist is truly the body and blood, soul and divinity, of Jesus Christ, God, but believe it only represents Jesus Christ . . . well they have a problem. They do not believe what the same Jesus Christ has said is reality.

Ref: Ephes. 5:1-9; Luke 11:14-28

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wine into His body and blood. He gave those same Apostles exclusively, the authority, power, and ability to endow others with the power, authority, and ability to change bread and wine into His body and blood, and also the power, authority, and ability to endow other with the same, ad infinitum.

The only organization and place where anyone is able to get the body and blood of Christ to eat and drink is His True Church. It is not available at any Protestant Church, Pentecostal Church, Assembly of God Church, Church of The Anglican Communion, or through any person not ordained and in good standing with an Orthodox, Coptic, Roman, Assyrian, or other valid Jurisdiction of The One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

When in The Lord's Prayer, The Our Father, Our Lord taught us to pray, "give us this day our daily bread," if He was making reference to something one purchases at a bakery, grocery store, or makes at home, it was a subordinate and minor reference. His primary reference was to His body under the appearance of bread in Holy Communion. He was stating His desire, instruction, and intention, that we receive Holy Communion daily. For many this is a great difficulty or a practical impossibility. But these people are able to join in the Holy Sacrifice of the Divine Liturgy throughout the world by offering themselves and everything they do every day in prayer and as prayer in union with that same Holy Sacrifice everywhere it is offered that day.

Paul's opposition.

Our Lord introduced Himself to Saint Paul in a swift and dramatic manner. Usually, He introduces Himself to us in a more gentle and gradual manner. He assists us to understand that The Way He has given us to follow provides temporal and spiritual benefits to everyone - benefits which are not provided by any other manner of living. And He makes it clear why this is so.

It is at this point that those who honor God are separated from those who merely acknowledge the reality of God or who have no concern about the reality of God.

Those who merely acknowledge the reality of God and who have no concern about the reality of God, pursue their own desires without major regard for or reference to God. But those who honor God in any measure attempt to explore this Jesus Christ, His significance, and as they gain knowledge of Him they attain the realization that He is God, just as Saint Paul attained that realization. Only Saint Paul attained that realization by very dramatic personal experience, a form of experience which very few other people ever encounter.

It is not necessarily the experience, but, rather, this realization, which often prompts a person to further explore Christ and The Way taught by Christ.

Here we again realize there is a similarity with what Saint Paul experienced, and separation in methodology. Saint Paul pondered The Way under the direct tutorship of Our Lord Himself. We, however, in our pondering The Way, normally are not guided by Our Lord in His own person. Instead, He has entrusted His teachings to the True Church, the Church of Apostolic Succession which is the sole source of all of the Sacraments Our Lord established. Unlike Christ, who perfectly and personally fulfilled this task for Saint Paul, the Church often fulfills this task in a less than perfect manner. But it remains the best source readily available and accessible. Those who ponder Christ and The Way without the traditions and the traditional guidance of God's true Church will not attain as successful and truthful result as they would with the assistance of those traditions and traditional guidance.

With his being a follower of Christ, Saint Paul began a life of living The Way taught by Our Lord. And in living The Way he also began a formal process of proselytizing The Way and Jesus Christ.

Those of us who also accept Christ must accept living The Way taught by Christ. We will in all probability be very inadequate in persistently living The Way. But we have the ability to make it be, the most consistent and persistent factor each in our own individual life. And in attempting to live The Way we also will be proselytizing The

as well.

If under certain circumstances God's instructions require the offering of a spotless lamb (sheep of one year of age), and the one who wishes to make the offering either has or can obtain such a lamb, will God be satisfied, or even accept, a small fish? If you think He will, think again. What about the situation where the person does not have, and for some reason can not obtain, a lamb . . . when the best the person can obtain is a small fish?

Those who worship God their own way are always in error even if their way appears to be the same way as God has instructed. They are in error because they are worshiping God their way, and not God's way. They desire to and have discarded God's instructions and what God has established, and have replaced them with their own contrivances. They have established their own house and live in that house instead of living in God's house. They are *not* in **God's HOUSE**.

Our Lord made it a requirement that we eat His flesh and drink His blood if we are to have life in us - His life, His grace. He established the same requirement if we are to have eternal life in us, if we are to be united with Him for all eternity in Heaven. At the Last Supper He established the means by which bread and wine are changed into His body and Blood so that we may eat His flesh and drink His blood. He gave to the Apostles the power, authority, and ability to change bread and

CHAPTER TEN
HUMAN HOLINESS IS ATTAINED BY
HUMANS *EXCLUSIVELY* IN
CONJUNCTION WITH THE HOLY
EUCHARIST

During Great Lent, and in any circumstances wherein we seek holiness, we know that fasting, prayer, almsgiving, and offering to God, all with the proper attitude, are of great assistance. Whether we seek to attain holiness, to fortify our holiness, or increase holiness, it is not the activities alone but the activities with the proper attitude which are important.

An essential aspect of the proper attitude is worship - that God be worshiped in the activities. The essential element and aspect of worship is that it be as God has directed. God has not said He prefers we worship in certain manners and ways. Rather, God has stated if we are to worship Him we must worship Him in certain manners and ways. It is not a matter of multiple choice, or of a graduated scale or list. Only inability of self or of circumstances allow modification of God's instructions regarding worship of Him.

An easy to comprehend example is Old Testament offerings. God gave Moses instructions regarding offerings and many other matters, all of which Moses wrote to preserve as an instruction manual for the Children of Israel, and the rest of the world

Way and Jesus Christ. Not in the dramatic manner as done by Saint Paul, but in a manner suited to our individual temperament, personality, abilities, and life situation.

