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CHAPTER 26: 28-36

For the Catholic Church, God's Revelation is found in Sacred Tradition, understood as God's Revealed Word handed down by the Living Teaching Authority established by Christ in the Church. That includes both Written Tradition (Scripture) and Unwritten Tradition received from Christ and handed down Orally by the Apostles and their Successors. The Church founded by Christ on Peter, and only that Church, has been Empowered by Christ to 'Interpret' His Teaching Authoritatively in His Name.

Scripture is *Inspired*; *Inspiration* really means that God Himself is the Chief Author of the Scriptures. He uses a Human Agent, in so marvelous a way that the Human writes what the Holy Spirit wants him to write, does so without Error, yet the Human Writer is Free, and keeps his own Style of Language. It is only because God is *Transcendent* that He can do this - insure Freedom from Error, while leaving the Human Free. To say He is Transcendent means that He is above and beyond all our Human Classifications and Categories.

Matthew writes his gospel account to give us the view of Jesus as the King. He records Jesus' authority in calling the disciples: "Follow me" (Matthew 4:19), and he also records more than any of the others about Jesus' teaching concerning God's kingdom and heavenly rule.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapse's, S.J. writings on the Bible, created a Scripture Commentary so complete and scholarly that it was practically the universal commentary in use by Catholics for over 400 years. Fr. Lapse's most excellent commentaries have been widely known for successfully combining piety and practicality. Written during the time of the Counter Reformation, it includes plenty of apologetics. His vast knowledge is only equaled by his piety and holiness.

Continuation of Matthew 26: 28-36

Verse 28- *For this is My Blood of the New Testament. Syr. Covenant, &c.* The Ethiopic has, *This is My very Blood.* He means, "in this chalice, by this My consecration, wine is turned into My Blood. Wherefore, after this consecration, there is no longer wine there, but My Blood, by which the new Covenant and Testament are confirmed and rectified, by means of My mediation between God and man." For Christ by His Blood, shortly to be shed, merited and confirmed for us the hope and the right of eternal inheritance in Heaven, which was the chief and the last will of Christ the Testator. And the Sacraments afford this right to us, especially the Eucharist, in the same way that a testament consigns in writing to the heir a right to the testator's goods.

Observe: Matthew and Mark have, *My Blood of the New Testament.* But Luke and Paul have, *This chalice is the New Testament in My Blood.* The meaning in both is the same, but Christ would seem to have actually uttered what Matthew and Mark relate.

roses of martyrs, the chaplets of doctors; for "a garden enclosed is my sister, a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed. Thy sendings forth (shoots) are of Paradise" (Cant. iv. 12, 13).

But thou wilt maintain, If Peter, believing Christ's words, had persuaded himself that he would certainly deny Christ that very night, he could not have but done it; because this persuasion and belief would have determined his mind, and bound him to do so. For no one can effectually strive against that which he knows will certainly happen by his own agency. The attempt would be vain. He regards and shrinks from it as impossible; for he knows that this and nothing else would happen, whatever his efforts. But, I reply, this persuasion would have inclined and in some measure have determined Peter to deny Christ, but yet only in a general way, that he would deny Him some time in the night, but not at that particular moment or occasion, or before such and such people. All his particular acts then would have been free. And in like manner that knowledge, that we cannot avoid all venial sins, obliges us to fall into them at some time or another. But yet only generally, and in a confused way. For as often as we commit this or that venial sin, we sin of free choice. Theologians, and Suarez in his treatise on Hope, teach us that if a man's damnation were revealed to him, he could not possibly effectually hope for eternal life, as already apprehending it to be impossible (for no one can attempt what he thinks impossible). But yet he both ought and can observe God's commands, and that as often as he transgresses he would do so freely and sinfully, even though he is generally aware that he would fall into, and die in, some mortal sin. This fall of Peter and the rest made them more humble and cautious. See John xxi. 15, 21, 22.

Verse 36- *Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, &c.*

Gethsemane is the valley of oil or fatness, or more precisely, the oil-press, for pressing the oil from the olives which grew on Mount Olivet. It was somewhat more than half an (Italian) mile from the *caenaculum* (upper chamber). Christ withdrew there—(1) for retirement and prayer, and to be free from distraction; (2) to show that He did not fly from death, but rather sought for it, for the place was well known to the traitor; and (3) to show that He suffered out of pure love and compassion for men. For oil is the type of compassion; and as oil was in that spot pressed from the olives, so in His agony was the Blood of Christ pressed forth, with which we are refreshed as with oil, are anointed and are fed. See Cant. i. 3.

Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. That is, in the garden, about a stone's throw distant. See John xviii. 1; Luke xxii. 41. Adrichomius describes the hut of S. Pelagia the penitent and the tomb of the Blessed Virgin as close by, and above it Mount Olivet, the place of the ascension; humility and exaltation being fitly associated together, as is oft the case with God's elect. To speak accurately, Christ neither prayed nor suffered His agony in Gethsemane, but in the garden close by; and He began His Passion in a garden as expiating the sin of Adam, which was committed in a garden. For he ruined therein himself and all his descendants, and subjected them to sin, death, and hell. And all these did Christ expiate in a garden by the agony He there endured. As in the Canticle, "I raised thee up under the apple tree: there was thy mother defiled: there was she violated that bare thee" (Cant. viii. 5). Christ therefore in the garden restored us to Paradise, from which we had been expelled by Adam, and planted there the garden of His Church, verdant with the anguish of mortification, the saffron of charity, the spikenard of humility, the lilies of virgins, the

For this is an expression of clearer meaning. Christ, by instituting the Eucharist at His last supper, rather than upon the Cross, ratified His testament and covenant with the Church. For all the Apostles were here present. And they personified and represented the Church.

Observe, secondly: In the form of consecrating the chalice which we now use in the Sacrifice of the Mass, there are added these words, *The eternal testament, the mystery of the faith*. Tradition says they have been handed down from S. Peter, who is the author of our Liturgy. So teach Leo IX. (*Epist. ad. Michael imp. c. 9*) and S. Thomas (3 p. q. 78, art. 2, ad. 4). For although they do not concern the essence of the form (and yet S. Thomas in 1 Cor. xi. seems to say they do), wherefore they are not found in the Liturgies of S. James, S. Basil, S. Chrysostom, and S. Clement, yet they pertain to its complete integrity. And this is the common opinion of the whole Latin Church, which, in the form of consecrating the chalice in the Mass, writes and pronounces these words as spoken by Christ, and enjoined by the Apostles, equally with the rest.

Where observe: *The mystery of the faith* signifies—1st That the Blood of Christ veiled beneath the species is a hidden (*arcanam*) thing, which can be recognised and believed by faith alone. 2nd That the very Blood of Christ, as it was shed in His Passion, is the object of faith whereby we are justified. For we believe that we are justified and cleansed from our sins by the merits of the Passion and Death of Christ.

For many, i.e., for all men, who are very many.

Shall be shed (Vulg.). But the Greek of Matthew, Mark, and Luke has *ἐκχυνόμενον*, *is shed*, in the present, *i.e.,* is offered in this Sacrifice of the Eucharist under the species of wine, and which shall be presently shed upon the Cross in its own species and natural form of blood. For the blood of the victim was wont to be shed in the sacrifice itself, and so was a libation made to God. Whence the shedding itself is called a libation, a drink-offering. Wherefore this chalice of the Blood of Christ, as it was the drink-offering of the Sacrifice of Christ, was poured into the mouth of Christ and His Apostles, and for this reason the reception of the species, both of bread and wine, pertains to the object and the perfection of the Sacrifice. Hence, then, it is plain that the Eucharist is not only a Sacrament, but a Sacrifice, in truth, the only Sacrifice of the New Law, which has succeeded to all the ancient sacrifices, and which contains them all in their completeness in Itself. Therefore Christ is called "a Priest after the order of Melchizedek," not of Aaron. For Aaron offered sheep, but Melchizedek bread and wine, even as Christ did, and transubstantiated them into His Body and Blood (see *Ps. cx. 4* and *Heb. v. 6, 7*). The Eucharist is, therefore—1st A burnt-offering; 2nd A sin-offering; 3rd A peace-offering; 4th A *mincha*, or meat-offering (*Lev. i., &c.*).

That this is so is plain—1st Because Christ did not say of His Blood, “*which is poured upon many,*” as a Sacrament, but *which is shed for many,*” as a sacrifice and drink-offering.

2nd Because the Greek of all three Evangelists is *ἐκχυνόμενον*, *which is shed*, in the present tense, that is to say, now, in this Supper and consecration of the Eucharist. Therefore He speaks of the present Sacrifice of the Eucharist, and not only of that which was about to take place upon the Cross. And so S. Ambrose understands (in *Ps.* 38). But the Vulgate translates, *shall be shed*, because it has respect to the Sacrifice of the Cross, which was just about to take place, in which the Blood of Christ was most evidently and most perfectly shed for the salvation of sinners, of which this sacramental shedding of His Blood in the Eucharist was a type and figure, and therefore was, typically, one and the same with It.

