

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.*

John was writing his eye-witness account of Jesus some thirty years later than the other three accounts, possibly around 95AD. There had been time for growth, reflection and observation. Many thousands of Christians had by then lost their lives for their faith in the Lord Jesus, both in Rome and in Jerusalem. John himself had been in prison and was now in exile, the last of Jesus' twelve apostles to remain alive.

Considered one of the most important Catholic theologians and Bible commentators, Cornelius à Lapide'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. Lapide'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 John 6: 36-52

Ver. 36.—*But I said, &c. Said, elsewhere, even if it had been nowhere recorded by S. John. So S. Chrysostom and others. Again said, i.e., sufficiently, and more than sufficiently, I have shown and proved to you, because ye have seen, i.e., have known, i.e., by the many signs and miracles which I have wrought, ye could and ought to have known Me. And yet through the obstinacy of your minds ye do not believe in Me. For (c. v. v. 3, &c.) He at length confutes the Jews, because though they had seen so many signs they did not believe in Him. As Euthymius says, "Ye have seen Me, or ye have known who I am, both from the witness of John, and the miracles which I have wrought, and the witness of the Scriptures which I have unfolded to you; but voluntarily doing evil ye believe not."*

Ver. 37.—*Every thing, &c.* There is an anticipation, thus, "Ye will object against Me, 'If Thou knewest that we would not believe Thy preaching, why dost thou preach to us?' I reply, 'Because there are some of you who will believe in Me, namely those whom

"Although also He is said to be delivered up by the Father, yet He is also said to have given up Himself. And the one indeed was said that we might learn His accordance with the Father, the other that we might not be ignorant of the free volition of the Son."

expounded it. And although they were so grievously offended, yet did not Christ correct them, when this their offence, and apostasy He could, and should (*debuisset*) have done by a single word, saying that He was speaking figuratively (*mysticè*), namely, that to eat His Flesh was nothing else but to believe in Him as incarnate and suffering for the salvation of men. Since, therefore, it is certain that He did not do this, it is certain that He was speaking concerning the real and sacramental eating of His Flesh in the Eucharist. "Consider," says Theophylact, "that the bread which is eaten by us in the Mysteries is not merely a certain figure of the Lord's body, but is the very Flesh of the Lord. He said not, *The Bread which I will give is a figure of My Flesh*. For by the words secretly spoken (*arcanis verbis*) that bread is transformed through the mystic benediction and the accession of the Holy Spirit, into the Flesh of the Lord. And how is it that flesh does not appear to us, but bread? It is that we may not shrink from eating it. For if indeed It had appeared to be flesh, we should have been disaffected towards communion. But now through the Lord's condescension to an infirmity, the mystic Food appears to us such as that to which we are accustomed at other times."

Ver. 52.—*And the bread which I will give is My Flesh for the life of the world* (Vulg.) The Greek has, *But the bread which I will give is My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world*. And so read the Syriac, S. Cyril, Theophylact and Theodoret. The Arabic reads *Body* instead of *Flesh*. The meaning is, "The bread, *i.e.*, the food of the Eucharist, which I will give at the Last Supper, is My Flesh which I will give, *i.e.*, will offer to God upon the cross, a price and a ransom, to redeem the world from death, so that I may indeed raise the world dead in sin to the life of grace and glory." Or better, "The bread of the Eucharist, which I will give in the way of food for the life of the world, will be My Flesh which I will deliver to the death of the cross for the life of the world, but in such manner that upon the cross I will give It to restore to the world its lost life, but in the Eucharist I will give It for food, that the world being raised by My death to the life of grace, may be nourished, may grow, and be perfected by It." He means, "I will give My true Flesh upon the cross, as it were corn in a mill, to be broken and ground, that from It might be produced the bread of the Eucharist, fruit-bearing and life-giving, feeding the faithful for the life of grace, and leading them to the life of glory." S. Ignatius, when he was condemned to the lions, had regard to this when he heard them roaring, and said, "I am the corn of Christ; by the teeth of the beasts I shall be ground, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ."

