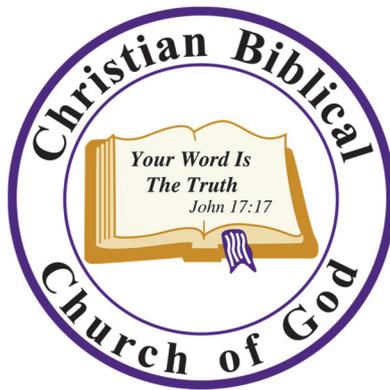


# The Eucharist— Sacrifice of the Mass



*by*  
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# The Eucharist—Sacrifice of the Mass

**Is the bread and wine of the Eucharist  
transfigured at the command of a priest  
into Jesus' literal flesh and blood?**

The Catholic Church claims that Jesus instituted the “Eucharist”—the so-called “Sacrifice of the Mass”—on the night of His last supper. According to Scripture, however, Jesus kept the Passover that night (Luke 22:15, etc.), instituting the unleavened bread and wine as symbols of the New Covenant. Thus, He instituted the Christian Passover service.

Just what is the “Eucharist,” and what is its *true* origin? And what of the claim that, at the command of a priest, bread and wine actually *become* the literal flesh and blood of Christ in the “Sacrifice of the Mass”?

During the second to fourth centuries AD, the apostate “Christian” church in Rome grafted numerous pagan rituals into its “Christianized” practices. Among them was the “Sacrifice of the Mass”—called the “Eucharist”—in which it is claimed that bread and wine are transfigured into the literal flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. **“In the celebration of the Holy Mass, the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ.** It is called **transubstantiation**, for in the Sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of bread and wine do not remain, but the entire substance of bread is changed into the body of Christ, and the entire substance of wine is changed into his blood, the ... outward semblance of bread and wine alone remaining” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, article “Consecration,” bold emphasis added).

## *The Eucharist—*

But is this belief founded on the Word of God?

Such a teaching ignores the plain teaching of the New Testament concerning the Passover. As symbols of the New Covenant, the bread and wine of Christ's last supper were clearly **representative** of His body and blood. To take Jesus' words literally—"this is my body" and "this is my blood"—is to grossly disregard a common literary tool of Scripture: **figurative language**.

Such language is widely used throughout the Bible. For example, when David's men risked their lives to bring him much-needed water, he said: "*Is it not the blood of the men who went in danger of their lives?*" (II Sam. 23:17). To David, the water was symbolic of the blood of those who risked their lives for him. In a similar manner, Christ is called a "door" in John 10:9, a "vine" in John 15:5, and a "rock" in I Corinthians 10:4—none of which are to be taken literally.

Forcing a literal meaning on Christ's words concerning the bread and wine of Passover creates several problems. First, it ignores the fact that Jesus Christ, Who is seated at the right hand of God the Father in heaven, is no longer composed of flesh and blood—but of spirit (see a description of His glorified form in Revelation chapter one). Secondly, the drinking of blood is expressly forbidden in Scripture (Deut. 12:16; Acts 15:20).

More importantly, however, the idea of transubstantiation seriously contradicts a pivotal New Testament teaching, that Jesus' sacrifice was efficacious **once for all time, for all human sin**—for Christ was "**offered once** to bear *the* sins of many" (Heb. 9:28). The Catholic Church teaches that in the Eucharist the wafer of bread (as Christ's literal body) is offered up by

## *The Sacrifice of the Mass*

the priest **in sacrifice**. (The wafer is referred to as a “host,” from a Latin word originally meaning “victim” or “sacrifice.”) In a quote from the Council of Trent, the church says, “If any one saith that in the Mass **a true and proper sacrifice** is not offered to God ... let him be anathema” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, article “Sacrifice of the Mass,” bold emphasis added. Note: “Sacrifice of the Mass” is another name for the Eucharist).