3rd Because Luke and Paul, to the words of consecration, *This is My Body*, add, *which is given*, that is, is offered, *for you* in sacrifice. Paul has, *which is broken for you*, that is to say, under the species of bread in the Eucharist, and actually by the nails and lance upon the Cross. Wherefore Paul calls the Eucharist, *the bread which we break*, viz., in the Sacrament, because we break and eat the species of bread, as offering this in sacrifice to God, by receiving and consuming them, none of which things were done upon the cross. Therefore *to break bread* signifies the Sacrifice, not of the Cross, but of the Eucharist.

4th Because Luke has expressly, *τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἢ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματι μου τὸ ὑπέζ ὑμῶν ἐκχυνόμενον*, i.e., *this cup is the New Testament in My Blood, which, i.e., the cup, shall be poured forth for you*. For the word *which* must be referred to the *cup*, not to *the Blood*; since *αἵματι* is in the *dative* case, *τό* in the *nom.* Therefore the chalice of the Blood of Christ is poured out for us; but it is poured out in the Eucharist, not on the Cross, for then there was no chalice. Therefore the pouring out of the Blood is a drink-offering and a sacrifice.

The Sacrifice of the Eucharist, then, is a whole burnt-offering, because in consecrating and eating we offer whole Christ to God. The same is a peace-offering, because by It we ask and obtain peace, that is, all good things from God. The same also is a sin-offering, because it is offered to God, and obtains from Him remission of venial sins and temporal punishments. But It obtains remission of mortal sins indirectly, because It obtains from God prevenient grace and contrition, by which they are blotted out. (See *Council of Trent, Sess. 22. q. 2. See also S. Thomas and the Scholastics on the Eucharistic Sacrifice.*)

Lastly, to the Blood of Christ rather than to His Body is ascribed remission of sins, although it pertains to both. The reason is, that in the Old Testament expiation is attributed to blood, and in the sin-offering the victim’s blood was poured out. Also by the shedding of His Blood the Death of Christ is signified, which was the all-worthy price, expiation and satisfaction for our sins.

The first reason, then, which moved Christ to institute the Eucharist, was to ordain a

Lord, strengthen my weakness by Thy grace; support and sustain me, that I fall not into sin.” And our experience is the same. We think that we are strong in faith, in chastity, in patience; but when tribulation assails us we stumble, we are afraid, and speedily fall. The remedy for temptation is the acknowledgment of our own weakness and the imploring Divine strength.

Verse 34- *Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.* In Greek *ἀπαρνῆση*, abjure Me. Thou wilt do much worse than the others. Thy presumption deserves it. They only fled, thou shalt abjure Me.—The cock crows more loudly in the morning than at midnight. This time, then, is properly the cock-crowing. It was before this cock-crowing that Peter thrice denied Christ. As S. Mark says, “Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny Me thrice.” Thou who art now so eager to confess Me, wilt be more frequent and eager in thy denials this very night than the cock in his crowing. And yet the cock awakes the sleepers to praise God, whilst thou, by thy denial, wilt excite others to revile Me.

Peter, says S. Jerome, made professions from the warmth of his faith, and the Saviour foretold, as God, what would be. And He gives the cock-crowing as a sign to Peter, in order that whenever he hears it he may remember Christ’s prophecy, may penitently acknowledge his sin of denial and presumption, and seek for pardon; as indeed he did. “As God” (so Bede observes), “He foretells the mode, time, moment, and extent of his denial.”

Verse 35- *Peter saith unto Him, Though I should die with Thee, yea will I not deny Thee. Likewise also said they all.* To testify their faith, affection, and love towards Him; but in their presumption they sinned in a twofold manner. Thou wilt say, The Apostles believed Christ to be the Son of God, why then did they not believe (nay, clamoured against) Him when He predicted their fall? Why, because they did not attend to Christ’s prediction, but looked rather to their then purpose of heart, which they felt to be so strong that it would be impossible for them to fall away. And consequently regarding Christ’s words not so much a prediction as a test and trial of their purpose and love, they thought that in this time of trial their affection towards Him should be boldly and resolutely manifested. “Peter,” says S. Hilary, “was so carried forward by his affection and love for Christ, as to take no account of his own natural weakness, nor the belief he should have in the Lord’s words.” But even though they believed Christ’s prediction, yet they were free to deny Him, because neither did the prediction itself nor their belief in it take away their liberty, but rather presupposed it. For Christ predicted their defection because they would certainly forsake Him; but they did not forsake Him because He foretold they would do so. Objectively their future defection was prior to Christ’s foreknowledge and prediction, for Christ only foresaw that which they would do as free agents, and accordingly imposed not on them any necessity of denying Him, since His prediction was objectively subsequent.

