

February 11, 2018

Mingling of the Body and Blood of Christ!

Last Saturday, I received the following comment after the 5 pm Mass, "Father, I enjoyed reading your explanation of the mixing of the water and wine during the preparation of the gifts. I've noticed this hundreds of times but never understood it. I didn't know that the priest was praying a silent prayer at that time. That prayer is quite inspirational. I now understand that the wine represents Jesus and the water represents us. This strengthens my understanding of our communion with Christ at Mass. I have also noticed that while we sing the Lamb of God, the priest, after breaking the host, places a small piece of the host into the Chalice. Can you explain why he does this?" My answer was simple, "At that very moment, the priest says another **silent prayer**: *'May this mingling of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it.'*"

This is a powerful moment at Mass. I'd like to share with you an explanation of it found in Edward Sri's book, A Biblical Walk Through The Mass: Understanding what we say and do in the Liturgy. In chapter 23, Agnus Dei: The Fraction, Commingling and the "Lamb of God", Sri says, "The ritual known as the commingling was used at one time to express the unity of the Church. In Rome, the pope had a small particle of the consecrated host, called the fermentum (Latin for leaven), sent to priests in the city, who placed it in their chalices as a sign of their union with the Bishop of Rome. Some have also interpreted this ritual as a reenacting of Christ's Resurrection. In this view, which has roots in eighth-century Syria, the separate consecrations of the bread and wine in the Mass represent the separation of Christ's Body and Blood in his death, whereas the commingling rite expresses the reunion of Christ's Body and Blood in his Resurrection."

In his book, The Mass: The Glory, the Mystery, the Tradition, Cardinal Wuerl has a short chapter on "The Lamb of God." He begins it by stressing that, "As the Mass approaches its dramatic climax, **Holy Communion**, the ritual connections to the ancient Passover grow even stronger ...The original Passover marked a new life for the chosen people. They "passed over" from slavery to freedom; from Egypt to the promised land. Our **new Passover, Jesus Christ**, marks an even greater change to an even greater new life. Through this feast the Lamb accomplishes a marriage of heaven and earth; of God and the Church. **This is the meaning of our Holy Communion. This is our Passover. It is your Passover and it is intensely personal. We draw closer together as we draw closer to God.** While we are praying or singing the "Lamb of God", the priest breaks the host, **mingles a small portion of it with the precious blood** of Christ, which fills the chalice. The sacrificial action is **complete**, and all that is left is for the victim, **our Sacrificial Lamb**, to be consumed." Interestingly, Cardinal Wuerl does not quote the above silent commingling prayer, neither does he try to give a detailed meaning of the act of commingling except that "it is the last act at Mass before we **consume the Sacrificial Lamb.**"



As Edward Sri mentions, there are several possible interpretations. The one that inspires me is that the act of commingling expresses the **reunion of Christ's body and blood** in His resurrection. The priest's silent prayer says it all: "**May this mingling of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ bring eternal life to us who receive it!**" Yes, whoever eats Christ's Body and whoever drinks Christ's Blood will have **Eternal life** (John Chapter 6). Yes, as we prepare to receive the Holy Communion, we are reminded that we will become **One with Christ**, right now at Mass, and that we will be united with **Him in Heaven!** This is **our Hope!**

May the Holy Spirit help us to deepen our understanding of the Eucharist, and Mary, the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, continue to lead us to her Son, Jesus!

*One in Christ,
Fr. Alain*

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Prayer Requests *

We are asked to pray for: Jessica Holt, Sue Holt, Wilbur Etbauer, R. Todd Iddings, Michael Proctor, Nellie Lynch, Edmund Madden, Abigail Poole, Sarah Parker, Dennis Forgash, David DeMarr, Joseph Mason Proctor, David & Georgiana Norgren, Ann Garner, Larry McGraw, Cecilia Spinks, Chantelle Angelini, Sonia Knapp, Lynn & Ronald Henrion, Ebony Jenkins, Tina Gallagher-Detwiler, Judy Studds, Vincent Argiro, Sr., Pearl Green, Graham Waldon, James Thompson, Doris Chesley, Joseph Albrittain, Ester Baraquio, Chris Goldhammer, Robert Pittman, Brenda Dobson, and all our military and civilians serving in harm's way.