From the expression, *I will give*, in the future tense, all the ancients, and the moderns generally, understand this passage of the Eucharist, and some add that Christ not only on the cross, but in the Eucharist also gives, *i.e.*, offers His flesh to God for the life of the world. For Christ not only offers Himself to God upon the cross, as it were a bloody victim for the life of the world, but also daily offers Himself for the same in the Eucharist, as it were an un-bloody victim. For the Eucharist, or the Mass, is the perpetual, but un-bloody sacrifice. As Euthymius says, "He said not, *the bread which I give*, but, *which I will give*; for He was about to give It in the Last Supper, when He gave thanks, and brake the bread which He had taken, and gave it to His disciples, and said, *Take ye, and eat, This is My body*." After an interval, "I will give unto death. For He pre-signifies His crucifixion and voluntary passion." Hear also Theophylact,

the Father hath chosen, and hath given Me to be My disciples and children.'" By this He tacitly intimates that most of the Jews on account of their incredulity had not been given to Him, nor elected to the Faith by God, but that in their stead God had elected many others, especially of the Gentiles. Wherefore He saith, *every thing*, in the neuter gender, *which the Father giveth Me*, not the masculine, the rather to express the universality of all nations. *Every thing (omne)*, *i.e.*, all of every nation, every race, every age and sex, on whom the Father breathes the spirit of faith, that they may of their own free will believe in Me, these by faith shall come to Me, and become Christians and my disciples. Wherefore I will not repel them from Me, nor banish them from My house, *i.e.*, my Church: but you, O ye unbelieving and rebellious Jews, I do repel from Me and My Church, and will banish you to hell: but *those* I will lovingly embrace, and take with Me to the Church triumphant in heaven.

Observe: when Christ here smites backward and terrifies the unbelieving and captious Jews, He rises to the secret will and predestination of God. For He means to teach that the faith which they lacked was God's gift. The Father therefore gives unto Christ the faithful from eternity by predestinating, and in time by calling them to the faith, after this manner and plan, that being called freely by God, they obey the call, and believe, and so come unto Christ. For this is the *actual* cause of faith, or why any one here and now in act believes in Christ. This cause, I say, is the grace of God stirring a man up to believe, when man of his own free will consents to the grace of God, and believes. Therefore the Father giveth us to Christ when by His prevenient and co-operating grace He causes us to be converted in act, and freely to believe in Christ. For as He here says Himself, every one who by the Father is given to Christ does in reality come to Christ. So SS. Augustine, Cyril and others.

Observe: Christ here speaks properly concerning predestination to faith and grace, not to glory, just as Paul does. There is an allusion to Ps. ii. 8. "Ask of Me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession." Wherefore Christ speaks in the future tense *shall come to Me*, to intimate that the Gentiles by the preaching of the apostles would come to Him. Hear Cyril: "He signifies that the Gentiles were already about to come; and He threatens the loss of grace which the Jews were about to experience."

Moreover God the Father gives believers to Christ, because He merited this by His obedience and Passion. For the merits of Christ are the cause not only of the calling in time, but even of the eternal predestination of the faithful. For God on account of the foreseen merits of Christ predestined and chose the faithful, as Paul teaches (Eph. i. 4), saying, "He hath chosen us in Him (Christ), before the constitution of the world, that we should be holy." And presently, "He hath predestinated us to the adoption of sons, through Jesus Christ, unto Himself"

I will not cast out of My house: I will not drive him from Me, from My Church, My heaven, but with great care I will cherish him. There is an allusion to a host, who receives to His hospitality well-disposed travellers and friends. As Euthymius says, “*Here* I will not cast him away from My friendship, nor *there* from the heavenly kingdom.” And Cyril says, “He shall not be disappointed, nor with shame cast out, neither shall he be deprived of my kindness, but he shall be stored in My garner, and shall rest in the heavenly mansions, and shall come whither the mind of man hath not even conceived.”

Observe: SS. Chrysostom and Cyril (*lib.* 3, c. 39) say that they who are given by the Father to the Son, are those who by a good use of their free-will have rendered themselves worthy of the vocation and grace of God. Pelagius afterwards crudely taking up this teaching, denied the necessity of grace, saying that free-will was sufficient for him to do good works. But this is an error which S. Augustine confutes. “*To believe,*” he says, “is of the grace of God; *to be able to believe,* of nature.” Wherefore Christ Himself here and elsewhere teaches that all indeed are able to believe, do good works, and be saved, because free-will in all is capable of receiving the grace of God, and often does receive from God grace sufficient for salvation: and yet that only those in act believe and are saved, to whom God gives efficacious or congruous grace, such indeed as He foresees will persuade free-will so that it will co-operate with Himself. On this more is said (ver. 44).

