

Holy Thursday
Reading 2
1 Cor. 11: 23-26

Brothers and sisters:

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."

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

Jerome Biblical Commentary

.**11-12**. The preceding argument must not be pressed as though man did not need woman. There is a mutual dependence "in the Lord"; both are necessary to and have their proper roles in the Church. As the first woman was formed from the man, so now every man is born of woman.**13-14**. An argument from "nature," i.e., conventional concepts of what is proper.**16**. The matter is finally settled by an appeal to the custom of the primitive communities of Judea, "the churches of God" (1 Thes 2:14; 2 Thes 1:4; Pauline Theology, 79:151).

70 (b) THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (11:17-34). The Corinthians, like the churches of Palestine, celebrated the Eucharist in the setting of a fraternal meal, which Paul calls the Lord's supper. The factions that divided the Corinthians resulted in serious abuses of charity and even of good manners in its celebration. Christians who were well off, possibly the Apollos faction, brought ample food and drink to the assembly but refused to share these with the other groups. Some also overindulged, even became intoxicated, while others were left hungry. All this was reported to Paul.**19**. *factions*: Not "heresies" in our modern sense; they served at least one good purpose, for they distinguished the virtuous Christians who kept aloof from them from those who were failing in charity. Although gathered in the same place, the Corinthians no longer partook of a common meal expressing their union with one another in the Lord, but each group ate apart.

Haydock's Catholic Commentary

Ver. 16. *If any man seem to be contentious about this matter, or any other, we have no such custom, nor hath the Church;* that is, says St. Chrysostom, to have such quarrels and divisions. Or, as others understand it, we have no such custom for women to be in the Church uncovered. (Witham)

Ver. 17. *Now this I ordain, &c.* St. Paul found that several abuses had crept in among the Corinthians at their Church meetings, where before the holy mysteries (though St. Chrysostom thinks after them) they used to have those *charitable suppers*, called the *Agape*. For as our Saviour eat first a common supper with his apostles, before he instituted the holy sacrament, so the Christians in many places brought meats with them, and eat a supper together, in token of that friendship and union, which they had with all their brethren, before they began to celebrate the holy mysteries. It is this supper, which according to the common interpretation St. Paul here (ver. 20.) calls the *Lord's supper*,^[3] (though St. Augustine and some others by the *Lord's supper*, understand the holy sacrament itself of Christ's body and blood.) The apostle tells them, he *hears there are divisions among them* at their meetings, which he says will happen, as there *must be also heresies*, which God permits, that *they who are approved, may be made manifest*, that is, that on such occasions, the just may shew their fidelity and constancy in their duty to God. The apostle tells them, that *it is not now to eat the Lord's supper*, that is, there were such abuses among them, that it was not now to imitate the supper, which Christ made with his apostles, or, according to the exposition of St. Augustine, this was not becoming persons, who, before the end of their meetings, were to partake of the divine mysteries. (Witham)

Ver. 19. *There must be also heresies:* By reason of the pride and perversity of man's heart; not by God's will or appointment; who nevertheless draws good out of this evil, manifesting, by that occasion, who are the good and firm Christians, and making their faith more remarkable. (Challoner) --- Not that God hath directly so appointed, as necessary: this originates in man's malice, and his sole pride, and great abuse of free-will. The providence of God draweth good out of evil, but *wo to the man*, says the Scripture, *by whom scandal cometh*, such as sects and heresies. Hence St. Augustine, chap. viii. de vera relig. says: "Let us use heretics not so as to approve their errors, but to make us more wary and vigilant, and more strenuous in defending Catholic doctrine against their deceits."

¹Brown, R. E., Fitzmyer, J. A., & Murphy, R. E. 1968]; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996. *The Jerome Biblical commentary* (electronic ed.). Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ

Ver. 20. *The Lord's supper.* So the apostle here calls the *charity [Agape] feasts* observed by the primitive Christians; and reprehends the abuses of the Corinthians on these occasions: which were the more criminal, because these feasts were accompanied with the celebrating the eucharistic sacrifice and sacrament. (Challoner)

Ver. 21. *Every one taketh before his own supper to eat.* The sense seems to be, that he took and brought with him, what he designed to eat with others, and give at that supper: but as soon as some were met (without staying for others, as he orders them, ver. 33., when he again speaks of these suppers) the rich placing themselves together, began this supper, and did not take with them their poor brethren, who had brought nothing, or had nothing to bring; by this means, *one indeed is hungry, and another is drunk*, that is, had at least drunk plentifully, while the poor had nothing but shame, and *confusion*. By this means of eating and drinking without temperance and moderation, they were by no means disposed to receive afterwards the holy Eucharist. He tells such persons that committed these disorders, that if they be so hungry that they cannot fast, they should eat (ver. 34.) before they come from home. We find these Agape forbidden to be made in the Churches, in the 28th canon of the council of Laodicea, a little before the general council of Nice. In St. Chrysostom's time, and from the first ages[centuries], every one received the sacrament of the holy eucharist fasting, as it is probable this was one of the things which St. Paul gave *orders* about, (ver. 34.) when he came to Corinth. We must not imagine, that because Christ instituted the holy sacrament, and gave it to his apostles after he had supped with them, that the apostles, or the pastors of the Church, their successors, could not order it to be received *fasting*, and *kneeling*, for greater reverence and devotion. See St. Augustine on this same subject, in his letter to Januarius, liv. tom. 2. part 2. p. 126. Nov. edit. He says, that though it is evident the apostles did not receive the body and blood of Christ fasting, yet we must not on that account calumniate, or blame the universal Church, in which it is received only by those who are fasting. He says, it is most insolent madness to dispute against what is a custom in the universal Church. (Witham)

Ver. 23. *I have received of the Lord.* That is, by revelation from Christ, as well as from others, who were present with him, *that which also I delivered to you* by word of mouth, &c. Here he speaks of the holy sacrament itself, of the words of consecration, as the evangelists had done, and of the real presence of Christ's body and blood. --- *Which shall be delivered for you.* In the common Greek copies, *which is broken for you*, to wit, on the cross. --- *You shall shew the death of the Lord.* As often as you receive, it shall be with a devout and grateful remembrance of his sufferings and death for your sake. He puts every one in mind, that whosoever *shall eat this bread*, (ver. 27.) so called from the outward appearances, *or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall*, by such a sacrilege, *be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord.* And (ver. 29.) that *he eateth, and drinketh judgment*, or condemnation *to himself, not discerning* the difference betwixt celestial food and other meats, and not considering it to be truly *the body of the Lord.* See St. Chrysostom, hom. xxvii. If the words of our Saviour, *this is my body*, &c. were to be understood in a *metaphorical* and *figurative sense only*, is it probable that St. Paul, writing twenty-four years afterwards, to the new converted Gentiles at Corinth, would have used words, which full as clearly express a true and real presence of

Christ's body in the eucharist, without one word to signify that this was to be understood in a figurative sense only? (Witham)