If we each do this, we each become not a version of Saint Paul divinely adapted to our individual selves, but, amazingly, we become Christ adapted to our individual selves.

Ref: Acts. 9:1-22; Mat. 19:27-29; Rom 12:16-21;
Mat. 8:1-13

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CHAPTER THREE
WHAT WILL ASSIST ONE TO NOT TREAT
OTHERS AS THOUGH THEY WERE PETS,
and to not even treat our pets as pets usually
are treated?

What we do in relationship with others, and also as regards ourselves, is in great measure effected by our perception, and our “perception” of what we perceive. Not by just what we see or smell, or what we intellectually observe, or in-perceptually, spiritually assess; but through our total perception: by use of our physical senses and our spiritual senses. And, very importantly, by our perception of what we perceive - not our interpretation of what we perceive but our perception of what we perceive.

It is difficult for us to attempt to model ourselves on God in this matter and process, because what is perception for us is not perception for God. About the best we are able to state regarding God and reasons, relationships, perception, and probably everything else, is, God is, and God knows, in perfection. We aren't and we don't.

Despite not being God, we do have the ability to accurately perceive even though we may not comprehend what we are perceiving, or really understand that we are accurately perceiving. The disciples perceived Our Lord's Divinity and ability to save them in the storm at sea. Yet their

in ignoring God's instructions as those who would make animals the equals of humans, or who would degrade human nature to the bestial.

Simply seek your own holiness; to become, stay, and increase in holiness yourself; and attempt to assist others to do the same.

You and I should take care of the human stuff and let God take care of the God stuff.

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knowledge which God has decided to keep to himself. And in seeking to ascertain what is written on the scrolls, they seek to reveal that which God has said is not to be revealed . . . at least not to be revealed by man.

Some of these “students” wish to know what must happen before the second coming. They are of the opinion the second coming will not, and can not, happen until certain events happen, certain conversions and life styles are established, certain conditions are met. They intend to assist in the establishment of these conditions.

There is a message for these “students”. Stop trying to use the Apocalypse - Book of Revelations - to figure out what God will have happen and when and using that to try to make it happen. God does not need your help. Those prophecies are for your realization all is in God’s hands at His time without your help. It will happen and Jesus told us only the Father knows how and when. To try to know the how and when is not for us because Jesus said it is not. Use that effort to learn how to Operate Divinely, to live and be as God wishes us.

Remember: Jesus, God, did not need the assistance of any human being to confect the Supreme Sacrifice - His own Passion and Crucifixion.

Those who ignore Our Lord’s admonitions regarding the end of the world and the establishment of the New Jerusalem are the same

perception and comprehension at that time were infantile in comparison with their comprehension and perception after the resurrection. These greatly increased after Pentecost, and increased even more after the First Council of the Church, at Jerusalem. It is amazing what the operation of the Holy Ghost will do if we accept it.

In our post Apostolic times we perceive the value of having our throats blessed on Saint Blaise Day. It is a perception based in the Divine Virtue of Faith. For many, perhaps most of us, that Faith and that perception lack the maturity which is provided by full immersion in Divine Love. And it is this Divine Love which is immaturely developed in us which fogs what we physically and spiritually perceive, and our assimilation and application of what we perceive, simply because of its immaturity. The immaturity and the immaturity of the development cause the fog. The more properly developed, and the more maturely developed, is the Divine Love in us, the less the fog.

By way as example, if we exclude those who are evil, and those who desire to engage in evil, when we pursue beauty we actually are pursuing God. We like a shiny new car, the way it looks and smells, and anticipate enjoyment in a well running machine, because we associate those qualities as approaching a type of perfection. In actuality it is the Divine perfection which we seek. Of course, we will not find either it or its source in a new car or in another created person.

Similarly we mistakenly endow certain physical characteristics with the property of being indicators of certain qualities. Then, when we meet a person or an animal, or even a “thing”, which possesses some of these physical characteristics, we also project upon that person, animal, or thing, the qualities we associate with those appearances. That person, animal, or thing, may or may not possess those qualities, but because we associate those qualities with those physical characteristics we presume that person, animal, or thing has those qualities.

We are inclined to form associations and friendships with other people based on those appearances because we associate the appearance with certain qualities. And we also avoid becoming acquainted with or establishing friendships with people based on the belief that their physical appearance is indicative of certain qualities which we wish to avoid.

Incidentally, there are many people who are very much aware of this inclination and who modify their appearance and behavior in an attempt to influence others. Very often they are successful. Many a person has, within a few months or a year or so after marrying, wondered what happened to the person they thought they were marrying - their spouse having drastically changed. Likewise, many a person has wondered what happened to the person they helped to elect to public office.

Then there are those who seemingly study Sacred Scripture apparently with the intention or desire to further God’s will on Earth. Though they may seem to be of a philosophy and beliefs which oppose the animalistic proponents, many of them actually are in harmony with the proponents of the animalistic, even though they may believe they are not.

One of the favorite Scriptures of such people is The Apocalypse - Book of Revelations. The Apocalypse is a fantastic work for those seeking explanation of what has already happened, especially before the creation of man. It is a fantastic work in its revelation of the works of the Devil, and its revelation of the omnipotence of God. It gives an insight into what will happen, even unto the second coming of Christ - but it so does in the language and vocabulary possessed by Saint John all those years ago, within the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And remember, what was written on the scrolls was not to be revealed.