God allowed this for various reasons. 1. To suggest to Christ further grounds for patience, and to exercise Him in every kind of suffering. For the defection of the Apostles was a great affliction to Christ; not merely on their own account, but because He saw that all the fruit of His preaching had been lost upon them. 2. To humble the Apostles with a sense of their own weakness, when they saw that all their courage and resolution had melted away. "Like lions before the battle, like deer when in it." 3. To show the power of persecution and fear which bereft them of their faith, their memory, and senses; and that consequently this fear could not be overcome by their natural reason or strength, but only by Divine grace, which they should constantly implore. "We learn thence," says S. Chrysostom, "a great lesson, that the will of man is powerless unless strengthened by help from above." And S. Victor of Antioch, "Man's promptitude is worthless for withstanding graver temptations, if heavenly aid be wanting."

I will smite. The Heb. and Sept. read "smite" in the imperative. The meaning is, however, the same. The Prophets frequently use the imperative for the future by way of apostrophe. "Smite, O sword," that is, "I God will smite Christ, will suffer Him," *i.e.*, to be smitten. Comp. Isa. vi. 10 with S. Paul, Acts xxviii. 26.

The shepherd. Christ the Shepherd and the Bishop of our souls (1 Pet. ii. 25). *And the sheep shall be scattered, i.e.*, the Apostles. But God soon brought them together again, that Christ might find them joined in one body, and restore them their faith and courage. For having no homes of their own, they naturally betook themselves to the upper chamber, where they had kept the Passover, that He the master of that house might be again their host and friend, and where, in fact, He soon after appeared to them, and restored their faith. This was Christ's special favour. He bestowed it on Peter after his threefold denial, when by a look He made him weep bitterly; and on S. John, whom He brought back and placed by His mother near the cross, and commended him to His mother as her son. There can then be no question that they both returned into favour with Christ and were sanctified. Christ foretold this to show that He was God, and that He suffered for man's redemption, not compulsorily, but willingly; and that when suffering thus "they might not despair," says S. Hilary, "but might exercise repentance and be saved."

Verse 32- *But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee, "where I will meet you,"* says Euthymius. "He mentioned Galilee," says S. Chrysostom, "to deliver them from fear of the Jews, and induce them the more readily to listen to Him." It was to keep them from despair.

Verse 33- *Peter answered and said unto Him, Though all should be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.* This was from his vehement love for Christ. "For faith is the ardent affection towards God," says S. Jerome, "which makes him speak thus." "For he thinks" (says S. Augustine, *de Grat. de lib. Arb. cap. xvii.*) "that he can really do that which he feels he wishes." And yet his sin was threefold—first, in boldly and vehemently contradicting Christ; next, in arrogantly preferring himself to others; thirdly, in too great presumption and reliance on his own strength. He ought to have said, "I believe it can be, nay, that from my weakness it will be so. But do Thou, O

most excellent and Divine Sacrament in the New Law, by means of which He might feed the faithful with Divine Food. And that the Church might worthily, by It, as well unceasingly honour and worship God. For the victim which is offered to God in the Eucharistic Sacrifice is of infinite value. It is commensurate and co-equal with God Himself. For the victim is Christ Himself, who is both God and man. God Himself therefore is offered to God. Wherefore, since all our other worship, inasmuch as it is but that of creatures, is poor and worthless, therefore Christ made Himself to be the Victim in the Eucharist, that by It, as being God's equal, we might render due and equal worship to God, even such as He of right requires.

Moreover, this Sacrifice chiefly consists in the consecration. For by it Christ is mystically slain, when His Body and His Blood are severally apportioned (*seorsim allocantur*) under the species of bread and wine, as Suarez and Lessius (*lib. 12, de Perfect. Div. c. 13, n. 94*) teach from SS. Gregory, Irenæus, Nyssen, &c. By the word "severally" (*seorsim*), "by themselves," understand only as regards the effect (*vis*) of consecration. For by concomitance, where there is the Body of Christ, there also is His Blood, and *vice versâ*.