Ver. 38.—*For I came down,* &c Christ gives the reason why He will not cast out him whom the Father hath given Him, viz., because He Himself came in flesh, and into the world, for this end alone, that He might do the Father’s will, which is, that those whom the Father wills to give to Him, and to save, Christ should accept and save. This is why He adds in explanation, *This is His will,* &c. Listen to S. Cyril in the Council of Ephesus, profoundly handling these things. “When He adds that He was accomplishing not His own, but His Father’s will, He quells indirectly the madness of the Jews, who were always labouring to bring about their own will, and holding cheap the Divine laws, and making of no value what was pleasing to their Lord - whilst, I say, He here openly commends their prompt profession of obedience, He nevertheless darkly rebukes their rebellion.”

Ver. 39.—*But this is His will,* &c. *Everything,* i.e., *all altogether, of every nation, rank, age, or sex,* as I have said, verse 37. I will not lose (*perdam*), i.e., *I will not suffer to perish.* He explains what He had said, *I will not cast out.* This He expounds and completes by adding, *but will raise it up at the last day, i.e.,* at the day of judgment, that I may admit (my servant) into heaven, and there bless him with immortality and glory both of body and soul for ever. Then indeed shall come to an end the motion of the heavens, and by consequence time, which is the measuring of their motion, shall cease. Wherefore then shall be the stay and the end of all days and months and years.

Ver. 40.—*And this is the will,* &c. *He that seeth,* Greek, *θεωζῶν,* i.e., who considers and contemplates the Son, seeing Him with the eyes not of the body, but of the

which took place through the separation of the soul and blood of Christ from His body, and that we should both imitate this by mortification and shew it forth by holy living.

You will say secondly: Christ (ver. 27, 29, 63) treats concerning the spiritual eating of Him by faith, therefore also He here proceeds to speak of the same, and not of sacramental and corporal eating, otherwise He would not speak consistently and logically (*cohærenter*). I answer (1.) by denying the consequence. For Christ wished by degrees to raise the ignorant Jews, and first to set before them easy things, and afterwards things more difficult and mysterious. Wherefore from the multiplication of the loaves with which He had fed the multitude He rises to the manna, and from that to the spiritual food of faith: (ver. 27, 29, 35, 36, 40, 47). Then in this verse and afterwards (He proceeds) to the real eating of Himself in the Eucharist, which is the end, the goal and aim of that miracle of the multiplication of the loaves. In a similar manner He led on the Samaritan woman from the drinking of material water to spiritual water. And Christ Himself sufficiently hints at, and indeed explains this leading onward, when (ver. 29, 35) He said that bread *was already possessed* by those who believed, but here He says that His Eucharistic bread was not yet possessed, and that He was not then giving it, but that He would give it in the future. *The bread,* He says, *which I will give is My flesh for the life of the world.* But the reason of this change is that Christ (ver. 27, &c.) wished to forewarn and prepare His hearers for the most august mystery of the Eucharist. For in It faith and spiritual manducation are required in the highest degree, for without them the real and corporeal profits nothing, as S. Augustine says.

I reply (2.) by denying the antecedent. For Christ did not say that we were to eat Him by (*per*) faith, but He required faith as a means for obtaining from Him the heavenly bread and food, which is nothing else than His flesh and blood in the Eucharist, as I have observed in verse 27, &c.

They object (3.) that Christ says (ver. 64), *It is the Spirit which quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing.* This I will explain in the proper place.

From what has been said it is clear that in the Eucharist the very flesh of Christ is truly and properly eaten, and His blood drunk, and not bread, as the Calvinists suppose, which is only a type and figure of the flesh of Christ. For the figure of the Eucharist was rather the manna of the Jews, as being something celestial and sweet to the taste, than the common arid bread of Christians. And if the Eucharist is mere bread, and not the body of Christ, then Christ would have no ground for preferring the Eucharist to the manna, since the manna was sweeter and better than bread. And so the Capharnaites and His disciples understood Christ, namely, that He wished His Flesh to be truly and properly eaten, although they were ignorant of the manner of eating It sacramentally, under the species of bread and wine. And this they could not at this time have received, even though Christ had

Lastly, this is the common opinion of the Fathers, both Greek and Latin, also of the commentators and Scholastic Doctors, viz. S. Cyril, Chrysostom, Theophylact, Euthymius, S. Thomas, Rupert, Lyra, Maldonatus, Toletus, on this passage, and others in various places, who are quoted at large by Toletus, Ribera, Maldonatus, Sanders and Castillus, commenting upon this chapter, and by Bellarmine (*lib. 1, de Euch. c. 5*).

