

287. Why This Sacrament Should be Administered to the End of Days.

As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come. 1 Cor. 11, 26.

What does Christ, our Lord, enjoin when He says: "This do in remembrance of Me"? That this Sacrament should be administered in His Church to the end of days, that under the consecrated bread and wine His body be eaten and His blood be drunk. And for this reason we continue to perform the sacred act, as without our eating and drinking the Sacrament does not exist. We celebrate the Holy Supper as a memorial act, whereby we praise Christ for what He has done for us. It is an act of thanksgiving.

What looms large in our sacramental thanksgiving, however, is not the act we do, but what *God* has done and does. We give, but we receive far more; God gives as He always gives, or we could have nothing to give. The sacramental act, then, is not anything we do and offer to God to merit His grace, but an act in which we receive His grace. Does not the apostle say: "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come"? What, then, ought we to do when we eat His body and drink His blood and thus receive the pledge? We ought to show and remember His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: "This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me."

That implies the main purpose for which the Lord instituted this Sacrament. Which is that purpose? As the evangelists plainly say: "For the remission of sins." Why, then, ought we remember and show forth the Lord's death? That we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins but Christ, true God and man, and that we may learn to look with terror at our sins and to regard them as great indeed and to find joy and comfort in Him alone; and thus be saved through such faith. Why, then, should the Sacrament be administered until the second coming of Christ? That we may learn to believe more firmly that Christ died for us out of great love and that we may also the better learn to love God and our neighbor.

Prayer.

O Lord God, who hast left unto us in a wonderful Sacrament a memorial of Thy holy Passion, grant, we beseech Thee, that we may so use this Sacrament of Thy body and blood that the fruits of Thy redemption will continually be manifest in us. Thou, O Lord Jesus Christ, hast said when instituting this Sacrament: "This do in remembrance of Me." It is Thy holy will, then, that this Sacrament should forever be administered in Thy Church. It is Thy call and divine decree that under the consecrated bread and wine we should eat Thy body and drink Thy blood till Thou comest for our final redemption. Amen.

O Lord, we will obey Thy call,
We bow to Thy decree,
And through Thy love thus draw us all,
Dear Savior, unto Thee!

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You may contact Rev. Ley at: pastorley@leychalet.com.

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