

PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE

E U C H A R I S T



IRENÆUS (189 AD)

"He has declared the cup, a part of creation, to be his own blood, from which he causes our blood to flow; and the bread, a part of creation, he has established as his own body, from which he gives increase unto our bodies. When, therefore, the mixed cup [wine and water] and the baked bread receives the Word of God and becomes the Eucharist, the body of Christ, and from these the substance of our flesh is increased and supported, how can they say that the flesh is not capable of receiving the gift of God, which is eternal life—flesh which is nourished by the body and blood of the Lord, and is in fact a member of him?"

ibid., 5:2

"Jesus taught that the Eucharist was foreshadowed in the manna given by God during Israel's exodus from Egypt (see Jn 6:49–51). Indeed, long before the Last Supper, Jesus Himself foreshadowed the Eucharist by multiplying bread to feed His congregations, by repeatedly evoking banquet scenes in His preaching, and by choosing to be born in a town named Bethlehem (Hebrew for "House of Bread"). In an extended, explicit foretelling, He detailed the theology of His Eucharistic presence in the famous "Bread of Life" discourse (Jn 26–58).

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh" (Jn 6:51).

His flesh is bread; His blood is drink. This corresponds directly to His pronouncements over the bread and wine at the Last Supper: "This is My Body . . . This is the cup of My blood"—the very action He commanded His Apostles to repeat.

It is a curious fact that those who ordinarily insist on a strictly literal reading of the Bible will, with equal insistence, interpret these passages exclusively in terms of metaphor. (This is what I myself did, many years ago.) Yet Jesus did not treat "bread" and "blood" and "flesh" as metaphors. In the Bread of Life discourse, His language shocked His hearers. The verbs are more graphic in the Greek; He's telling the assembly that they must "chew" or "gnaw" His flesh. Yet, the more the people expressed their disgust, the more graphic and realistic Jesus' language became. . . ." (Reasons to Believe, by Scott Hahn)

VEPERS

Ant. 1 I cried to you, Lord, and you healed me; I will praise you for ever.

Psalm 30

Thanksgiving for deliverance from death

Christ, risen in glory, gives continual thanks to his Father(Cassian).

I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me *
and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O Lord, I cried to you for help *
and you, my God, have healed me.
O Lord, you have raised my soul from the dead, *
restored me to life from those who sink into the grave.

Sing psalms to the Lord, you who love him, *
give thanks to his holy name.
His anger lasts but a moment; his favor through life. *
At night there are tears, but joy comes with dawn.

I said to myself in my good fortune: *
"Nothing will ever disturb me."
Your favor had set me on a mountain fastness, *
then you hid your face and I was put to confusion.

To you, Lord, I cried, *
to my God I made appeal:
"What profit would my death be, my going to the grave? *
Can dust give you praise or proclaim your truth?"

The Lord listened and had pity. *
The Lord came to my help.
For me you have changed my mourning into dancing, *
you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.
So my soul sings psalms to you unceasingly. *
O Lord my God, I will thank you for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, *
and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, *
and will be for ever. Amen.

Psalm Prayer

God our Father, glorious in giving life, and even more glorious in restoring it, when his last night on earth came, your Son shed tears of blood, but dawn brought incomparable gladness. Do not turn away from us, or we shall fall back into dust, but rather turn our mourning into joy by raising us up with Christ.

Ant. I cried to you, Lord, and you healed me; I will praise you for ever.