The intention of many students of The Apocalypse is to ascertain when the second coming of Christ will occur, when the end of the world will happen, when the New Jerusalem will be established, what was written on the scrolls. In seeking this knowledge they seek to know that which Our Lord expressly stated is known only by God the Father and which He will not reveal out of time. Therefore, any human who attempts to ascertain “the end times” is attempting to ascertain

policies, which seek to grant to animals the same rights and privileges which humans have, with which humans are endowed by God. The popular assessment of the reasons for doing this is that the organizations wish to raise animals to the same level as humans. But the popular assessment is in error. The reason these organizations wish to do this is to lower the perception of the value of being human. These organizations which once desired to protect animals, now wish to encourage humans to behave like animals, to engage in sex wherever and whenever, to gorge, to maim and kill wantonly, to behave as beasts. Why? So that as many people as possible will be encouraged to engage in sensual excesses, burying and stifling any holy spiritual inclinations, crashing into the depths of Hell aflame with an orgy of unholy and evil excesses.

Of course this statement, this position, will be ridiculed. But if you ridicule the foregoing, then you must believe you will be able to engage in a lifetime orgy of sensuality bereft of any holiness and also spend all eternity with God in Heaven. If this is your belief, then you are a fool; unless you do not believe in God, Heaven, the Devil and Hell - in which case you are a fool.

Those who scoff at this position should inquire as to which of the animal rights organizations oppose abortion of humans, or oppose perversion of the definition of marriage.

We also are inclined to accept a pet because of its physical characteristics, because we associate those physical characteristics with certain qualities and behavior.

This leads us to another common situation which affects our behavior. When we establish relationships based on physical characteristics, we may easily neglect to assess the true character, disposition, and very importantly, the inclinations and desires of that with which or with whom we have established the relationship.

If the relationship is a pseudo relationship such as a relationship with an automobile, we must use a certain level of reasonableness, otherwise we will be disappointed, since, if we fail to put gasoline in the car it will stop running when it runs out of gas. Likewise if the engine freezes and fails because we failed to maintain the oil lubricant. We readily apply the realization that an automobile requires maintenance to other machines. Also, while we may say we love our car, or tractor, hand gun, or other machine, we know we really do not love it, but in actuality appreciate its functioning, appearance, and what ever utility it provides.

Animals, whether or not they are pets, respond to us and we therefore endow them with our perceiving them as possessing more human qualities than we do a machine. But a prudent person will understand if they are careless around

a lioness or a Siberian tiger they may quickly become lunch. And no matter how fluffy and cuddly a domestic cat may seem, do not squeeze one unless you are prepared for the potential of the cat turning into a people shredder.

Pack animals, such as dogs, often are more forgiving when an human is careless or thoughtless, probably because the human is perceived by the animal as being the “Alpha” entity in the canine - human relationship.

But no matter what the animal and its status as pet or livestock, we are inclined to pay attention to them when we desire and to ignore them to the extent we are inclined so-to-do at any given time.

If we treat family - spouse, children, siblings, parents, et cetera - in the same way we treat pets, we invite disaster.

Before anyone marries, they should first at least mentally explore what they expect to be doing with their prospective spouse on a daily and even hourly basis once they are married. This does not mean one must plan every second of the spousal relationship. But considering what the two of them will be doing in general will assist in establishing the realization the prospective spouse is really and actually another person, just as is one’s self. That the spouse has desires, wishes, dreams, needs, character traits, and all other human attributes as does one’s self - and that many of them will not be

CHAPTER NINE
EVIL FINDS SUCCESS IN MISDIRECTION
Which should not come as a surprise
considering the Devil, the originator of evil, was
a murderer from the beginning and is the
father of all lies.

Contrary to concepts which seem to have innumerable adherents, evil exists, evil is real, there is a devil - Satan - and he does attempt to and does successfully lead many humans to participate in the eternal hell and damnation which he chose instead of choosing eternal joy in union with God.

Evil has insidiously taken control of or strongly influenced innumerable organizations to the amazement and disbelief of the decent people under whose noses evil has operated.

Consider the various organizations which were formed to prevent cruelty to animals. Many of those same organizations now solicit money using sophisticated advertising which triggers the protective responses in human nature - responses which are designed to induce adults to protect babies and little children. Instead of a baby or child peering out with beleaguered visage it is a cat or dog, puppy or kitten which triggers that protective response.

Many of these organizations have policies, or are closely associated with organizations which have

steering wheel. But then, how would you be able to steer. You might hit a bump and just slide off that slippery raw bacon seat.

In the personal category, let us proceed down the more safe route: clothing. Remember, anything may be substituted for clothing - cosmetic plastic surgery, whatever. Do you really wish to wear or to dress yourself with a slab of raw bacon? If you do there is something wrong with you. That bacon will get into everything . . .

Unfortunately, if after substituting thoughts of a slab of bacon for thoughts of the sinful inclination, one indulges in the sinful inclination, one is faced with the horrible reality that at that instant in time one desired a greasy, slimy, stinking slab of bacon more than one desired God.

And that is exactly what we do when we sin.

Ref: 2 Cor 6:1-10; Mat. 4:1-11

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in harmony with one's own. This assists in forming the realization, understanding, and appreciation, that the spouse can not be treated as a pet or as livestock, to be tended to only as desired. That the spouse can not be manipulated or "dressed up" as one would a pet or a doll.

Nor should children ever be treated as pets, much less as livestock, or as dolls, or even worse, as possessions.

Not only is it common for people to choose a pet or even livestock because the animal possesses certain characteristics and abilities; it is very common for the main criteria in choosing a pet to be appearance. What the animal looks like. And it also is very common for the animal's physical appearance to be modified so that the desired physical appearance is enhanced.

But changing the animal's physical appearance does not enhance the characteristics which the owner associates with those physical characteristics. It merely changes the animal's appearance.

When a spousal or other relationship is established on physical characteristics the invitation to disaster is written, addressed, mailed, and received by the addressee.

