

THE MAGDALENE



**From the Desk of Fr.
Neil...**

THE PRIEST, THE OFFERING AND GOD PART 2

In last month's newsletter, I explained some of the reasons for why the priest sometimes stands facing the people and at other times stand facing away from the people.

One point I made was that the priest, when turned to the altar, after receiving the financial offerings of the people, receiving the bread and wine and when praying the Prayer of Consecration, is making an offering to God. He takes what the people, and he, have given and presents them before God as the offering of the people. The service then moves to a very important moment when the Holy Communion is to take place. Holy Communion is understood as an act that is ordained by Christ Himself. Accompanying Holy Communion are prayers, supplications, intercessions, and giving thanks. Holy Communion includes taking bread, blessing it, breaking it and giving it to the people. Likewise, the wine, is blessed, and distributed to be drunk. These things are all done as sacrificial worship of Almighty God in obedience to the command of Christ, from the people, through the ordained priest.

One 19th century Anglican theologian says of the Eucharist (Holy Communion), "The consecration, instead of being the mere reading of a passage of Scripture for edification, is embodied in a prayer which is offered to God, commemorating before God, and solemnly reminding Him, of His

own ordained work of redemption."¹ We need to keep in mind that the outward form of the celebration of the Eucharist, "never has had, and never can have, the smallest resemblance to the mode of offering or immolating a Jewish sacrifice."² Yet, he goes on to say that Christ did ordain it in sacrificial terms, at a sacrificial time and for a sacrificial end. He said, "Take, eat, this is my body, "given" for you, and drink this, all of you, this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is "shed" for you.

Jesus' body and blood were certainly broken, shed and given in sacrifice to fulfill the bloody animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant. In the Eucharist we imitate Jesus in what He did at the Last Supper. He ordained a repetition of what He did. He took bread, blessed, broke and gave it. The same with the cup. The priest does the same acts. He takes the bread into his hands, breaks it, then takes the cup into his hands...all as Christ did at the Last Supper. The sacrificial wording is important for us to notice. When the Prayer of Consecration is said, it contains words such as *given* and *shed* when speaking about His body and blood.

Second, Jesus ordained this act at the time of the Passover. He ordained a perpetual Christian Passover in a sense. He is the Passover or Paschal Lamb. So, the timing of His ordaining the Holy Eucharist was important and purposeful. He ordained that His Body and Blood be taken and eaten spiritually and sacramentally, recalling His sacrifice on the Cross.

Third, Jesus had intention behind the ordaining of the Eucharist.

¹ M.F. Sadler – The One Offering: A Treatise on the Sacrificial Nature of the Eucharist.

² IBID

There is a real sense in which the Eucharist is similar to the Old Covenant sacrifices. In the Old Covenant the animal was brought before God and sacrificed. In the Eucharist, we bring before God, the reminder of the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. Jesus said, "Do this in remembrance of me." This is called the *anamnesis*. It means *remembrance*. We are commanded by Christ to continue a perpetual memory of Christ's death and sacrifice.

In the Old Covenant, those sacrifices were, we can say, a memorial, an anamnesis, a remembrance before God of the sins of the people. Yet, Hebrews 10:4 tells us that "...it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. (ESV) In the Christian Eucharist, we have a memorial or anamnesis of Christ in Whom we have full and complete redemption from sin.

Jesus instituted this to be done "in remembrance of Him" and it is to be done repeatedly by the Church until He comes again. We do not offer it simply to remember Jesus, but so that in a very real way, His death and sacrifice would be effectually recalled and offered to the Father and the work of His redemption might be effectually applied to us, not because Jesus' one sacrifice of Himself, once offered was in any way insufficient, but rather that His sacrifice is still effectual. Jesus is at the right hand of the Father now, pleading our cause. His sacrificial death is the instrument by which we are saved and we are offering this memorial to God to once again place before Him our sacrificial offering.

The priest then prays the *Invocation*. This part of the Consecration Prayer is when the priest asks God to bless and sanctify this bread and wine with His Holy Spirit, so that those who truly receive them by faith and trust and belief, will be true partakers of Christ's Body and Blood. The last paragraph of the Consecration Prayer says, "And we earnestly desire thy fatherly

goodness, mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving." This is a description of what is being offered. This is how we praise and thank God...by repeatedly taking the Body and Blood of His Son Jesus Christ, blessing, breaking, eating and drinking it, so that all of the benefits that Christ won for us will be applied to us or used by God to nourish us both in body and soul. That we would be filled with God's grace and heavenly benediction. That we, by this sacrifice, would be made ever more and more, one body with Him.

The language of sacrifice is tricky. We don't want to say too little, emptying Holy Communion and making it just a time of refreshments, but at the same time we don't want to conjure up images of re-sacrificing Christ either. The priest has an important role, separate from the people in that he is commissioned and ordained to connect the people with God. One way is through the mystery of Holy Communion or the Eucharist. So in a very real way, the realities of Christ's sacrifice in the form of bread and wine are, at the hands of the priest, presented to the Father to be blessed, hallowed and sanctified by Him, and all of the benefits of Christ's sacrifice are then given to the people at the hands of the priest through these holy mysteries to our great and endless comfort.