In like manner the Council of Ephesus understand this passage (*Epist. ad Nestor.*), so do the Second Council of Nice (*Act 6*), the Council of Cabillon (*II c. 46*), and the Council of Sens (*cap. 10*), and the Council of Trent (*Sess.13, c. 2*). Nor does S. Augustine dissent, as is plain to those who read him carefully, although many think the contrary. For from this very passage he, in common with several others of the ancients, maintained that the Eucharist ought to be given even to infants. And this was actually the practice in various places for 600 years, until the Church laid down the contrary, namely that the Eucharist is not necessary for infants, and that it is not expedient to give it to them through fear of irreverence.

Here observe, that S. Augustine, besides the literal and genuine explanation of this passage, which is concerning the Eucharist, adds another which is symbolical and mystical. And he understands by this bread and food the society of the members and the body of Christ which is the Church: that to eat the flesh of Christ is the same thing as to be incorporated into the Church, to be aggregated and associated to it, and so to be brought in to Christ, and to drink and participate in His Spirit. S. Austin does this on account of the Donatists of his time in Africa, with whom he had a perpetual controversy. For they by schism rent the society and unity of the Church. It may be added the Eucharist is not only a symbol, but a cause of this union (*societas*) of the faithful in the Church. For as out of many grains of wheat ground together one loaf is made, and out of many clusters of grapes pressed together wine floweth, so of many faithful communicants is one society and Church. (2.) Because this union and society of the faithful is the end and fruit of the Eucharist, which without it profits not unto salvation. (3.) Because S. Augustine often just glances at and passes over the literal sense, as a thing easy and plain, and dwells upon the spiritual and mystical sense, as more obscure, subtle and sublime. Origen, SS. Gregory and Jerome, and other Fathers do the same. So S. Augustine is explained after his manner by his disciple S. Bernard (*Serm. 3 in Ps. xc.*) "What is it to eat His Flesh and drink His Blood but to participate in His sufferings, and to imitate His conversation in the flesh? Wherefore also that spotless Sacrament of the Altar sets this forth, when we receive the Lord's Body. As that form of bread appears to enter into us, so we know by that conversation which He had upon earth He enters into us to dwell in our hearts by faith."

You will say that S. Augustine asserts (*lib. 3, de Doct. Christ. c. 16*), that there is in these words of Christ a trope or figure, by which we are commanded to have communion in His sufferings. I answer, S. Augustine calls this a figure because the flesh of Christ is not here commanded to be cut, cooked and eaten (as is done with the flesh of bulls and sheep), as the Capharnaites imagined, and therefore were offended; but figuratively, *i.e.*, sacramentally. For he thinks that it is here commanded that in the Eucharist, by means of the species of bread and wine, separated one from another, and as it were dead, we should represent the Passion and Death of Christ,

mind, *i.e.*, believing in Him, and obeying Him. Lactantius (*lib. 7, c. 9*) observes out of Trismegistus that the word *θεωζῶν*, especially applied to Divine things.

And I will raise him up: the Greek *ἀναστήσω*, may be translated either by the future indicative, *I will raise*; or by the aorist conjunctive, *that I may raise* (as the Vulgate has it in ver. 39). Christ teaches the Resurrection because "the hope of Christians is the resurrection of the dead," as Tertullian says. Hear S. Chrysostom (*Hom. 46*): "Everywhere He makes mention of life: for we are drawn by the desire of it, and there is nothing sweeter than not to die. In the Old Testament, indeed, long life and many days were promised: but now is promised not merely a long life, but endless life. At the same time also He wishes to show that He now revokes the punishment produced by sin, by remitting the sentence of death, and bringing in eternal life, contrary to the decree of the former times."

Ver. 41, 42.—*The Jews therefore murmured*, &c. Murmuring at benefits, says Cyril, is a sort of ancestral inheritance with the Jews, coming down from their fathers under Moses to Christ. Theophylact gives the cause of the murmuring, "Up to this point they thought He was speaking of material bread, and listened to Him cheerfully, but now when He revealed to them that He was speaking to them of spiritual bread, they despised Him, and murmured." They did not understand how Christ was *Living Bread*, and how He had *descended from heaven*, and how they might *eat Him*, for they craved for something for their throats.

Ver. 43.—*Jesus therefore answered*, &c. . . *among themselves* (Vulg. *in invicem*). It is intimated that some were for Him, and others against Him: and through some attacking Him, and others defending Him, they murmured among themselves.