Similarly, when the physical characteristics of a newly conceived or "to be conceived" child are

manipulated to meet the desires of the parents, the parents should consider constructing a robot instead of working with God to create an human being.

And when a child's appearance is manipulated to meet some idealized image of the parents, without in depth consideration of the child's personality and other traits, the child has been transformed in the mind of the parents into a thing - the parents do not perceive the child as an human.

Likewise when people attempt to manipulate other people in any manner, whether in appearance or otherwise.

Each created person possesses God given talents, abilities, and, yes, even infirmities and inadequacies. The reasons are God's, to be known by others only as God deems fit. But without regard to a person's perceived positive and negative aspects, each person must be treated and related to with the utmost respect, if for no other reason than God said it must so be. If one does not treat others with respect, how is any human relation supposed to function: as slave and master?

The one "thing" which will prevent us from making such mistakes is sometimes considered to be a quality, and often perceived as being a force. But in reality it is neither, though it encompasses both. It is the Divine virtue of Love. Not the natural virtue of love, but the Divine virtue of

This is where a slab of bacon can be of assistance. Yes, bacon, but not nice and cooked, but raw, a slab of raw bacon.

Substituting the thought of a slab of raw bacon for a sinful thought or inclination will be of absolutely no assistance to a husband whose wife asks him if the dress she is wearing makes her butt (buttocks) look big. Especially if it does make her butt look big, and he is attempting to get out of a no win situation.

But substituting a slab of bacon for a sinful inclination, a temptation, often is able to stop that temptation dead in its tracks.

No, we will not explore substituting thoughts of a slab of raw bacon for sexually based temptations. That has the potential of being too disgusting. We will use two examples of "things", one of which is basically things, the other being basically personal.

In the things category, consider the automobile which you think of as being the most desirable - one upon which you obsess. Remember, anything may be substituted for the automobile in this example. Instead of imagining yourself driving around in that vehicle as you normally would, imagine sitting in that vehicle with the seats made out of a slab of raw, greasy bacon. You should be able to fill in the disgusting consequences. Of course, if the steering wheel is made of really well cooked bacon, you might be tempted to bite the

devil, or general circumstances, or our own inclinations, would be futile if we did not desire either what the sin might provide or the sin itself. As a simple example, if you are not interested in money or what money may be able to provide, you will have no inclination to take a money bag someone inadvertently leaves on the table next to yours in a restaurant.

Every temptation presents us with a choice: to sin or not to sin, that is the question (*our apologies to Shakespeare*).

Sin simply is a matter of choice. We chose to follow God's instructions and wishes or to follow our own sinful wishes. But this leads us to a foundation issue: whether to indulge in our own sinful wishes and inclinations or to indulge in our own **holy** wishes and inclination.

We validly rely on God's assistance in overcoming sinful temptations and inclinations. But we also are responsible for establishing in ourselves the moral and spiritual fortitude to overcome such temptations and inclinations. For an aspect of living The Way taught by Christ is our own becoming ever increasingly holy, so that we, in God's holiness, are able to maintain holiness.

Therefore, the prudent person uses various means of assisting themselves in pursuit of overcoming sin and in pursuit of attaining holiness.

Love as in Faith, Hope, and Charity. Charity being Agape Love, the Love which is God's Love, a Love which He makes us able to possess.

Even natural love will guide us in the right direction. But Charity - Divine Love - not only guides us into the correct direction, it matures us in everything. As we open ourselves to receive Charity from God, its source, we enable our own giving and projection of Charity as well. We also open ourselves to truly receiving the Holy Ghost - not by seeking Him and His gifts for our own selfish reasons and aggrandizement; but to receive and acquire Him that we may become more like Him; more like God for the sake of holiness.

How do we acquire or "get" this Love?

We ask for it.

Simply ask God, "God, please help me Love You."

He will, and it will not be second tier love; it will be the best Love.

Ref: Rom. 13:8-10; Mat. 8:23-27

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CHAPTER FOUR EAT GOD! What?! Why?

It may seem that the liturgical calendar of the Church is always preparing for one season or another, or celebrating the season after the feast for which we were preparing. The three weeks before Great Lent in the Orthodox Western Rite is the Liturgical Season of Septuagesima. It is the time designed for us to prepare for Great Lent. And of course, Great Lent is another period of preparation.

Remember, however, that what is good for this liturgical season is good for every day of our lives.

Many people will have a vague intention to pray more at this time. Most of these will not implement that vague intention.

So why not skip that vague intention, and attempt to pray what we already pray, using greater focus, more fervent intention, and, perhaps, add a little more in-depth understanding of our prayers and liturgies or prayer systems.

We know why we pray the Our Father - The Lord's Prayer. We pray it because when Our Lord was asked how we should pray, Our Lord dictated it. Many scholars have analyzed it. It is a simple, yet multi faceted, prayer which is included in every Divine Liturgy, and forms the anchor of many other prayer liturgies and systems.

CHAPTER EIGHT CAN A SLAB OF RAW BACON HELP OVERCOME TEMPTATION?

Only if you do not plan to and actually do not cook it.

It may happen that we do that which is against God instructions or wishes, but so do inadvertently or through failure to comprehend after due diligence. Under such circumstances we may escape culpability - but it is not likely one who actually has even the slightest level of desire to be holy will escape some level of culpability unless the transgression is totally inadvertent. The level of culpability - of evil - is dependent on a multitude of factors beyond the scope of this simple discourse.

The reality with which we must contend is that there are a multitude of different sins. We often think of the devil as being the source of the temptations to sin which we experience, but, if we simply consider the sins we commit or wish to commit, we must acknowledge our own inclinations are a major source of the temptations we experience.

