

Institution of the Holy Eucharist

By command of our Lord, the major-domo had again laid out the table, which he had raised a little; then, having placed it once more in the middle of the room, he stood one urn filled with wine, and another with water underneath it. Peter and John went into the part of the room near the hearth, to get the chalice which they had brought from Seraphia's house, and which was still wrapped up in its covering. They carried it between them as if they had



been carrying a tabernacle, and placed it on the table before Jesus. An oval plate stood there, with three fine white azymous loaves, placed on a piece of linen, by the side of the half loaf which Jesus had set aside during the Paschal meal, also a jar containing wine and water, and three boxes, one filled with thick oil, a second with liquid oil, and the third empty. In earlier times, it had been the practice for all at table to eat of the same loaf and drink of the same cup at the end of the meal, thereby to express their friendship and brotherly love, and to welcome and bid farewell to each other. I think Scripture must contain something upon this subject.

On the day of the Last Supper, Jesus raised this custom (which had hitherto been no more than a symbolical and figurative rite) to the dignity of the holiest of sacraments. One of the charges brought before Caiphas, on occasion of the treason of Judas, was, that Jesus had introduced a novelty into the Paschal ceremonies, but Nicodemus proved from Scripture that it was an ancient practice.

Jesus was seated between Peter and John, the doors were closed, and everything was done in the most mysterious and imposing manner. When the chalice was taken out of its covering, Jesus prayed, and spoke to his Apostles with the utmost solemnity. I saw him giving them an explanation of the Supper, and of the entire ceremony, and I was forcibly reminded of a priest teaching others to say Mass.

He then drew a species of shelf with grooves from the boards on which the

jars stood, and taking a piece of white linen with which the chalice was covered, spread it over the board and shelf. I then saw him lift a round plate, which he placed on this same shelf, off the top of the chalice. He next took the azymous loaves from beneath the linen with which they were covered and placed them before him on the board; then he took out of the chalice a smaller vase, and ranged the six little glasses on each side of it. Then he blessed the bread and also the oil, to the best of my belief after which he lifted up the paten with the loaves upon it, in his two hands, raised his eyes, prayed, offered, and replaced the paten on the table, covering it up again. He then took the chalice, had some wine poured into it by Peter, and some water, which he first blessed, by John, adding to it a little more water, which he poured into a small spoon, and after this he blessed the chalice, raised it up with a prayer, made the oblation, and replaced it on the table. John and Peter poured some water on his hands, which he held over the plate on which the azymous loaves had been placed; then he took a little of the water which had been poured on his hands, in the spoon that he had taken out of the lower part of the chalice, and poured it on theirs. After this, the vase was passed round the table, and all the Apostles washed their hands in it. I do not remember whether this was the precise order in which these ceremonies were performed; all I know is, that they reminded me in a striking manner of the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

Meanwhile, our Divine Lord became more and more tender and loving in his demeanour; he told his Apostles that he was about to give them all that he had, namely, his entire self, and he looked as though perfectly transformed by love. I saw him becoming transparent, until he resembled a luminous shadow. He broke the bread into several pieces, which he laid together on the paten, and then took a corner of the first piece and dripped it into the chalice. At the moment when he was doing this, I seemed to see the Blessed Virgin receiving the Holy Sacrament in a spiritual manner, although she was not present in the supper-room. I do not know how it was done, but I thought I saw her enter without touching the ground, and come before our Lord to receive the Holy Eucharist; after which I saw her no more. Jesus had told her in the morning, at Bethania, that he would keep the Pasch with her spiritually, and he had named the hour at which she was to betake herself to prayer, in order to receive it in spirit. Again he prayed and taught; his words came forth from his lips like fire and light, and entered into each of the Apostles, with the exception of Judas. He took the paten with the pieces of bread (I do not know whether he had placed it on the chalice) and said: 'Take and eat; this is my Body which is given for you.' He stretched forth his right

hand as if to bless, and, whilst he did so, a brilliant light came from him, his words were luminous, the bread entered the mouths of the Apostles as a brilliant substance, and light seemed to penetrate and surround them all, Judas alone remaining dark. Jesus presented the bread first to Peter, next to John and then he made a sign to Judas to approach.² Judas was thus the third who received the Adorable Sacrament, but the words of our Lord appeared to turn aside from the mouth of the traitor, and come back to their Divine Author. So perturbed was I in spirit at this sight, that my feelings cannot be described. Jesus said to him: 'That which thou dost, do quickly.' He then administered the Blessed Sacrament to the other Apostles, who approached two and two.

Jesus raised the chalice by its two handles to a level with his face, and pronounced the words of consecration. Whilst doing so, he appeared wholly transfigured, as it were transparent, and as though entirely passing into what he was going to give his Apostles. He made Peter and John drink from the chalice which he held in his hand, and then placed it again on the table. John poured the Divine Blood from the chalice into the smaller glasses, and Peter presented them to the Apostles, two of whom drank together out of the same cup.

I think, but am not quite certain, that Judas also partook of the chalice; he did not return to his place, but immediately left the supper-room, and the other Apostles thought that Jesus had given him some commission to do. He left without praying or making any thanksgiving, and hence you may perceive how sinful it is to neglect returning thanks either after receiving our daily food, or after partaking of the Life-Giving Bread of Angels. During the entire meal, I had seen a frightful little figure, with one foot like a dried bone, remaining close to Judas, but when he had reached the door, I beheld three devils pressing round him; one entered into his mouth, the second urged him on, and the third preceded him. It was night, and they seemed to be lighting him, whilst he hurried onward like a madman.

Our Lord poured a few drops of the Precious Blood remaining in the chalice into the little vase of which I have already spoken, and then placed his fingers over the chalice, while Peter and John poured water and wine upon them. This done, he caused them to drink again from the chalice, and what remained of its contents was poured into the smaller glasses, and distributed to the other Apostles. Then Jesus wiped the chalice, put into it the little vase containing the remainder of the Divine Blood, and placed over it the paten with the fragments of the consecrated bread, after which he again put on the cover, wrapped up the chalice, and stood it in the midst of the six small cups. I saw the Apostles receive in communion these remains of the

Adorable Sacrament, after the Resurrection. I do not remember seeing our Lord himself eat and drink of the consecrated elements, neither did I see Melchisedech, when offering the bread and wine, taste of them himself. It was made known to me why priests partake of them, although Jesus did not. Here Sister Emmerich looked suddenly up, and appeared to be listening. Some explanation was given her on this subject, but the following words were all that she could repeat to us: 'If the office of distributing it had been given to angels, they would not have partaken, but if priests did not partake, the Blessed Eucharist would be lost—it is through their participation that it is preserved.' There was an indescribable solemnity and order in all the actions of Jesus during the institution of the Holy Eucharist, and his every movement was most majestic. I saw the Apostles noting things down in the little rolls of parchment which they carried on their persons. Several times during the ceremonies I remarked that they bowed to each other, in the same way that our priests do.

She was not certain that the Blessed Sacrament was administered in that order, for on another occasion she had seen John the last to receive.