Murmur not: for I give you no occasion of murmuring; I tell you the simple truth, and if on account of its sublimity you do not receive it, it is ye who are in fault, both because ye carp at and rebel against Me, and do not ask Me for an explanation of My words; and also because ye do not ask God for light to understand My words: wherefore He subjoins,

Ver. 44.—*No man can come to Me*, &c. Observe, (1.) Christ might, as S. Chrysostom observes, have answered and said, "It is not wonderful that you, O ye Jews, neither understand nor believe the things which I say, namely, that *I am the Bread of Life who came down from heaven*: it is because ye are hard and carnal. But He prefers to answer more sweetly and divinely, thus, that no one could believe in Him unless it were given them of His Father; that so, those who believed might not contend against the others who did not believe; and that the unbelievers might acknowledge that they were in want of Divine light, as needful plainly to believe; and that they should ask for this by humble prayer to God in Christ

and not murmur, or certainly they would be without the light of God which was offered to them.

The meaning therefore is, “Do not, O ye who believe in Me, murmur against the unbelieving, because they do not believe My doctrine, which is confirmed by so many miracles; for faith is the supernatural gift of God; neither can any one believe in Me except the Father draw him to believe. But those are not yet drawn of the Father. Do not therefore be indignant with them, but ask the Father to draw them as He has drawn you. For so will they equally with you believe in Me. You too, O ye unbelieving, do not murmur against Me, and My words, and those who do believe in Me. For the Father has drawn them to believe in Me. Rather, therefore, ask the Father that He may draw you also. For so will ye, equally with them, believe in Me, and will be of one mind with them in My faith, and doctrine, and Church. Say ye therefore with the Spouse, “Draw me after Thee,” for those who are so drawn “will run in the odour of Thine ointment” (Cant. i. 3).

Observe, (2.) The word *draw* does not signify coercion, or necessity; nor is it opposed to free-will, as if it took it away from man, as the Lutherans and Calvinists suppose. Stones and wood are drawn in this way. But with men, it is a man’s own pleasure, *i.e.*, his liberty, not necessity, by which he is drawn. You show sugar to a child, you draw him towards you: you show a green branch to a sheep, you draw her towards you. Both are drawn by the enticement of food. In like manner the will of man is drawn, as iron by a magnet. Thus was S. Agnes drawn to Christ by the secret power of His love. “We are drawn,” says Cyril, “by monition, doctrine, revelation, ineffably produced.” Listen to S. Augustine in this passage (*Tract.* 26). “Do not think that thou art drawn unwillingly: the mind is drawn also by love.” And by and by, “How do I believe of my own will, if I am drawn? I say, it is too small a thing to be drawn by the will, thou art drawn by pleasure also. What is it to be drawn by pleasure? ‘Delight thyself in the Lord, and He will give thee thy heart’s desire!’ There is a certain delight of the heart, to which that Bread of heaven is sweet. Now if the poet might say ‘his own pleasure draws everyone,’ it is not necessity, but pleasure which draws. It is not obligation, but delight. With how much greater force ought we to say that man is drawn to Christ who delights in the truth, who delights in blessedness, in justice, who delights in life everlasting, which is altogether Christ.” And shortly afterwards, “Show me a lover; he feels what I say. Show me one who desires, who is hungry, one who wanders in the wilderness, and is thirsty, who sighs for the fountains of the eternal country; show me such a one, *he* knows what I say. But if I speak to one whose heart is cold, he knows not what I say.” The same writes (*Serm. de Verb. Apost.*), “He said not, He will *lead*, but He will *draw*. That violence is done not to the flesh, but to the heart. Wherefore then dost thou marvel? Believe, and thou comest; love, and thou art drawn. Do not suppose that violence is rough and troublesome: it is sweet and pleasant, the very sweetness draws thee. Is not a hungry sheep drawn to the green grass? And I think it is not impelled by the body, but drawn by desire. So also do thou come to Christ; do not contemplate a long journey. Where thou believest, thither thou comest. For to Him who is everywhere, we come by loving, not by journeying.”

The drawing then of God signifies the force and efficacy of grace. This drawing is

Eucharist, but mystical food; for that we mystically eat the Body of Christ by faith when we believe in Him. Of Catholics the same opinion was held by Jansen on this passage, Cajetan, Gabriel, Ruardus Tapper, Nicolas Casanus and Hesselius, who are cited by Baronius (*lib.* 1, *de Eucharist.* c. 5). Against these authors Didacus Castellus has written a whole book, Nicholas Sanders another, and Toletus, Maldonatus and Bellarmine refute them at length.