The second reason was, that He might leave unto us a perpetual exhibition (*ideam*) of His Life and Passion, to continually stir up in every one the memory of so great a redemption. For in the Eucharist the Blood is consecrated by Itself, and the Body of Christ is consecrated by Itself, that His Passion may thereby be set forth, in which His Blood was shed, and separated from His Body. The *species* therefore of wine shows forth (*representat*) the Blood of Christ shed. The *species* of bread exhibits the lifeless Body of Christ. This is what He said, *Do this, &c.* And S. Paul, 1 Cor. xi. 26, says, *As oft as ye shall eat, &c., ye shall announce the Lord's Death until He come.*

The third reason was, the greatness of the love of Christ towards His faithful people, by which, as He united our flesh, hypostatically, in the Incarnation, to His Deity, so in the Eucharist, sacramentally, He unites the same together with His Godhead, to each faithful communicant, and as it were incorporates them, that each may become Divine, and in a certain sense a Christ and God. For this is what S. John says of Christ when He was about to institute the Eucharist, before He washed the Disciples' feet. John xiii. 1: *Jesus, knowing that His hour was come, and that He was about to Pass out of this world to the Father, having loved His own that were in his world, He loved them to the end.*

To the end, to the extremity both of life and love. That is, He loved them with extremest and highest love, when He left Himself to them in the Eucharist, that they might always have Him present with them, that they might associate and converse with Him, consult Him, open to Him all their difficulties, troubles, and temptations, ask and obtain His assistance. For as

He Himself says in Prov. (viii. 31), "My delights are with the sons of men."

Hence, as the Church sings, with S. Thomas:

"Himself as born for brotherhood,
Feasting He gives His brethren food:
Their price He gives Himself to die,
Their guerdon when they reign on high."

That by this extremity of love He may entice, yea, compel us, ardently to love Him back. For a "magnet is the love of love." It was this love which, as a sharp goad, drove S. Laurence to the flames, S. Vincent to the "wooden horse," S. Sebastian to the arrows, S. Ignatius to the lions, and all the other martyrs bravely to endure and overcome all manner of pains and torments, that they might pay back love for love, life for life death for Christ's death. This was why they were ambitious of martyrdom, and rejoiced and triumphed in it. And these things were the effect of the Eucharist. This supplied them with strength and gladness in all temptations and sufferings. Wherefore, of old time, the Christians in days of persecution used to communicate daily, that they might strengthen themselves for martyrdom. Indeed, they took the Eucharist home with them, and received It with their own hands (as Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland, when she was kept captive in England, and had no Priest with her). Christ before His Passion instituted the Eucharist, that by means of It He might arm the Apostles to meet temptation.

A fourth reason was, that in the Eucharist Christ might give us the opportunity of exercising every virtue. For in it our *faith* is exercised, when we believe that He who is true God and man is invisibly, but really and truly, contained in a small host. Hope is exercised, because when we believe that Christ giveth Himself unto us, we hope that He will give us all other things, which are far less than Himself. Charity is exercised, because the Eucharist is a furnace of love, which Christ exhales, and breathes upon us, that we may love Him again. Religion is exercised, because we worship and invoke God with the highest form of worship, and sacrifice to Him Christ Himself. Humility is exercised, because we ignore our eyes and senses and natural judgment, which suggests to us that there is only bread and wine in the Eucharist, and humbly submit ourselves to the words of Christ, who says, *This is My Body: This is My Blood*. Gratitude is exercised, because by it we render highest thanks to God for all His benefits, which is why it is called *Eucharist*. Abstinence is exercised, because it is not right to communicate otherwise than fasting. Patience and mortification are exercised, because it is a lively mirror of Christ's sufferings and crucifixion, and so on.

The *tropological* reason is, that by feeding us with His Divine Flesh, He may call us away from earthly flesh, and its pleasures and concupiscences, that we may live a life that is not carnal, but spiritual and divine, and may say with S. Paul, "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." A Christian ought therefore so to live, speak, work, as though it were not he himself, but Christ who is living, speaking, working in him. Let him live, therefore, like an angel, "For man did eat angels' food." And S. Cyril of Jerusalem says