**St. Mary Magdalene Anglican Church
205 So. Glassell Street
Old Town Orange, CA 92866
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Rev. Fr. Neil Edlin, Rector**

**Sunday Services:
8am Mass
10am Choral Mass &
Children's Sunday School**

**Wednesday Service &
Anointing of the Sick: 9am**

Acquiring Truth

"What is repentance?"

Repentance means, **to change one's way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude with regard to sin and righteousness.** In repentance, a person is given a true sense of the heinous nature of sin and, hating it, they turn to God through Christ with the desire to part ways with it.

The Bible does make it clear that not all repentance is genuine. Paul said to the Corinthians, "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death." [2 Cor. 7:10].

Because God grants us a clear view of our sins in repentance, we don't regret the loss of them. False repentance is characterized by a continual longing for the "old life." Although a person may have made certain external changes in their life, their heart is continually drawn back to the sins they miss. Jesus said, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" [Luke 9:62].

True repentance is often characterized by a Godly anger at the terrible nature of sin. False repentance is less concerned about their relationship with God and more concerned with getting caught. This type of concern is what Paul calls "worldly grief." True repentance means bringing sin into the light (through confession) since the sin itself is hated, not just its consequences. Jesus said, "For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God" [John 3:20-21].

False repentance is scary because it can trick us into thinking we've truly repented when, in reality, we've only found more crafty ways to hold on to our sin. Do you constantly long for your sin? Do you love your sin more than Jesus and find yourself only hating its consequences?

Peter says, "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).

CURRENT EVENTS



LENT COMES TO A CLOSE

LENTEN PROGRAM COMES TO AN END

There are only two weeks left to enjoy our Tuesday Meatless Suppers and Educational Programs from Fr. Neil and Dn. Sean.

PALM PROCESSION ANNOUNCING THE KING'S ARRIVAL

The gathering of Christ's followers in the church breezeway with Palms waving high will begin at **10:00am Sunday on April 14th.**

The Choir will lead us in song as we process into the Church, commemorating the Triumphal Entry of Jesus the Christ into the City of David while the people waved palm branches and strewed cloaks in His path. Once we are seated in the church, palms blessed by Fr. Neil will be received and mass will begin. During this service

all of the congregation will participate in the Passion Narrative. You cannot miss it.

MAUNDY THURSDAY COMMEMORATES THE LAST SUPPER

On **April 18th at 7pm**, come celebrate Jesus' last supper with his Apostles in the Upper Room. This service is an important Holy Week service and your participation is needed.

During this service ... foot washing, our participation in the stripping of the Altar and our private prayers at the Altar of Repose point us to the final night in which Jesus was betrayed, left alone in the Garden of Gethsemane, arrested and tried..

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Good Friday Liturgy marks the time Jesus is crucified on the Cross, died, was taken down and entombed. Beginning at **12:00 Noon on April 19th**, the Service begins with this Liturgy followed by Holy Communion from the "Pre-Sanctified" elements consecrated on Maundy Thursday.

DARE TO WALK ON GOOD FRIDAY

Each Station or Icon that adorns the walls of our church represent the day that Jesus dragged a wooden cross on a stretch of road between the Antonia fortress and Golgotha after being flogged to near death. We stop at each icon to pray and contemplate Him. Our journey ends at Jesus' crucifixion and burial.

Dr. Martin Hengel, leading scholar in theological writings, wrote "Jesus not only died an unspeakably cruel death, he underwent the most contemptible abasement that could be imagined. So repugnant was the gruesome

reality, that a natural tendency prevails to blunt, remove, or domesticate its scandalous impact." **Private confessions** will be heard between **4:00pm - 5:00pm** prior to **Stations of the Cross** commencing at **7:00pm**.



EASTER SERVICE

Easter Day, April 21st, is the glorious day of Jesus' Resurrection from the dead.

We will be celebrating Mass at **8:00am and 10:00am. 10:00am Mass will include a full choir celebration.** Easter is recognized as a Holy Day of Obligation so church attendance is important.



Plan on coming early. Parking will be available at the pre-school and Knox Insurance lots.

EASTER EGG HUNT

YES! Easter egg hunts will be held at both masses for our church children. We will be collecting kid-friendly candy and mini crackers to stuff Easter Eggs **before Thursday, April 18th**. No peanuts or peanut butter please. Please try to park your car in the additional parking lots on that day so the children will have a place to hunt for eggs.

4TH SUNDAY BRUNCH RETURNS!!

On **Sunday, April 28th at Noon**, we will enjoy lots of fellowship at Katella Grill. Please sign up for this no-host event in the Narthex or contact Niki Strate.