I say then that Christ from this place onward speaks expressly of the Eucharist. This is so certain that Maldonatus says, to deny it is rash, and almost heretical (*erroneum*).

It is proved (1.) because Christ here most clearly asserts it, constantly bidding us eat His Flesh and drink His Blood, in such sort that the doctrine of the Eucharist could not be more clearly expressed. For this is what He reiterates over and over again, you hear nothing else but *My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood. Unless ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His Blood.* Surely it is incredible that Christ should wish to obscure a thing in itself so clear, and by Him so often repeated; I mean that we must believe in Him, by so many words and metaphors about eating His Flesh and Blood, especially when He foresaw that many, even of His disciples, would for this cause depart from Him.

(2.) Because He distinguishes both kinds in the Eucharist. For His Flesh He calls the food which we may eat: but His Blood that which we may drink. *Unless ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, ye shall not have life in you* (ver. 54). Therefore He speaks concerning the Eucharist, in which we truly and properly eat the Flesh of Christ and drink His Blood. Now in that spiritual eating of Christ which takes place by faith, drink cannot be distinguished from food, nor blood from flesh. Nor indeed ought we especially and severally to believe in the Flesh, and then again in the Blood of Christ, but it suffices to believe generally and fully in the whole Humanity of Christ.

(3.) Because nowhere in Scripture are the efficacy and fruit of the Eucharist, as well as the universal obligation of receiving It, clearly expressed and inculcated except here. And this precept, since it is so important, and so binding upon all the faithful, ought clearly to be expressed.

(4.) If S. John does not here treat of the Eucharist, then he nowhere does so. But who could believe such a thing of Christ’s Benjamin, who at the Last Supper, when Christ instituted the Eucharist, lay upon His breast, who, I say, could believe that he should have passed over, and involved in silence this most august monument and mystery of the love of Christ?

(5.) Because in a similar way (*cap.* 3), he narrates the institution of Baptism, and Christ’s conversation about it with Nicodemus. So here he relates the mystery of the Eucharist, and Christ’s disputation with the Jews concerning It. And these two Sacraments are necessary to the faithful, and are, as it were, the two bases and pillars of the Christian Church.

consubstantial with the Father, He will assuredly see Him from whom He is." And as Euthymius says, "Being of the same nature, substance and knowledge, He is in the bosom of the Father."

Ver. 47. *Verily, verily, &c. Hath*, by right and merit, or in certain hope, but not yet in fact. Christ goes back to verse 29, and again and again inculcates faith in Himself, because that is the beginning of all good: the root of salvation, and the necessary means for obtaining from Christ the Bread of Life, *i.e.*, the Eucharist.

Eternal life: thus He impels those unwilling to faith by a firm hope of the reward. For what is better or sweeter than eternal life to those who fear death and corruption?

Ver. 48.—*I am the Bread of life*, nourishing those who eat Me unto life eternal. As though He said, "I give eternal life to those by whom I am eaten with true and living faith." He often repeats and confirms the same, that He might not seem to have spoken rashly, because to the Jews this thing seemed plainly impossible.

Ver. 49, 50.—*Your fathers, &c, in the desert*, "signifying," says S. Chrysostom, "that the manna did not long continue, nor come to the land of promise; for as soon as they reached it the manna ceased." But this Bread of Christ endureth for ever. Listen to the words of Josue (v. 12): "And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." For as God fails us not in things needful, so He gives not an abounding of superfluities.

And died: i.e., manna fed your fathers after the way of other food, and neither did, nor was able to protect them from death; but My Bread will save from death.

That whosoever shall eat of it, by true faith and living charity, *shall never die*. That is, the manna had not the virtue of preserving life from corporeal death, much less the souls of your fathers from death, but this My Bread has the power of freeing from death not only the body, but the soul, and that for ever. For although it will not prevent the temporal death of the body, it will cause nevertheless the faithful man to rise up from that death, and to die no more for ever.

I am the living Bread (bread is used by a hebraism for food), quickening those who eat Me in Myself who am Life, and communicating My life to them. Whilst the manna was in itself inanimate and dead, and therefore could not bestow life upon those who ate it. *Who came down from heaven* (by reason of a Divine supposition, says Suarez); "Since they sought food from heaven," says Chrysostom, "therefore He frequently testifies that He came down from heaven."