It is true that the devil often arranges for us to experience that which is or is likely to lead to temptation. And we even may have received the original impetus to certain sins from the devil. But temptation to sin, whether originating from the

the wall of evil. That quality is love. Of course, if a person is so selfish or self centered as to possess little or no consideration for anyone else, love is neither likely to exist nor likely to come into existence. But if there is just the smallest lack of selfishness or self interest, it is possible for love to come into existence. And if there is even the smallest concern for someone else, it is possible for love to come into existence.

If love does find life in a person, it will battle evil. It will battle evil because evil will seek to destroy love, and love will seek to overcome that which attempts to destroy it.

If love is able to be nurtured in a person, love will in turn seek to become perfect love - Divine Love, which Saint Paul designates with the name Charity.

All of these are very useful. If a person is having difficulty adhering to the Divine Law, adhering to the Natural Law will assist them in following the Divine Law. Combine that with encouraging even the smallest flicker of regular old love, and the basis for overcoming evil is established.

But one must remove any blindfold if they truly wish to see God.

Ref: 1 Cor 13:1-13; Luke 18:31-43

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There is another prayer which is part of, at least, every Western Rite Orthodox Divine Liturgy. While it was not dictated by God to us, it was composed and written under Divine inspiration.

It too is multi faceted, yet simple, with its focus on the reception of Holy Communion; the undesirable potentials which could result from reception of Holy Communion which we wish to avoid; and the desirable potentials which we wish to attain, receive, and accomplish in receiving Holy Communion.

While it is an optional prayer immediately before the reception of Holy Communion, only a fool would omit it. Perhaps in some extreme emergency or unusual situation a rational person would intentionally omit this prayer . . . perhaps. Its name is, "The Prayer of Humble Access", and it "goes like this".

THE PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS

We do not presume to come to this Thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy Table. But Thou art the same Lord, Whose property is always to have mercy: Grant us therefore, Gracious Lord, so as to be

nourished by the Precious Body and Blood of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ; so that our sinful lives may be made clean by His Most Precious Body and Blood, and that we may ever more dwell in Him and He in us. Amen.

This prayer is a simple statement of the extraordinary activity in which those praying are about to engage.

That activity is: They are going to eat God.

In the history of the human race this is an extraordinary concept. From the beginning mankind has acknowledged the existence of a creator, of some sort of being totally greater than humans. Some have believed in multiple such beings, but even those who believed in multiple such beings believed in a chief amongst such beings. Generically, today, they are named or called gods - with a little or lower case "G", to distinguish them from the real God, for Whom we use a capital "G".

From the beginning of the human race, mankind has realized the prudence and even necessity of trying to have God like us. And even though mankind realized God is the creator of everything, man offered presents, stuff, . . . offerings, to God. This is the rational. While God definitely made and therefore owns everything, humans have the ability to modify what God has made, and to pick

For one studying the Natural Law, and its origins, the progression to the Divine Law is more likely to be a successful journey if the one making the inquiry realizes Divine assistance will be beneficial.

In a real sense, seeking Divine assistance in this instance is akin to seeking to acquire the Divine Virtue of Faith.

Faith is a gift, and it can be lost. How does one regain it if one has lost it, and how does one obtain it if one does not have it? One asks it of God, and God will offer it to the one who asks for it. But then the one who asks must accept it in order to receive it.

The Natural Law itself is a form of one-way barometer indicating the likelihood one will make inquiry regarding the origins of the Natural Law. While one who follows the Natural Law may or may not make inquiry regarding its origins, it is extremely unlikely one who ignores or violates the Natural Law, whether intentionally or otherwise, will make inquiry regarding the origins of the Natural Law. This is because violating or ignoring the Natural Law creates as a well fertilized environment for growing and strengthening evil. Evil, of its own course and in its own interest, opposes the Divine, which includes inquiry into the Divine Law.

There is one quality which is capable of breaching

experience disharmony and poverty in geometric proportion as compared to a society which does adhere to the Natural Law.

In addition, those individuals and a society which violates the Natural Law de facto opens the door to evil, to real, full evil. In such situations evil encroaches on every inclination to follow the Natural Law, resulting in a continual downward spiral opposed to adherence to the Natural Law, a corresponding decrease in the goodness which results from the Natural Law, and an increase in the prevalence and permeation of evil in the individual and in that society.

It would seem that adherence to the Natural Law would result in a person seeking or at least investigating the Divine Law. But this is not necessarily what happens. Adhering to the Natural Law seems to sometimes invoke a curiosity about the possibility of something from which the Natural Law is derived. We know, through revelation, that the Natural Law is derived from the Divine Law. A deep, intense, quest for the foundation for the Natural Law may lead the one making that study to the conclusion it is founded on something from the Divine. But such a study by one without Faith - the virtue of Faith - could also easily lead to the conclusion the Natural Law is something innate in the nature of mankind, and of "things", just as natural as the fact that water is wet.

out the best from the not quite as good. Thus man is able to add his own efforts and labor to what God has provided. In that addition man, as it were, improves or makes something new or different - even if it is only slightly different, and it is this which is offered to God.

So if an human wanted God to like him, or if the human did something which the human thought might make God angry with him, or if the human wished to thank God for something, or just because . . . perhaps simply because the human wanted to, or because it seemed like a good idea, humans have been making offerings to God since the first human.

The basic format of these offerings was determined in part by what was being offered, and the purpose of the offering. Some offerings were totally burnt or destroyed in some manner. Other offerings were partially destroyed, with a portion sometimes being given to the one making the offering, and with a portion sometimes being reserved for the use of the priest who actually made the offering. Very often an offering was only partially destroyed, or even not destroyed at all, and the offering distributed to the family making the offering, or even the entire populace. Sometimes the offering was not destroyed but rather was driven or encouraged to wander out of the place where the offering was made, often indicating the desire and intention that the offering carry with it out of the place all the ills and evils

and punishments associated therewith which the populace had incurred.

