

GENERAL INSTRUCTION OF THE ROMAN MISSAL

C. The Liturgy of the Eucharist

72. At the Last Supper Christ instituted the Paschal Sacrifice and banquet, by which the Sacrifice of the Cross is continuously made present in the Church whenever the priest, representing Christ the Lord, carries out what the Lord himself did and handed over to his disciples to be done in his memory.^[69]

For Christ took the bread and the chalice and gave thanks; he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take, eat, and drink: this is my Body; this is the cup of my Blood. Do this in memory of me.” Accordingly, the Church has arranged the entire celebration of the Liturgy of the Eucharist in parts corresponding to precisely these words and actions of Christ:

- At the Preparation of the Gifts, the bread and the wine with water are brought to the altar, the same elements that Christ took into his hands.
- In the Eucharistic Prayer, thanks is given to God for the whole work of salvation, and the offerings become the Body and Blood of Christ.
- Through the fraction and through Communion, the faithful, though they are many, receive from the one bread the Lord’s Body and from the one chalice the Lord’s Blood in the same way the Apostles received them from Christ’s own hands.

47. At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity ^[36], a paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us ^[37].

^[36] Cf. St. Augustine, *Tractatus in Ioannem*, VI, n. 13.

^[37] Roman Breviary, feast of Corpus Christi, Second Vespers, antiphon to the Magnificat.