unwillingly or by compulsion, and as He could not deliver Himself and them, He consequently was not God, and that as He would die and never rise again, they had nothing further to hope for from Him. They consequently forgot and disbelieved all His promises and predictions. The Church accordingly seems to think that the Blessed Virgin alone remained then steadfast in the faith. For in the Office for Good Friday the Church puts out all the lights one by one, leaving only one burning; though others confine this more strictly to faith in the resurrection, as if she alone believed that He would rise again from the dead. This is clear, too, from the Apostles, who hardly believed Christ when He appeared to them after His resurrection, and said that He was alive. Christ accordingly reproved their unbelief (Mark xvi. 14). And so S. Hilary explains it, "Ye shall be troubled with fear and want of faith." And Euthymius, "The faith ye now have in Me will be driven out of you, because ye will believe that I can no longer help you." Indeed our Lord foretold this. See John xvi. 31, 32, "The hour cometh when ye shall be scattered, every one to his own, and shall leave Me alone. Ye believe in Me now, but very soon ye will not believe, when ye see Me a captive and suffering." For not only "did they forsake Him hastily, but" (says S. Augustine, *Tract. ciii.*) "in their hearts forsook the faith. For they were reduced to as great despair, and extinction (as it were) of their faith, as appeared in Cleophas when he said he trusted that He would have redeemed Israel. But see how they forsook Him, in abandoning the very faith wherewith they believed in Him." Many commentators follow S. Augustine in considering that the Apostles fell away from the faith. And S. Ambrose also maintains that S. Peter lost his faith, and Turrecremata also (*de Eccl. i. 30 and iii. 61*). But many theologians teach at the present day that he did not lose his faith, but merely sinned in not openly professing it. This, they urge, is all that the Evangelists say; why invent a heavier charge, and urge it against him? S. Augustine says (in *John, Tract. cxiii.*), he merely denied that he was a Christian, as people did in Japan, though still retaining the faith in their hearts. S. Cyril (*Lib. xi. 41*, in *John*) maintains that he denied Christ not through fear, but through love; for that if he confessed himself His disciple he could not have remained by Him, as he wished to do. S. Ambrose (in *Luc. xxii.*) says that he did not deny God, but man. "I know not the man, because I know Him to be God." And when he says (*Serm. xlvi.*) that Peter gave up the faith, he means the profession of the faith. So, too, S. Hilary (cap. xxxii. in *Matt.*) and S. Leo (as above), "His tears abounded where his love failed not, and the fount of charity washed away the words of fear." Peter then sinned mortally against the profession of the faith, and consequently lost charity, though not faith. Maldonatus, Toletus (in *John xviii.*), Bellarmine (*de Eccl. iii. 17*) distinctly maintain this; Suarez (*de Fide Disp. ix. sect. 6*) thinks it was probably the case with all the Apostles that they fled through fear, and not as denying Christ.

ending with the 119th, "*Blessed are the undefiled in the way.*" From hence S. Chrysostom concludes that no one ought to depart from Mass before the thanksgivings, which are contained in the collects after communion. You may gather the same principle from an ordinary dinner or supper, from which people ought not to depart before returning thanks to God. Hence, also, the Fourth Council of Toledo asserts that this hymn of Christ's affords us an example of singing hymns. Hence, also, the practice of singing at Mass is of the highest antiquity, as is plain from the ancient Liturgies.

This, then, was the custom of the ancient Hebrews, to sing hymns at the Paschal Supper, which the Christians afterwards followed, in that after the Eucharist and the Agape, a common feast of charity for all the faithful, they sung hymns and psalms by way of giving thanks to God. This is gathered from S. Paul (*Eph. v. 19*), and Tertullian eloquently shows the same (*Apol. c. 39*), and S. Cyprian (*Epist. ad Donat.*).

The ancient heathen had a similar practice at their feasts, in honour of their gods.

Lastly, S. Augustine (*Epist. 253*) says that this hymn of Christ was in circulation in his time, but he himself regarded it as spurious, and intimates that it was forged by the Priscillianists.

They went out to the Mount of Olives. Christ was wont, especially in these last days of His life, to go daily to Jerusalem, and teach in the Temple; and then about evening to return to Bethany, and there sup, and soon after supper return to the Mount, of Olives, and there spend the night in prayer, as Luke intimates (*xxi. 37*). But upon this occasion He did not go to Bethany, as He had supped in Jerusalem. He went, therefore, direct to the Mount of Olives, as it were to a wrestling-ground, that there He might offer Himself to be seized by Judas and the Jews. Thus Victor of Antioch asks, "Why did He go out to the mountain? why does He despise a lurking-place, and manifest Himself to those who came to apprehend Him? He made haste to occupy the spot where aforetime He was wont to pray, the spot which His betrayer knew so well" (*John xviii. 2*).