These and other basic practices were well understood and common throughout all of mankind, everywhere, though the degree, fervor, and forms may well have varied from culture to culture.

God drastically changed all of that when He established the Passover Liturgy by-which the children of Israel would be protected from the last plague with which God would inflict Egypt - that of death.

But even this last plague - the death of every first born whether human or animal, was much more than what it appears to be on its surface.

In reality, each one of the earlier plagues was much more than what it appears to be to us in modern times. Pharaoh and all of Egypt, and all of the world which heard of the plagues in those days, and “primitive” people of today, understood the reality of what had happened.

When God, through Moses and Aaron, turned into blood the water in the River Nile and all of its connecting waters, and even all water which was not connected to the Nile - such as that in vessels, pots, and jugs - when this happened the true God was stating and proving He is God and that no other is God. He was proving He is greater than

CHAPTER SEVEN REMOVE YOUR BLINDFOLD IF YOU WISH TO SEE GOD

There is none so blind as those who will not see. Those who refuse to acknowledge the reality of Christ, Son of God, the necessity of so acknowledging and of adhering to The Way He teaches unmodified, or any of these, have blinded themselves . . . and there are none so blind as are they.

But there are those who are in much worse condition, and who will experience much worse results if they fail to amend their ways. Those in much worse condition are those who refuse to acknowledge, or fail to even attempt to comply with, the absolutes God has established in the Natural Law, for the Natural Law is part of the very nature of every human being. Thus, it is impossible for any human being to escape the obligation of following the Natural Law, or the consequences for failing so-to-do. But with following the Natural Law comes the anticipation of receiving something desirable as a reward or at least as a result.

There are rewards which accompany following the Natural Law. One of them is that the society which follows the Natural Law will generally be a peaceful and prosperous society. Conversely, to the extent a society ignores the Natural Law, it will

wine, being identical and the same as the bloody offering of His body and blood on the Cross. No, they were not eating the Bread of the Presence which was supposed to be eaten only by the Temple Priests. They were eating The Bread of the True Presence, and it was and remains available to everyone of proper disposition. And instead of feeding mere thousands, billions have been fed with the Bread of Life.

Ref: Gal. 4:22-31; John 6:1-15

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what ever the Egyptians worshiped as the God of the Nile River.

The same is true for each of the plagues which followed.

The last plague was that of the death of every first born in Egypt, whether human, animal, or otherwise, **EXCEPT** the first born of those children of Israel who prayed the Passover Liturgy as God had instructed. This demonstrated and proved that the true God was more powerful than the Egyptian god of fertility, the Egyptian god of life, and the Egyptian god of death, individually or in any combination. That the true God had revealed Himself as being the one and only true God to Abraham, Israel, and the children of Israel, and that anything else is not God.

While the basic format of worship and of making offerings to God changed for the children of Israel at their exodus from Egypt, the old format remained the common practice for everyone else - even though it no longer was valid because God made it no longer valid with Passover and His instructions to Moses regarding worship and offerings.

For now it is sufficient to understand that God's instructions to Moses for the Passover Liturgy was that the Pascal Lamb was to be killed without breaking any of its bones, its blood spread on the door head and posts with a brush of hyssop, that it

was to be roasted whole, served with bitter herbs, eaten while standing and dressed for immediate travel, that anything left over was to be burned and thus destroyed that night with nothing of it being kept.

This is the Passover dinner and liturgy which Our Lord ate and prayed with His Apostles, Disciples, and family the night He was betrayed. It was at this time Our Lord instituted the Eucharist, substituting Himself for the Passover Lamb, becoming the Pascal Lamb, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Our Lord changed the Passover Liturgy, and all of His Apostles, Disciples, family, followers, and all of the children of Israel knew what He had done.

We continue to pray the Last Supper as the essential of the Divine Liturgy, and we continue to eat the flesh of God and to drink His blood in every Divine Liturgy. Considering this, only a fool would ignore praying The Prayer of Humble Access, or would recite it instead of attempting to pray it with as much fervor and attention of which one is capable at that instant in time.

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Now the importance of the multiplication of the loaves of bread and the feeding of five thousand becomes very clear. For it was the very next day, to the same people He had fed, that Our Lord said, (*John 6:48 - 59*) “I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert: and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven: that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say unto you: except you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life: and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed: and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me: and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live for ever.”

At the Last Supper and after the Resurrection the Apostles and Disciples began to realize the culmination of offerings and sacrifices which were completed in the bloodless offering of Christ's Body and Blood under the auspices of bread and

We seem to not comprehend how plainly Our Lord has continually explained this to us. When Our Lord taught us the Our Father, The Lord's Prayer, in teaching us to pray, "give us this day our daily bread," he was not making reference to the just the stuff onto which you put peanut butter and jelly, or the stuff which you dip into gravy.

The Disciples understood the dual reference to include The Bread of the Presence, which was always to be before the Lord in the Temple. Only priests could eat this bread, and it could only be eaten in the Holy Place, because it was holy.

The inclusions of The Bread of the Presence, and of bread as an offering, and Manna from the Exodus, to be correlated into the multiplication of the loaves of bread for the five thousand, was made unmistakable because the feeding of the five thousand occurred shortly before the Pasch - which is Passover.

The very next day, when those who had partaken of this miraculous meal sought and eventually found Jesus, they entered into a discourse with Jesus which eventually focused on the bread which comes from heaven and gives life. The people asked where and how they could obtain this bread. Jesus told them, that He himself is that bread of life. He told them that He Himself is the living bread which came down from heaven.