Ver. 52.—*If any one shall eat, &c.* For this Bread gives to the soul the life of grace, which endures even to the life of glory for all eternity. And it shall make the body to rise from death to live together with the soul gloriously for ever.

Calvin and the heretics contend that this Bread is not the Body of Christ in the

sweet and mild, not compelling the free-will, but alluring, soothing, leading it to believe. It also signifies man's weakness, and vicious desires, which are repugnant to Christian faith and holiness, so that a man needs not so much to be led as dragged by the vehement impulse of God's grace to Christian faith and virtue. This is what Christ saith (Matt. xi. 12), "The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent seize it." For the drunkard ought to do violence to his gullet, the unclean to his lust, the avaricious to his avarice, the ambitious man to his ambition. Therefore the drawing of grace lifts to celestial things the will that is drawn down to the flesh. It allures the resisting, and strengthens the weak will. It makes cheerful the sorrowful, and animates the shrinking will to good. Wherefore the Latin Fathers with S. Augustine constantly use these words of Christ against the Pelagians to prove the necessity of grace. I do not say the same of the Greeks, as SS. Chrysostom and Cyril, and those who followed them, who wrote before Pelagius, and therefore speak sparingly concerning grace, that they may make much of man's free-will against the Manichees. Whence Theophylact from S. Chrysostom says upon this passage, "As the magnet attracts only iron, so God draws only those who are fit, those who by using their free-will aright render themselves worthy the grace of God." This is why S. Chrysostom upon this passage must be read with caution, when he says, that those who are drawn by God merit this by some foreseen good wish of free-will. For if you were to understand this of the first drawing of grace, and of simple free-will, it is Pelagianism. But if you understand it of a further drawing to greater faith and virtue, and concerning free-will already influenced and stirred up by previous grace, it is Catholic doctrine.

Observe, (3.) Some are drawn by God inchoately, or so far as God is concerned, and as far as is sufficient, that they may be converted. And yet these do not come to Christ, nor are they converted, because they are unwilling to follow God when He draws them. And without this drawing it is simply impossible to come to Christ, just as impossible as it is for a man to fly without wings. Concerning this drawing, says Maldonatus, if you ask why one man is drawn to Christ, another not, I answer, because the one was willing to follow Christ when He drew, the other was unwilling. Indeed some who were already believers in Christ taking offence at this eating of His Flesh drew back from Him, as John testifies, verse 67. And express mention is made of Judas the traitor, verse 71. *Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?* But others are fully drawn by God, *i.e.*, they are drawn wholly to Christ. These follow God when He draws them: and of such Christ here also speaks, as appears in the 37th verse. *Every thing which the Father giveth Me shall come to Me. Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Me.* For to be drawn of the Father means here the same thing as to hear, be taught, to learn of the Father. "What is to be drawn of the Father but to learn of Him?" says S. Augustine. So those are wholly drawn to whom God gives grace, not only prevenient, effectual, and congruous (for those of whom we have before spoken, who are drawn inchoately, have sufficient grace only), but also

co-operating grace. Congruous grace is so called, because it is conformable to the disposition, affections, and character of those who are drawn. Wherefore God foresees that such persons will in fact freely consent and co-operate, and so be converted, believe, and do good works. Concerning those S. Augustine says, "If thou art not drawn, pray that thou mayest be drawn." And "why one man is drawn, another not, do not scrutinize, if thou wouldst not err."

Moreover, this effectual and congruous grace is necessary to conversion, faith, and salvation, not *simpliciter*, but upon the hypothesis of the foreknowledge of God, by which He foresees that this grace will persuade free-will, so that it shall turn itself to God: but that that other grace which is merely sufficient will not persuade it.

Wherefore God equally foresees that we will freely consent to effectual and congruous grace, but that to sufficient and incongruous we shall not consent, and this of simple liberty of will. This is what Christ saith, *No one can come to Me, except the Father draw him*. Wherefore the great gift of perseverance even unto the end of life is congruous grace, and this is the cause of our eternal salvation, and therefore has not to do with merit, but is the peculiar and chief blessing of God, which He confers upon His predestinated and elect, and divides and distinguishes them from the non-elect and reprobate, as S. Augustine teaches at large (*de Predest. Sanct. c. 16*), and S. Thomas and the Scholastics from him, and the Council of Trent (*Sess. 6, c. 13*). Wherefore this grace of congruity ought to be constantly and most humbly asked of God, for on it our eternal salvation hinges, and God has promised that He will give us whatsoever we ask in Christ's name (John xv. i6).

