



# *Sunday is* **A DAY OF LOVING SACRIFICE**

## **From Sacred Scripture**

*1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

*For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."*

## **From the Mass, Source and Summit of Life**

The Eucharistic prayer at Mass recalls the action of Jesus on the night before his death. He gave his disciples his Body and Blood in the form of bread and wine. At the anamnesis (or the remembering that makes present), the people recall the saving death and resurrection of the Lord. The priest prays that the Holy Spirit comes upon the people, and that in receiving Christ's Body and Blood (the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament), they may become a living offering to God.

"[Christ] is the true and eternal priest, who instituted the pattern of an everlasting sacrifice and was the first to offer himself as the saving Victim, commanding us to make this offering as his memorial. As we eat his flesh that was sacrificed for us, we are made strong, and as we drink his blood that was poured out for us, we are washed clean" (Preface I of the Most Holy Eucharist).

## From the Riches of Our Faith

In one sense, becoming a living offering means connecting our own suffering to the sufferings of Christ. It is an act of faith, trusting that just as the cross was not the end of the story for Jesus, it is not the end of the story for us. The love and mercy of God will prevail. On another level becoming a living offering means dedicating ourselves to lives of service and self-giving love. Sunday is a day to dedicate our lives to the ways of Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John 3:16).

"All that the Son of God did and taught for the reconciliation of the world is not simply known to us through the historical record of the past; we also experience it through the power of his present works...It is not only the courageous, glorious martyrs who share in his suffering; all the faithful who are reborn also share it, and do so in the very act of their rebirth. For when men renounce Satan and believe in God, when they pass from corruption to new life, when they lay aside the image of the earthly man and take on the form of the heavenly man, they go through a kind of death and resurrection. He who is received by Christ and receives Christ is not the same after baptism as before; the body of the reborn Christian becomes flesh of the Crucified Christ" (Pope Saint Leo the Great, Sermon 63, 6).



Note that "Sunday . . . is to be observed as the foremost holy day of obligation in the universal Church" (*Code of Canon Law*, can. 1246 § 1). In abstaining from Sunday labors, and in working to make certain others can rest, as well, along with offering to the Father with all the members of the Body of Christ the Sacrifice of Christ in the Holy Mass, Sunday is truly seen as a day of sacrifice.

Indeed, the Eucharist is a true sacrifice, not just a commemorative meal; the first Christians knew this and proclaimed it in their writings.

They recognized the sacrificial character of Jesus' instruction, "Do this in remembrance of me" (Cf. Luke 22:19, 1 Corinthians 11:24-25).

"You cannot pray at home as at church, where there is a great multitude, where exclamations are cried out to God as from one great heart, and where there is something more: the union of minds, the accord of souls, the bond of charity, the prayers of the priests" (CCC, 2179).

In the sacrifice of the Mass, we declare the Paschal Mystery, that is the suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus makes all the difference. Through the hands of the priest, Jesus the Lamb of Sacrifice willingly gives of Himself as an atonement for sin and we offer our own lives of sacrifice with our Blessed Lord to the glory of God the Father.

## Live it!

- What can you give up to make more space for God in your life? What can you give up to love Jesus?
- Take time to thank God for the opportunities to do things for others – for your family, friends, the Church, other organizations.
- Read a story about one of the Saints who gave up so much to follow the way of the Lord. Or, reminisce for a while upon someone holy in your own life who made sacrifices to improve things for you. If this hero is still alive, give him or her a phone call or send a note of thanks. If he or she has died, lift up a prayer of gratitude.

## Sacred Scripture throughout the Week

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| 1. Matthew 6:9-13     | Give us this day our daily bread.                         |
| 2. Luke 22:19-20      | Do this in memory of me.                                  |
| 3. Acts 2:42, 44-47   | They devoted themselves to the breaking of the bread.     |
| 4. Philippians 2:5-11 | Jesus humbled himself and was obedient to God unto death. |
| 5. Hebrews 13:15-16   | Through Christ offer God a sacrifice of praise.           |
| 6. 1 Peter 1:17-19    | We are ransomed by the blood of Christ.                   |

*Remember, Sunday is a Day of Loving Sacrifice.*