CHAPTER FIVE GOD'S OFFICIAL NOTICE THAT THE PASSOVER SUPPER HAD BECOME THE LAST SUPPER, THE LORD SUPPER, AND THE PASCAL LAMB WAS BEING REPLACED BY THE LAMB OF GOD

Virtually everyone who attends and participates in the Divine Liturgy regularly is familiar with the various prayers and activities in the Divine Liturgy. Most of these people understand the basic reasons why the prayers are prayed, why they are prayed when they are prayed, and why the Priest does what he does when he does it.

But the reasons for some of the prayers and actions or procedures, while understood by older Priests and laity, may have become obscured or forgotten.

The Divine Liturgy is the crucial activity of every member of the Body of Christ, and the source of all Grace which is obtained in conjunction with all of the Sacraments. Therefore, it is proper that every member of the Body of Christ know why we pray in the manner we pray, why the liturgy itself contains what it contains, why the ceremonies are as they are, why the Priest does what he does.

One of the ceremonies within the Divine Liturgy is the actual reception of the Body and Blood of Christ. We receive Holy Communion because Our Lord told us we must if we are to attain eternal

salvation. Our Lord plainly stated, that unless we eat His flesh and drink His blood we will not have life in us. He said that if we eat His flesh and drink His blood we will receive life everlasting. Of course Saint Paul informed us that one who unworthily receives Holy Communion is guilty of the body and blood of Christ, which is one of the reasons we pray The Prayer of Humble Access just before we receive Holy Communion.

In many rites the body and blood of Christ are mixed in the Chalice and received using a spoon, or they are received by intinction.

When the body and blood are received separately, the Priest main celebrant, and the laity, receive the body of Christ under the appearance of bread in the same manner for all practical purposes.

But you may have noticed they do not receive the blood of Christ under the appearance of wine, from the Chalice, in the same manner. The main difference is that the laity receive but one sip from the Chalice, while the main celebrant Priest sips from the Chalice three times.

The Priest sips from the Chalice, then offers the Chalice up - he holds it up - and says, Amen!

Then he does exactly the same things two more times.

Some people may think the Priest does this once

When Our Lord fed the five thousand men, and the women and children who accompanied them, with five loaves of bread, after everyone had eaten their fill, twelve baskets of chunks of bread were collected.

Those present, and everyone who heard of this miracle at that time, readily understood the significance, that there would be sufficient bread from Christ for physical life and for spiritual offering for the twelve tribes of Israel.

When Our Lord fed the four thousand men, and the women and children who accompanied them, after everyone had eaten their fill, there were collected seven baskets of fragments.

Again, everyone present, and everyone who heard in Israel of the miracle at that time, understood the significance of seven baskets. Just as God provided Manna for very day for forty years in the desert, so too would Christ provide bread, every day of the seven days of every week. What they did not comprehend until the Last Supper - well, after the Last Supper, when after the Resurrection Our Lord pulled everything together for the Apostles and Disciples - was that it was the daily, perpetual, offering of the Supreme Sacrificial Victim under the appearance of bread, which was signified by the seven baskets of fragments. Seven baskets of fragments, seven days in a week, signifying the availability of the Bread of Life every day of the week.

took its place as the permanent Supreme Sacrificial Offering which needed to be and which was to be bloodily killed but once, on the Cross.

The two miracles of the multiplication of the loaves and the fishes foretold what He would do at the Last Supper. And the blessing and manner of distribution which Our Lord followed on these occasions was not lost on the Jews who were there - for they each participated in Seder at least once every year.

Bread was a continual offering before the Holy of Holies in the Temple at Jerusalem. Fresh loaves of bread were kept as a perpetual offering before the Ark of the Covenant from the time it was made by Moses according to God's instructions. After the Children of Israel inhabited the Promised Land, even when the Ark was left virtually forgotten, fresh loaves of bread were kept before it by the Levites and Priests.

The Jews therefore associated bread with offerings to God, commingling the significance of bread in providing and sustaining physical as well as spiritual life.

Another aspect of these miracles which evil people do not wish you to realize, but which those who were present readily understood, is the significance of the number of baskets of leftover bread which were collected.

for each Person of the Blessed Trinity. While that is not radically in error, the real reason is because of the traditional Passover supper, and the unusual changes to the Passover supper which Our Lord made at the Last Supper. Those changes clearly established a demarcation in meaning, and established a completely new rite and liturgy with totally new effect.

The Lamb of God, Who is Our Lord God Jesus Christ, is substituted for the Pascal Lamb. God is offered in a bloodless manner which is inseparable from the bloody manner of offering of Calvary. Thus the bloody Pascal lamb which was of limited benefit, was replaced by the both bloodless and bloody Lamb of God.

But why does the celebrant Priest sip from the Chalice three times, each one followed by an Amen?

Because the Passover supper liturgy / prayer / ceremony / Seder includes drinking four cups of wine, but at the Last Supper Our Lord only drank three cups of wine.

It would be inappropriate to here attempt to give a detailed insight and explanation of the Passover Supper / Seder. But we are able to examine portions, especially those which Our Lord changed with what Christians know as the Last Supper.

First, we must comprehend the status wine held

until modern times when it became able to mass produce it and easily distribute it. Wine, especially good quality pure grape wine, was a royal drink. The children of Israel consumed it to celebrate their newly recovered freedom.

The Four Cups of wine consumed in the Seder do not just symbolize but are consumed in celebration of and are in their order inseparably associated with four distinct promises made by God as told in Exodus 6:6-7. These are traditionally referred to as: the Cup of Sanctification, the Cup of Deliverance, Cup of Redemption / Blessing, and the Cup of Restoration.