Verse 31- *Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of Me this night; for it is written, I will smite the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered.* Be offended and fall into sin, first the sin of weakness and cowardice in forsaking Me, your Master and Lord, in My Passion. "The terror of the disciples," says S. Leo, "was then excusable, nor did their sorrow sink into distrust." And further on, speaking of S. Peter's denial, "The Lord saw not in thee a feigned faith, nor estranged love, but shaken resolution." It was thus that Marcellinus and many others, when asked whether they were Christians, and denied it through fear of tortures, sinned not directly against the faith, but merely against its open profession, in not daring openly to confess it.

But the Apostles seem to have stumbled in the faith, because, when they saw Christ seized by the Jews without defending Himself, they thought He was suffering either

Cateches. 4, Myst.), "In the Eucharist we are made concorporate, and of the same blood with Christ."

Moreover, S. Chrysostom says (*Hom. 36, in 1 Cor.*), "Where Christ is eucharistically, there is not wanting the frequent presence of angels. Where there is such a King and such a Prince, there is the celestial palace, yea, there is Heaven itself." Wherefore we read concerning S. Ammon in the *Lives of the Fathers*, that when he was celebrating, an angel was seen to stand at the altar, sign the communicants with the sign of the cross, and write their names in a book. And S. Chrysostom (*lib. 3, de Sacerdotio*) relates that choirs of angels have been seen round about the altar, who, with bowed heads, showed deepest reverence to Christ their King, and uttered awe-inspiring voices. When, therefore, we communicate, or say or hear Mass, let us think that we are sitting by the side of Christ at the Last Supper. Let us think that Christ is speaking by the mouth of the Priest, is celebrating, is transubstantiating bread and wine into His Body and Blood, and is feeding us therewith. For it is Christ who is the chief Agent, and works the Eucharistic miracle, as the Council of Trent teaches (*Sess. 22*). Wherefore S. Ambrose (*lib. 8, in Luc.*) says, "It is this Body of which it is said, My Flesh is meat indeed. About this Body are the true eagles, which fly round about It with spiritual wings." And (*lib. 4 de Sac.*) "well may the eagles be about the altar where the Body is." Wherefore S. Francis says, in his epistle to Priests, "It is a great misery, and a miserable infirmity, when you have Him Himself present, and care for anything else in the world."

The *anagogical* reason is, that Christ, in the Eucharist, gave us a pledge, a prelibation and a foretaste of the celestial inheritance. Wherefore the Church sings, with S. Thomas, in the Office of the Adorable Sacrament, "O sacred Feast, in which Christ is received, in which the memory of His Passion is recalled, the soul is filled with grace, and to us is given a pledge of future glory."

S. Thomas says, "In the Eucharist spiritual sweetness is tasted at the very fountain." This was what S. Francis, S. Monica, S. Catherine of Sienna, and many others were wont to feel at the Holy Eucharist, who were inebriated with heavenly delights, and kept jubilee, exulted, and were rapt in ecstasy, saying with the Psalmist, "My heart and my flesh exult in the living God. For whom have I in Heaven but Thee, and who is there upon earth that I desire in comparison of Thee? God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

"My Jesus, my Love, my God, and my all."

Again, the Eucharist is the Food of immortality, because by virtue of It our bodies rise to the life immortal, according to that saying of Christ (*John vi.*), "Whoso eateth of this Bread shall live for ever." The Eucharist therefore stamps upon our bodies a certain force, not physical, but moral, which is

the seed of immortality, that by means of it we may rise again. Whence S. Chrysostom rightly concludes (*Hom. 83, in Matth.*), “How, then, does it not behove that he should be purer who enjoys such a sacrifice? Should not the hand which divides this Flesh be more resplendent than a solar ray? Should not the mouth be filled with spiritual fire; and the tongue, which is ruddy, with that tremendous Blood?”

And our Thomas, taught of God, says in the 4th *Book of the Imitation, chap. 2*, “It ought to seem as great, as new, and as pleasant to thee, when thou celebratest or hearest Mass, as though Christ on that self-same day descended into the Virgin’s womb, and became man; or was hanging upon the Cross, suffering and dying for man’s salvation.” Whence he gathers (*chap. v.*), “that when a Priest celebrates devoutly, he honours God, makes glad the angels, builds up the Church, assists the living, affords rest to the departed, and makes himself to have a share in all these good things.” “For what is His goodness, and what is His beauty, unless it be the wheat of the elect, and the wine that bringeth forth virgins?” (*Zech. ix. 17*) Vulgate.