The Catholic idea of Christ being offered up repeatedly as a sacrifice stands in sharp disagreement with Jesus’ own words when He said on the cross, “It is finished” (John 19:30). Again, Christ’s sacrifice was accomplished **once, for all time, for all human sin**. Hebrews 10:10-14 says “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**. Now [at the temple in Jerusalem] every high priest stands ministering day by day, offering the same sacrifices repeatedly, which are never able to remove sins; but He, after **offering one sacrifice for sins for ever**, sat down at *the* right hand of God.... For **by one offering** He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified.”

Those who believe otherwise—and practice the Eucharist—should consider whether they are “crucifying [again] the Son of God for themselves, and are publicly holding *Him* in contempt” (Heb. 6:6).

Clearly, the “Sacrifice of the Mass” is unbiblical. But what, then, is its true origin?

### **Ancient Transubstantiation Rites**

There is considerable evidence that transubstantiation rituals were carried out as part of the

religious observances of numerous primitive cultures. Sir James George Frazer writes: “The custom of eating bread sacramentally as the body of a god was practised by the Aztecs before the discovery and conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards [in the sixteenth century]. Twice a year, in May and December, an image of the great Mexican god Huitzilopochtli or Vitzilipuztli was made of dough, then broken in pieces, and solemnly eaten by his worshippers.... They called these morsels [of bread] the flesh and bones of Vitzilipuztli” (*The Golden Bough—A Study in Magic and Religion*, pp. 566-567).

Frazer adds that “the ancient Mexicans, even before the arrival of Christian missionaries, were **fully acquainted with the doctrine of transubstantiation** and acted upon it in the solemn rites of their religion. They believed that by consecrating bread **their priests could turn it into the very body of their god**, so that all who thereupon partook of the consecrated bread entered into a mystic communion with the deity by receiving a portion of his divine substance into themselves.... The ceremony was called *teoqualo*, that is, ‘god is eaten’ ” (Ibid., pp. 568-569, bold emphasis added).

Even the Catholics admit: “[Pagan] Mithraism had a Eucharist, but **the idea of a sacred banquet is as old as the human race** and existed at all ages and amongst all peoples” (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, article “Mithraism,” bold emphasis added).

“The doctrine of transubstantiation, or the magical conversion of bread into flesh, was also familiar to the Aryans of ancient India **long before the spread and even the rise of Christianity**. The Brahmans [of India] taught that the rice-cakes offered in

## *The Sacrifice of the Mass*

sacrifice were substitutes for human beings, and that they were actually converted into the real bodies of men by the manipulation of the priest” (*The Golden Bough*, p. 568, bold emphasis added).

Amazingly, the concept of literally “eating a god” actually stems from cannibalism. Of the various cultures that practiced cannibalism, Frazer writes that “the flesh and blood of dead men [were] commonly eaten and drunk [in order] to inspire bravery, wisdom, or other qualities for which the [dead] men themselves were remarkable.... By this means the strength, valor, intelligence, and other virtues of the slain are believed to be imparted to the eaters” (Ibid., p. 576).

If the victim was considered to be a god, so much the better: “[B]y eating the flesh of an animal or man he [the savage] acquires not only the physical, but even the moral and intellectual qualities which were characteristic of that animal or man; so when the creature [or man] is deemed divine [a god], our simple savage naturally expects to **absorb a portion of its divinity** along with its material substance.... By eating the body of the god he **shares in the god’s attributes and powers**” (Ibid., pp. 573 and 578, bold emphasis added).

Thus, the practice of cannibalism led to the idea of, literally, “eating a god.” Over time, this custom evolved into various transubstantiation rituals in which consecrated bread was eaten—but only after it had been “magically” changed into the “literal” flesh of a god. Depending on the culture, wine was also often consumed as the “literal” blood of a god.

But how did this pagan transubstantiation concept find its way into “Christianity”?