They are the four promises made by God to Moses and the Israelites in Exodus 6:6-7 6, when God said: “Therefore say to the children of Israel: I am the Lord who will bring you out from the work-prison of the Egyptians, and will deliver you from bondage: and redeem you with a high arm, and great judgments. And I will take you to myself for my people, I will be your God: and you shall know that I am the Lord your God, who brought you out from the work-prison of the Egyptians . . .”

In the Passover Supper / Seder there is the festival blessing after which everyone drinks from the first cup. Then there is the Passover Narrative and Little Hallel (*Psalm [112 - 117] 113 - 118*) after which everyone drinks from the second cup. This is followed by the main meal, where everyone eats the roasted lamb, unleavened bread, the bitter

men and the women and children who accompanied them. On the second occasion He fed four thousand men and the women and children who accompanied them. [For feeding the 5,000 see: Matthew 14:17-20, Mark 6:41-43, Luke 9:16-17, John 6:4,11-12; and for feeding the 4,000, see: Matthew 15:34-37, and Mark 8:6-8.]

Those who attempt in any manner to detract from these truly miraculous events are attempting to distract the faithful from realizing the full implication of what occurred. Therefore, let us briefly explore what these evil people do not wish the faithful to realize and to know.

On each occasion, Our Lord took the loaves of bread, blessed them, broke them, and distributed them to His disciples, that the disciples could and would redistribute the bread to the people. He did this in exactly the same manner as He blessed, broke, and distributed the bread at the Last Supper, when He changed bread into His body. And His truly ordained Priest continue to do this to this very day, consecrating ordinary bread into the Body of Christ and distributing it to the faithful.

Remember, the Last Supper was the Passover Supper, the Passover Seder, whereat Our Lord drastically changed that feast and the offering. The Passover Lamb was changed to the Pascal Lamb, the Lamb of God. The ordinary killing sacrifice of an animal, a lamb, which had to be repeated every year, was substituted and supplanted. Our Lord

CHAPTER SIX
TRUTHS AND THE PROPHETIC
STATEMENT IN THE MULTIPLICATIONS
OF LOAVES AND FEEDING OF
THOUSANDS

For some reason, probably a devious reason, some people proclaim there are such great disparities in the various relations of the multiplication of the loaves and the fishes amongst the various Gospels as to discredit the reality of the occasion.

People who attempt to discredit the multiplication of the loaves and fishes by citing discrepancies - and who are knowledgeable or validly claim to be Biblical scholars, simply are liars. For there was not just one occasion wherein Our Lord multiplied the loaves and fishes; there were two such occasions.

Others attempt to discredit these miracles by claiming when Our Lord began distributing the bread and fish He shamed the people who were there into sharing with each other the food they had brought with them. But the Gospels clearly state what food was available, that the people had followed Our Lord on each occasion without any anticipation of being gone but for a little while and anticipated being but a short distance from home, and therefore had brought no food with them.

On the first occasion Our Lord fed five thousand

herbs and spices, and the somewhat sweet spiced apples or fruit, and drink from the third cup of wine.

It is this third cup of wine which Our Lord changed into His blood, while it retained the appearances of wine.

The Passover Supper is completed with the singing of the Great Hallel, the drinking of the fourth cup of wine, and is ended or closed when the host or priest says, "Tel Telesti" which is interpreted as, "It Is Finished" or "It Is Consummated".

But Our Lord did not drink the fourth cup of wine at the Last Supper. After He changed the third cup into His blood, He told His disciples, (*Mat. 26:29*) "And I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father." Nor did He close the Passover Supper. He just got up and left, going to Mount Olivet - the Garden of Gethsemane, His disciples following Him there.

Before He was crucified, the soldiers attempted to give Our Lord wine mixed with myrrh - myrrh being a medicinal resin often mixed with wine. It has analgesic - pain relieving - properties. Christ refused it.

It was after He had been crucified, immediately before He died, when He said, "I thirst," that

common wine, almost a vinegar, was placed on a sponge on a branch of hyssop, and put to his mouth (*John 19:29*). Hyssop was used to spread the lamb's blood on the door post in Egypt at the first Passover. It was used in the Passover Supper. For Our Lord, it was the fourth cup.

It was immediately after this that Jesus closed the Passover Supper by saying, "It is consummated." And bowing his head, he gave up the ghost. (*John 19:30*)

The New Covenant which God told the children of Israel He would establish in Jeremiah was then completed in its establishment.

In the Divine Liturgy the celebrant Priest drinks the fourth cup when, after everyone has received Holy Communion, the main celebrant Priest drinks all of the consecrated wine which is left in the Chalice.

We have an English translation problem in the end of the Divine Liturgy, where we today say, "Go forth now into the world, loving thy neighbor as thyself and rejoice in the power of the Holy Spirit," or "Go in peace, the liturgy is ended," or even in understanding the Latin, "Ite, missa est", which is mistranslated as, "It has been sent", or as "dismissed".

The Latin is understood in the Greek, and the Greek closing as well as the High Church

Salvonic, and the Aramaic. All state the comprehension of the Passover Supper / Seder, "It Is Finished" or "It Is Consummated".

"It Is Finished" / "It Is Consummated" is what should be in the minds of the Priest and Laity when the Priest states the Divine Liturgy is ended.

Perhaps this information will assist today's Christians in comprehending the importance of even the ceremonies and language of the Divine Liturgy. Not only are bread and wine changed in substance into the Body and Blood of Christ, but the entire form of sacrifice, the substance of the sacrifice, and the effect of the sacrifice, are changed from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant.

Our Lord did not close the Passover Supper / Seder while sitting at the table. He closed it with the consummation of His offering Himself as the Supreme Sacrificial Offering, as He drank the fourth cup of the Seder.

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