And I will raise, &c. Christ shows in this the fruit of this drawing of God the Father: "I will indeed give him who, drawn of the Father, shall come to Me, and believe in and obey Me, this reward, that I will raise him up to eternal life and glory, that is to say, if he persevere in faith and obedience until death."

Ver. 45.—*It is written, &c.* He quotes Isa. liv. 13, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." Jeremiah (xxx. 33) has a similar prophecy, and Joel (ii. 28). Because what Christ said seemed strange to the Jews, *No one can come to Me, except My Father draw him*, Christ confirms it out of Isaiah and the Prophets, who assert that all the children or disciples of Christ would be taught of God. But to be taught by God is to be drawn by God, for this is the force of the Hebrew *limmude*.

Now, they will be taught by God in that He will at the external voice of Christ and His disciples teach their minds inwardly, illuminate and inspire them, to believe in and obey Him. Whereas previously in the ancient Law, God taught the people exteriorly rather than interiorly, by prophets, priests, and by the Holy Scriptures. Wherefore "where God is the Teacher," says S. Leo, "there are the lessons quickly learned." Hear S. Augustine (*in Epist 1 S. Jo. Tract. 3*) "The sound of our words strikes the ear, the Master is within. I have spoken to all, but to whomsoever that unction speaketh not inwardly, whom the Holy Ghost teacheth not within, such depart untaught. The outward instructions and admonitions are some sort of aid; but it is He who sitteth in heaven who teaches the heart. Wherefore He saith Himself in the Gospel, 'Call no

one your master upon earth, for one is your Master, Christ.' He indeed speaks to you inwardly when no mortal man is by. Where His inspiration, His unction is not, outward words are an empty breath."

Every one who hath heard. . . and learned, the Arabic adds, *and knoweth*. See how He explains *the drawing of the Father*. He is drawn by the Father who is inwardly taught by Him, i.e., whose understanding is illuminated by the Father, and his will inflamed, that he may believe in and follow Me. And he hath learned, or he does learn, that is, he receives My illumination in his intellect, and My impulse in his will: and he acquiesces, and freely consents. This man comes to Me, i.e., he believes in Me as the Messiah, and obeys Me. For the two feet, not of the body, but of the soul, by which she comes to Christ, are the understanding enlightened by God, and the will impelled and inflamed by Him. Hence S. Augustine (*de Predest. Sanct. c. 8*) says, "If every one who hath heard and learned of the Father cometh, assuredly every one who cometh not, hath not heard, nor learned of the Father. For if he had heard and learned, he would come." He subjoins, "This school is far remote from fleshly sense, in which the Father is heard, and teaches us to come to the Son. There, too, is the Son Himself, because He is His Word, by whom He thus teaches us: and this He does not through the ears of the flesh, but of the heart. There also at the same time, is the Spirit of the Father and the Son. And He neither refrains from teaching, nor does He teach differently. For we have learned that the works of the Trinity are inseparable." And after an interval, "Why therefore does He not teach all to come to Christ, unless because all whom He teaches, He teaches in mercy? But whom He teacheth not, in judgment He teacheth them not. For He hath mercy upon whom He will, and whom He wills He hardeneth. But He is merciful, and doeth good, and when He hardeneth He requiteth justly. This grace therefore which is secretly given to human hearts by the Divine bounty, is rejected by no hard heart. For this reason is it given that the hardness of the heart may be first taken away. When therefore the Father is heard and teaches inwardly that we should come to the Son, He takes away the heart of stone, and gives a heart of flesh, as He promised by His prophet. For so He makes the sons of promise vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory."

Ver. 46.—*Not that any one, &c.* "Lest the dense and ignorant Jews should imagine," says Euthymius, "that any one could hear or see the Father in a sensible manner, He saith *not that any one, &c.*" We must understand, "But let a man hear God unseen, speaking in the soul, illuminating it, and persuading to the truth in Christ." God is the invisible Master. God is the Teacher, not of eyes and ears, but of hearts and minds.

Save Him who is of God, viz. Myself, who am the Son of God, born of Him, and most intimate with Him, who continually see and behold Him as He is in His essence. And as man I was indeed formed by Him without man's agency, and always enjoy the beatific vision of Himself. As Cyril says, "Being