

WHY I AM A CATHOLIC

(This is Part III of a series on why I am a Catholic. The first article spoke of the Teaching Authority of the Church, the second about Apostolic Succession, and this third article pertains to that which is central to our Catholic Faith, and without which there would be no Church - The Eucharist.)



THE EUCHARIST

Jesus' disciples may seem to have held such privilege in being with Him day and night, witnessing his wonderful miracles, seeing the crowds gather around him, being present to hear his teachings and, for Peter, James and John, glimpsing His glory in the vision of seeing Him transfigured before their eyes. Yet truly, though they had the advantage of actually seeing Jesus, He is no less present to us than He was to the disciples because we share the same mysterious and sacred food that Jesus gave to them the night before He went out to His death - the Eucharist!

Our Christian brothers and sisters of the various denominations do not believe about the Eucharist what we believe and have always held since the Last Supper itself. For some, the idea of the Eucharist is one where Catholics arrogantly differ from all others about the Communion truly being Jesus - body, blood, soul and divinity. Others would like to smooth out any differences by simply saying people should be able to receive communion in Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran and all other churches at will and that this would somehow bring about unity. What these 'ideas' lack is Christ, for any other discussion will lead to simple talk about bread, wine, symbolism and remembrance. When we discuss the Eucharist we are not talking about a "thing" but the person of Jesus Christ Himself in the reception of the sacred consecrated Host at Mass - **real** body, **real** blood: **really** Jesus.

In the 8th century a Basilian monk in Lanciano, Italy, who was losing his faith in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, had just uttered the words of consecration over the bread and the wine when suddenly both species became live flesh and live blood. *(During the consecration of the bread and wine at Mass both species change into Christ's body and blood, but the appearance remains the same.)* The blood of Christ coagulated into five globules and the host appeared as the size of hosts most parishes use today taking on a brownish colour and appearing rose in colour when lighted from the back. Both of these elements were examined at the time by Church

authorities as well as those of science. In 1970-1971 the Church allowed the eminent Professor Odoardo Linoli, who specializes in Anatomy and Pathological Histology, Chemistry and Clinical Microscopy, to examine these two 1200 year old elements using modern technology and it is remarkable what was found during the testing of these elements.

- The Flesh is real Flesh. The Blood is real Blood.
- The Flesh and the Blood belong to the human species.
- The Flesh consists of the muscular tissue of the heart.
- In the Flesh we see present in section: the myocardium, the endocardium, the vagus nerve and also the left ventricle of the heart for the large thickness of the myocardium.
- The Flesh is a "HEART" complete in its essential structure.
- The Flesh and the Blood have the same blood-type: AB (Blood-type identical to that which Prof. Baima Bollone uncovered in the Holy Shroud of Turin).
- In the Blood there were found proteins in the same normal proportions (percentage-wise) as are found in the sero-proteic make-up of the fresh normal blood.
- In the Blood there were also found these minerals: chlorides, phosphorus, magnesium, potassium, sodium and calcium.
- The preservation of the Flesh and of the Blood, which were left in their natural state for twelve centuries and exposed to the action of atmospheric and biological agents, remains an extraordinary phenomenon.

What is extraordinary about these findings is that they only confirm what the Catholic Church has always believed and held to be true, often at the ridicule and scorn of others. Those who could not believe Jesus' words about giving them His flesh and blood responded, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (Jn. 6:52) and "Many of His disciples on hearing it", (Jesus' discourse on the Bread of Life), "exclaimed, 'This is more than we can stomach! Why listen to such talk?' And "from that time on, many of His disciples withdrew and no longer went about with Him."

Jesus lost many over the Eucharist in those who could not fathom the incredible that Jesus could do and give them. They could not see beyond the person of flesh and blood who stood before them and spoke of these things. They walked away and his words about giving his flesh and blood to them so offended their sensibilities that they stayed away. The miracle of Lanciano in the Church of St. Legontian does not and should not change our faith for we are members of the Catholic Church which has always proclaimed, defended, taught and held these things to be true. Other Christians, frankly, through time and politics and unbelief have dropped this belief. Unity among Christians can really only take place when we together believe the same thing about what Jesus has given us in the Eucharist. Jesus gave it, the Apostles upheld it, Catholics have celebrated it, the Lanciano miracle realized it, and the laboratory testing proved the reality of what Jesus wants us to receive each time we come to Mass and receive Him in communion. We are not just to behold the miracle of the Eucharist and the proofs of its reality, we are to receive what Jesus gave us;

what He knows, as God, we need - His body and blood in the Eucharist.

