

Argument of the Month

The Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist

I. Questions and Answers

A. What is the Catholic Teaching on the Eucharist?

1. The teaching of the Magisterium (teaching authority) of the Catholic Church undeniably confirms the truth of the Real Presence of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
2. Our Lord is present Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity
 - a) This presence is veiled in the appearance and properties of the Bread and Wine.
 - b) At the time of consecration, by a validly ordained priest, Jesus is made manifest in the Eucharist.
 - c) Down to the atomic level the smallest piece of bread or drop of wine is the complete body of Christ Jesus.
 - d) This is a truth of God proclaimed by the church.
 - (1) Individual believe is not required
 - e) Christ is present as long as the material presence of bread and wine remain.
 - (1) 15-20 minutes after consuming a host.
 - (2) Until wine is diluted – almost immediately after consuming.

B. How is God present in this world?

1. Omnipresence
 - a) The Spirit of God is present everywhere at all times.
2. Indwelling Holy Spirit
 - a) The Spirit of God is present in each one of us that is in a state of grace.
3. Eucharist
 - a) God is materially present isolated in the appearance of bread and wine.

C. Isn't the Roman Catholic Church adding things?

1. No, we simply believe the full truth. A truth that is Historical and Scriptural

- a) First century Christians believed in the Real Presence
 - (1) St. Ignatius of Antioch – co-worker Apostle John (wrote AD 110)
 - (2) St. Justin Martyr – disciple of Apostle John (wrote AD 130)
 - (3) St. Irenaeus – disciple of St. Polycarp who was a disciple of Apostle John. (AD 195)
- b) The church has defended the Real Presence throughout history
 - (1) Berengarius heresy (AD 1050)
 - (2) Durandus heresy (AD 1208)
 - (3) John Wycliffe (AD 1418)
 - (4) Council of Trent (AD 1545-1563)
 - (5) Pope St. Pius X (Defense against Modernism AD 1907)
 - (6) Pope Paul VI (Defense against Secularism AD 1965)
- c) Example: A Man can be a Son, Brother, Husband, Father and the last doesn't negate any of the previous it is just as true.

D. John 6:22-59 is the definitive discourse on the Eucharist.

- 1. Two Major lessons
 - a) Real Presence
 - b) Faith needed to believe the real presence
- 2. Discourse on Eucharist John 6:22-59
 - a) Key Verses: 48-58

I am the bread of life. (48)

Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. (49)

This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. (50)

I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh." (51)

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (52)

So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; (53)

he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. (54 – eat changes from consume to munch, gnaw)

For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. (55)

He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. (56)

As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live

because of me. (57)

This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live for ever." (58)

3. Discourse on Faith John 6:60-71

E. Why take John 6 Literally? Isn't He saying He feeds us with his word. (just as we devour a book today we are to devour the word of God.)

1. That might be true if he was speaking it today, but the fact of the matter is that in Jesus' time the figurative meaning of eating flesh and drinking blood was already well established. It stood for assault and persecution.

- a) Psalm 27:2
- b) Isaiah 9:18-20
- c) Isaiah 49:26
- d) Micah 3:3
- e) 2 Samuel 23:15-17
- f) Revelation 17:6,16

F. John 6 is figurative just like John 15:1 when Jesus calls himself a vine, or John 10:9 when he calls himself a gate.

1. Figurative vs. literal

a) Vine and Gate are obvious figurative examples – there is no obvious figurative examples for bread and wine.

b) The bible itself shows us how to tell if something is figurative or literal through the other teachings of Jesus.

(1) Literally wrong – Jesus corrects and explains (John 3:3-5) – born again.

(2) Literally correctly – confirms and repeats (Matt 9:2-6) – forgive sin.

(3) In John 6 Jesus confirms and repeats 6 time over 6 versus

(a) Scripture shows us that the people present took him literally v52 – How can this man give us flesh to eat

(b) The Catholic church proclaims the answer – The Last Supper.

G. How is the teaching of the church shown?

1. Genuflect and bow
2. Adoration
3. Bring to sick and home bound
4. Some priests hold the consecrated host and wine an extremely long time to emphasize the change
5. It is at every mass and available every day
 - a) Manna of new covenant

H. Why does anybody need the Eucharist?

1. Need is a very relative term.
 - a) Example – sleep, food
2. It is our spiritual food.
3. Like all the sacraments it is a gift of grace that God gives to us.
 - a) To change us!
 - b) Viaticum - "provisions for a journey,"