**Names will remain on our list for 3 months. Please call the parish office to re-request a name after 3 months or to remove a name when the person has regained health.*

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

CCD Class Schedule

Our Lady Help of Christians 2017-2018 CCD registration is open online: www.olhoc.org.

Feb. 11-12: Class in session

Feb. 18-19: No class during Presidents' Day Holiday

Contact **Therese Thiedeman** at 301-645-7112 or dre@olhoc.org
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Parish Youth Night !

Life Teen: High school youth ministry

(Sun., 5-6:30 pm- check website)

Edge: Middle school youth ministry (meets monthly)

FIAT: Elementary school Faith in Action Team (meets monthly)

Attention Families!!



The parish is invited to a pancake feast and fellowship on Shrove Tuesday, Feb. 13, before fasting for Lent. Tickets are \$5 (under 2 eat for free) selling after all Masses or in the office. All proceeds will benefit the Youth Pilgrimage Fund.

Ash Wednesday Mass Times

9:00 AM, Noon, 7:00 PM, 8:30 PM-Spanish

Upcoming Youth Events!!

Middle school and high school students: Join us as a cast or crew-tech member for this year's **Living Stations of the Cross**. We will need youth for roles as Jesus, Mary, soldiers, Simon, Veronica, weeping women—No lines to memorize! Rehearsals begin soon to present to the CCD classes on March 18 & 19. Parish presentation is Friday, March 23. Sign up www.olhoc.org/ym.

For more information and youth opportunities, please visit www.olhoc.com/ym or contact Mrs. Marlen Coles marlen@olhoc.org.

Mass Intentions this Week

Saturday, Feb. 10, 5:00 PM: OLHOC Parishioners

Sunday, Feb. 11, 8:30 AM: Phyllis Anne Windsor

Sunday, Feb. 11, 10:00 AM: Marla Marriaga Herrera (+)

Sunday, Feb. 11, 11:30 AM: José & Anna María Gonzáles

Monday, Feb. 12, 9:00 AM: Michael McCool (+)

Tuesday, Feb. 13, 9:00 AM: Cecelia Yates

Mass Readings for February 18, 2018

First Sunday of Lent

First Reading - Genesis 9: 8-15

Second Reading - 1 Peter 3: 18-22

Gospel - Mark 1: 12-15

OUR LADY'S LITTLE CHRISTIANS

<http://www.olhoc.org/preschool.html>

* UPCOMING Child Protection Workshop *

Mandatory for anyone who has contact with children at OLHOC. www.Virtus.org

St. Mary's School, Piscataway, Feb. 20 @ 6 p.m.

Please call the church office or email: preschool@olhoc.org for information.

Cardinal's Appeal Envelopes

Available in the narthex thru February

Community Outreach

The next **Shepherd's Table Dinner** will be held on **Thursday, Feb. 15, 2018 at Good Shepherd Church**. Looking for menu planning help.

Next Outreach Committee Meeting is March 1 at 7PM – All are welcome!

Calling all Parishioners!



The OLHOC Altar Guild is looking for Happy Hands to help keep our beautiful worship space clean! One day a month for a couple of hours. Call Diane Spurgeon at 301-752-3930 or email afbabe1@verizon.net.

Mary: A Biblical Walk with the Blessed Mother

An extraordinary study that reveals Mary's unique role in God's Kingdom and in our lives.

This Lent commit to attend our 5-part Bible Study (10-11:30 am): Thursdays, Feb 22, March 1, 8, 15 & 22 or Saturdays, Feb 24, March 3, 10, 17 & 24 or form a small group in a home at your convenience. For more information see

<http://olhoc.com/lent-2018>