Verse 29- *I say unto you . . . fruit of the vine; Arab., juice of the vine, &c.* S. Austin (*lib. de Consens. Evang. iii. 1*), and from him Jansen and others, are of opinion that Matthew intimates that Christ spake these words *after* the Eucharistic Supper. Let us here consider the following objection. “*The fruit of the vine* is wine produced from it, pressed from its grapes; therefore in the Eucharistic Chalice there is not the Blood of Christ, but only wine sprung from a vine.” I answer, the pronoun *this* in *this fruit, &c.*, does not signify exactly that wine which was in the consecrated Chalice, but in general the wine upon the table, from which the cup was filled, which was used both at the Passover and at the consecration of the Eucharist. Secondly, the Blood of Christ may be called *wine*, as the Body of Christ is called *bread* by S. Paul, on account, indeed, of the substance of bread and wine, as it was *before* consecration, and because of the *species* of bread and wine which remain after consecration. In truth, the *species* themselves, or the accidents of the wine, are rightly called *the fruit of the vine*, because they are produced by the vine. Thirdly, as all kinds of food, both by Scriptural and common usage, are often called *bread*, because it is the staple of all food, so in like manner is any kind of drink called wine, especially by the Italians, Syrians, and others.

But it is far more probable that Christ spake these words *before* the institution of the Eucharist, concerning the supper and the chalice of the paschal lamb. For at that supper a cup of wine was carried round, which the father of the family tasted first, and then sent round about to all who partook of the lamb, as the Jewish tradition is. This second view is proved, because Luke expressly asserts as much. He distinctly gives an account of the two suppers of Christ,—that upon the lamb, and the Eucharistic Supper,—which Matthew, for the sake of brevity, condensed into one. And he says that these words concerning the chalice were spoken before the Eucharist at the paschal supper. We may see that the same conclusion must be drawn from what Christ said previously concerning the eating of the lamb (*Luke xxii. 15, 16*). “And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you

before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” Then immediately afterwards He subjoins what is said concerning the cup of the paschal lamb, “And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.” Then, immediately afterwards, he relates the institution of the Eucharist, and of the Eucharistic cup, which Christ consecrated, saying, “Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” Where there is no mention made of *the fruit of the vine*, nor of *drinking new wine in the kingdom of God*.

Christ intended, therefore, by these words only to signify that He, from henceforth, would not sup with His disciples after the accustomed manner; but that this was His *last* supper, after which He was about to be taken and put to death. Wherefore here, as proceeding to die, He bids the Apostles His last farewell. Wherefore these words do not refer to the Eucharistic Chalice, which does not contain *the fruit of the vine*, in the sense of *wine*, but the Blood of Christ, into which it has been changed by consecration. This is the opinion of Jerome, Bede, and many others.

When I will drink it new with you, &c. New, i.e., of a new and different kind. For in Heaven the Blessed drink no earthly wine, but heavenly, even the wine and nectar of everlasting glory and joy; according to the words of Psalm xxxvi. 9, “They shall be inebriated with the fatness of Thy house: Thou shalt give them to drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure.” So Origen on this passage, and Nazianzen (*Orat. de Pascha.*). For Scripture is wont to express the spiritual joys of the Blessed by means of corporeal pleasures, such as food and drink.

You will say that Christ after His Resurrection, in order to prove it to His Apostles, ate with them, and, as it would appear, also drank wine with them. How, then, does He here say that He will no more drink wine with them? I answer, that Christ did indeed both eat and drink with His Apostles after the Resurrection, but only by the way as it were, and to prove to them that He had risen, but not to satisfy the requirements of nature, as He had done before His death. Wherefore, speaking after the manner of men, that reception of food after the Resurrection cannot be counted eating.

Verse 30- *And when they had sung an hymn, &c. Vulg. said an hymn, but meaning sung.* Greek ὑμνήσαντες, i.e., *said or sung a hymn*, by way of giving thanks and praise to God. The Arabic has *they gave praise*. Some think from the books of the Hebrew ritual that this was the hymn customarily sung by the Jews at the Passover, to give thanks after eating the lamb. But indeed, as Paul Burgensis observes, and from him Franc. Lucas, Baronius, and others, this hymn consisted of seven psalms of Hallelujah, beginning with the 113th, “*When Israel came out of Egypt,*” and