## **The Babylonian Influence**

Central to the ancient Babylonian religion was the supreme goddess “mother” Ishtar. Subsequently, every pagan civilization has worshipped its own version of a caring goddess-mother figure, such as Inanna, Fortuna, Hathor, etc. Of this “original goddess” figure, Alexander Hislop writes that “the goddess-mother has evidently radiated in all directions from Chaldea [Babylon]” (*The Two Babylons*, p. 158). As we will see, Babylonian goddess-mother worship was the forerunner of the Catholic reverence of “Mother Mary”—and pivotal to the development of the Eucharist ritual.

Hislop continues: “Now, thus we see how it comes that Rome represents Christ ... as a stern and inexorable judge, before whom the sinner ‘might grovel in the dust, and still never be sure that his prayers would be heard,’ while Mary is set off in the most winning and engaging light, as the hope of the guilty, as the grand refuge of sinners.... The most standard devotional works of Rome are pervaded by this very principle, exalting the compassion and gentleness of the mother at the expense of the loving character of the Son....

“All this is done only to exalt the Mother, as *more* gracious and *more* compassionate than her glorious Son. Now, this was the very case in Babylon: and to this character of the goddess queen her favourite offerings exactly corresponded. Therefore, we find the women of Judah represented as simply ‘**burning incense, pouring out drink [wine] offerings, and offering cakes to the queen of heaven**’ (Jer. 44:19)” (Ibid., pp. 158-159, bold emphasis his).

In what were known as “bloodless” sacrifices,

## *The Sacrifice of the Mass*

such “cakes” were offered to the “queen of heaven” (Ishtar) as a form of communion. Hislop adds that, after such sacrifices, Ishtar’s worshippers also “**partook of [the cakes and wine]**, swearing anew fidelity to her” (Ibid., p. 159, bold emphasis added).

Riding on the skirts of Mary, as it were, this early form of the Eucharist found its way into the apostate Roman church. “In the fourth century, when the queen of heaven, under the name of Mary, was beginning to be worshipped in the Christian Church [at Rome], **this ‘unbloody [bread and wine] sacrifice’ also was brought in....** [At] that time it was well known to have been **adopted from the Pagans**” (Ibid., p. 159, bold emphasis added).

In the Catholic Eucharist, the “host” is a **round wafer**. Contrast this with the reality that when bread is broken, it never breaks into *round* shapes. The *broken* bread at Passover represents the body of Christ, *beaten* and *torn*. This awesome symbolism is completely lost in the “round” wafer.

History, however, links the “roundness” of the wafer with **sun worship**. “The importance ... which Rome attaches to the *roundness* of the wafer, must have a reason; and that reason will be found, if we look at the altars of Egypt. ‘The thin, *round* cake,’ says Wilkinson, ‘occurs on all [Egyptian] altars.’ Almost every jot or tittle in the Egyptian worship had a symbolical meaning. The *round disk*, so frequent in the sacred emblems of Egypt, symbolised the *sun*.’... [The] ‘round’ wafer, whose ‘roundness’ is so important an element in the Romish Mystery ... **is only another symbol of Baal, or the sun**” (Ibid., pp. 160, 163, bold emphasis added).

Of this Egyptian practice, Hislop writes: “Now,

when Osiris, the sun-divinity, became incarnate, and was born, it was not merely that he should give his life as a *sacrifice* for men, but that he might also be **the life and nourishment of the souls of men**.... Now, this Son, who was symbolised as ‘Corn,’ was the SUN-divinity incarnate, according to the sacred oracle of the great goddess of Egypt.... What [could be] more natural then, if this incarnate divinity is symbolised as the ‘*bread of God*,’ than that he should be represented as a ‘*round wafer*,’ to **identify him with the Sun**?” Hislop adds that this god who was identified “under the symbol of the wafer or thin round cake, as ‘the bread of life,’ was in reality the fierce, scorching Sun, or terrible Moloch” (Ibid., pp. 160-161, 163, bold emphasis added).

In the end, says Hislop, “the practice of offering and eating this ‘unbloody sacrifice’ [of bread and wine] was patronised by the Papacy; and now, throughout the whole bounds of the Romish communion, it has superseded the simple but most precious sacrament of the Supper instituted by our Lord Himself” (Ibid., p. 164).