Lent brings to our minds the teaching of St. Paul and the Church; that we need to get rid of our sins before we can more worthily receive Jesus in the Eucharist. Please, my fellow Catholics, never take for granted who it is truly we are receiving each Sunday at Mass. It is Jesus and His life truly for our living! (Fr. Charles)

IN THE PARISH THIS WEEK:

- *Canadian Blood Donor Clinic in our Parish Hall on Monday, March 28th from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.*
- *Healing Mass on Wednesday, at St. Gregory's at 7:00 p.m. Fr. Charles is the celebrant.*
- *Euchre Night on Friday at 7:00 p.m. Sharp in the Parish Hall.*
- *Parish Lenten Retreat this Saturday, Apr. 2 from 9 to 12:00 noon.*
- *ShareLife Sunday next Sunday*

MASS INTENTIONS

Tuesday, Mar. 29 - NO MASS

Wednesday, Mar. 30 - 7:00 p.m. - NO MASS

MASS AT ST. GREGORY'S

Thurs., Mar. 31-8:30 am- Mass

Friday, Apr. 1 - 6:30 p.m. - Stations of the Cross
7:00 p.m. - Mass

Saturday, Apr. 2 - 5:00 p.m. - Christine Mackay+

Sunday, Apr. 3 - 9:00 a.m. - For the intentions of our Parish
Community
-11:00 a.m. - Tom Austin+

EASTER SUNDAY CHOIR - The 11 a.m. Sunday Choir is looking to pick up some extra people for Easter Sunday. No long-term commitment required, just attend 3 rehearsals - April 4, 11 and 18, all Mondays at 7:30 p.m. Leave your name and contact info. at the Parish Office or phone Bill Targett at (905) 294-3722.

THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE is planning a Spring Dinner, Dance and Auction for Saturday, April 30th in the Parish hall. Cocktails at 6 pm followed by Dinner at 7 pm and an evening of Dancing and Auction. Tickets at \$40 each are available in the church vestibule or by calling Karen (905) 655-4945 or Joan at (905) 655-2062. Please note: tickets will NOT be sold in the vestibule Palm Sunday weekend or Easter weekend.

The Committee also requests your assistance in obtaining auction items. If you would like to donate an item, please call Barbara at (905) 404-2694 or Pat at the church office (905) 655-3286 ext. 101. We look forward to seeing you for an enjoyable evening.

JESUIT DINNER - The Fifth Annual Jesuit Provincial's Dinner will be held on April 13, 2011 at Le Parc Dining and Banquet Hall. Tickets are available by calling (416) 481-9154 or emailing ido@jesuits.ca.

LIFT JESUS HIGHER RALLY 2011 - Saturday, April 9th - 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, North Building, 255 Front St., West, Toronto. This event gathers between 4,000 and 5,000 faithful who are hungry to hear the Word of God. Cost \$18 - Adults, \$9 - Youth (12-20). For tickets and more information please call (416) 251-4255, Sadie at (905) 270-2510, www.lift-jesus-higher-rally.org. Please see flyer on the Church bulletin board for schedule of speakers.

NEW BEGINNINGS - For those who are Separated, Divorced or Widowed. Friday evenings at 7:30 pm - March 4th to April 15, 2011. Location: St. Louis de France Church, 1415 Don Mills South of York Mills. Call to register (416) 921-1163 Ext. 2246. Please see the Church bulletin board for detailed information.

Guiding Your Children Through The Sexual Minefield:

Do your kids tune you out? Regardless of the age of our children, as parents it is our daily duty to be involved in moulding their morality and ethics in a Catholic manner. It is no longer enough to leave it to schools to do it for us. We must counteract the false messages about love that are rampant in our culture. This presentation will provide parents with tools to help them mould the morals and sexuality of children from toddlers to teens. It is based on Pope John Paul II's writings, and will be held at St. Bernadette's Parish Hall - 21 Bayly St. E., Ajax on Saturday, April 9 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Doors open at 9:15 a.m. Cost \$5.00 which includes lunch. For more info. please contact Jan Noonan (905) 420-8696 or Rose Heron (905) 683-9055 or email: stbreg@gmail.com.

The Office of Vocations is extremely pleased to welcome St. Luke Productions to our archdiocese for the presentation of Vianney to be held in St. Isaac Jogues Parish, Pickering on May 6th at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$10 each and will go on sale April 1st at the parish and will go quickly. Those interested in attending are encouraged to get their tickets early by contacting the parish at (905) 831-3353.

Please see the posters on the Church Bulletin Board for detailed information for the following:

CATHOLIC FAMILY SERVICES OF TORONTO - New Beginnings for those who are Separated, Divorced and Widowed on Tuesday, April 5, 2011 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

RETRouvaille - HELP FOR HURTING MARRIAGES Live-in Weekend followed by Post sessions. Upcoming Weekend - April 29, 30, May 1, 2011.

SALT+LIGHT - WITHIN YOUR GATES: Join Kris Dmytrenko as he retraces the Pope's pilgrim path through Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Dmytrenko leads viewers from Nazareth, home of the Holy Family; to the shores of Galilee, where Jesus preached and healed; and finally through the gates of Jerusalem where love triumphed over death. Purchase your DVD copy online at www.saltandlighttv.org/shop or call 1-888-302-7181.