### **Mary Worship—and Mary as “Mediatrice of Communion”**

When it comes to understanding the “mystery” of the Eucharist, the role of Mary cannot be overstated. Mary is so intimately connected to the Eucharistic mystery that the late John Paul II—in his encyclical letter *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*—called her the “Woman of the Eucharist.” “If we wish to rediscover in all its richness the profound relationship between the Church and the Eucharist, **we cannot neglect Mary**, Mother

## *The Sacrifice of the Mass*

and model of the Church.... Mary can guide us towards this most holy sacrament, because **she herself has a profound relationship with it**” (Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, ch. 6: “At the School of Mary, Woman of the Eucharist,” para. 53, bold emphasis added). The complete *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* is available at [www.ewtn.com/library/encyc/jp2euchu.htm](http://www.ewtn.com/library/encyc/jp2euchu.htm).

Mary’s connection to the Eucharist stems in no small part from the fact that she is actually *worshipped* by the Catholic Church. Catholics, of course, deny this. However, while there is nothing in Catholic literature that *explicitly* states that Mary should be the object of worship, the sentiment is strongly *implied*. The Catholic reverence of Mary amounts, in practice, to worship because Catholics kneel before her image, pray to her, trust in her for salvation, and attribute to her titles and honors which alone belong to God. For example, a popular prayer in Mary’s honor says, “Hail, holy Queen, Mother of Mercy! Our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping, in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us.” (Taken from *Mary Worship—A Study of Catholic Practice and Doctrine*, Mary Ann Collins, Jan. 2006, [www.CatholicConcerns.com](http://www.CatholicConcerns.com)).

Note the use of “Advocate,” a title belonging to Christ (I John 2:1). In the official “Catechism of the Catholic Church”—as proclaimed by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and approved in 1992 by Pope John Paul II—it is stated that **God has exalted Mary in glory** as “Queen of Heaven” (Catechism, no. 966), and that she is to be **praised with special**

**devotion** (Catechism, no. 971; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Doubleday, pp. 274-275).

One only has to read between the lines to see the high degree of reverence given to Mary. Connected to the worship of Mary is her presumed role as co-mediator with Christ of man's salvation—wherein she is often referred to as “Mediatrix.” According to Catholic Creed, the “Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix” (Catechism, no. 969; *Ibid.*, p. 275).

History had already predicted as much. Hislop writes that “the goddess-queen [Ishtar] of Chaldea [the “Queen of Heaven”] differed from her son, who was worshipped in her arms. *He* was ... represented as delighting in blood. But *she* [like Mary in the Catholic Church], as the mother of grace and mercy ... was averse to blood, and was represented in a benign and gentle character. Accordingly, in Babylon [as in Rome today] she bore the name of Mylitta—that is, ‘The Mediatrix’ ” (*The Two Babylons*, pp. 56-57).

Scripture, of course, confirms that there is but “one Mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus” (I Tim. 2:5). Referring to Christ, Luke wrote: “And there is no salvation in any other, for neither is there another name under heaven which has been given among men, by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

One of Catholicism's principal proponents of the Marianist Movement, which glorifies Mary, was priest-missionary Louis Marie de Montfort (1673-1716) of France—best known for his works *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin* and *The Secret of Mary* (see [montfort.org](http://montfort.org)). In his commentary entitled *St. Louis Marie de Montfort on the Eucharist and Mary*, Catholic

## *The Sacrifice of the Mass*

writer Corrado Maggioni describes Montfort's insight into the role of Mary in the Eucharist. "With great sensitivity and in great depth, Montfort draws attention to the **presence and action of Mary in the Eucharist** without detriment to the excellence of the redeeming work of Christ.... **Mary is mediatrix of Communion.**" Maggioni quotes Montfort as saying that people "should go to confession and Holy Communion with the intention of **consecrating themselves to Jesus through Mary**" (from [www.marys-touch.com/Saints/montfort3.htm](http://www.marys-touch.com/Saints/montfort3.htm), pp.1-2, bold emphasis added).

Not only has the Catholic Church exalted Mary to an idealized, larger-than-life position as goddess-Mother and Mediatrix, it has also made her a virtual **coequal with Christ in His sufferings**.

In his message to the 19th International Marian Congress (1996), Pope John Paul II said: "Mary is present, with the Church and as the Mother of the Church, **at each of our celebrations of the Eucharist**. If the Church and the Eucharist are inseparably united, the same ought to be said of Mary and the Eucharist. This is one reason why, since ancient times, **the commemoration of Mary** has always been part of the Eucharistic celebration....

"Every Holy Mass makes present in an unbloody manner that unique and perfect sacrifice, offered by Christ on the Cross, **in which Mary participated**, joined in spirit with her suffering Son ... **offering her own sorrow to the Father**. Therefore when we celebrate the Eucharist ... the memory of his Mother's suffering is **also made alive and present**.... Through spiritual communion with the sorrowful Mother of God, believers share in a special way in the paschal mystery" (*Mary Leads us to Eucharist*, bold emphasis)

added; available at [www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP96-815.htm](http://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP96-815.htm)).

In addition, John Paul says that “Mary, throughout her life at Christ’s side and not only on Calvary, **made her own the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist....** Mary experienced a kind of ‘anticipated Eucharist’—one might say a ‘spiritual communion’—of desire and of oblation, which would culminate in her union with her Son in his passion... (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, para. 56, bold emphasis added).

It should be obvious that the Sacrifice of the Mass is as much about Mary as it is about Christ. Indeed, in the Catholic mind, Mary is inexorably bound to the Eucharist. What, then, if anything, does all of this suggest?

Namely, that Mary’s so-called “presence” in the Eucharist is a huge understatement. Mary is worshipped, looked upon as co-mediator and co-sufferer with Christ, and she is inseparably “present” and “active” in every Eucharist ritual. The emphasis on her role as “mediatrix of Communion”—coupled with the stress placed on her “sacrificial” role—leads one to ask, *Is Mary also present in the host?*

While the Catholic Church clearly does *not teach* that Mary is co-present in the host in the way Jesus is said to be, the subtle *suggestion* nevertheless remains.

Montfort taught that “since Mary gave the Redeemer **his flesh and blood**, it follows that **she cannot but be involved in the mysteries that are a unique memorial of the same flesh and blood**, that is, the Eucharist” (Maggioni, p. 2, bold emphasis added).

## *The Sacrifice of the Mass*

As Jesus' mother, *her* flesh and blood are now *His* flesh and blood—giving her at least, perhaps, **an indirect presence in the host**. After all, since the Eucharist is a memorial of the sacrifice of Christ—in which, as we have seen, Mary is said to have “participated”—does not the ritual equally become a memorial of Mary?

Certainly, it is possible to **unknowingly worship** *someone* or *something*. Of pagan forms of worship, Christ said, “You do not know [who or] what you worship” (John 4:22). Is the Eucharist just another form of *veiled* Mary-worship? Is this not the Babylonian mystery religion brought full circle?

To borrow from Jeremiah 44:17-19, “We Catholics burn incense to Mary, the Queen of Heaven, and pour out drink offerings of wine to her, and make Eucharistic bread with which to worship her”—and to paraphrase Hislop, “All this is done **only to exalt the Mother** above her glorious Son.”

Whatever its intention, the Catholic doctrine of the Eucharist and transubstantiation stands exposed as nothing more than a fraudulent, *idolatrous*, **pagan tradition**—the product of a combination of Babylonian religious mysteries and primitive ideas of “eating a god.” **Regardless of the claims of the Roman church, and the prayers of her priests, Jesus Christ's flesh has never been present in any “communion wafer,” nor has His blood ever been present in any “communion wine.”**

For a complete historical and theological dissertation on the subject, see Alexander Hislop's *The Two Babylons*, pp. 156-165. (Available at [www.cbcg.org](http://www.cbcg.org).)

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