

## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

### 26\_ WHAT IS THE REAL MEANING OF SACRIFICES IN SCRIPTURE?<sup>1</sup>

Fr Luigi Gioia  
*Theologian In Residence*

1. **Sharp Faith:** talks on ‘soteriology’ (how are we saved):
  - 1.1. “Why is blood so important in Scripture?” (January 21)
  - 1.2. “Did Jesus die to expiate our sins?” (January 28)
  - 1.3. **“What is the real meaning of sacrifices in Scripture?” (February 4)**
  - 1.4. “Can Jesus’s death on the cross be called a ‘sacrifice?’” (March 3)
  - 1.5. “Why did Jesus die on a cross?” (March 17)
  
2. The Word of God tends to evoke **thanksgiving**
  - 2.1. we cannot separate God's Word from the response to it.
  - 2.2. the proclamations of the Word of God to the People of God has always been connected with the People's prayer and praise.
  - 2.3. in former celebrations of the *Qahal Yahweh* just when the sacrifice would have been offered, there was pronounced instead a solemn thanksgiving by the head of the people. **(see synopsis)**
  - 2.4. Nehemiah 8
    - 1Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month **the people of Israel were assembled** with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads. 2And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. 3And they stood up in their place and **read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God** for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the LORD their God. 4On the stairs of the Levites stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani; and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God. 5Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, **“Stand up and bless the LORD your God from everlasting to everlasting. Blessed be your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.**
    - 6<sup>b</sup> “You are the LORD, you alone. **You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them;** and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you. 7You are the LORD, the God who chose **Abram** and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham. 8You found his heart faithful before you, and made with him the covenant to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite. And you have kept your promise, for you are righteous.

a. \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Louis Bouyer, *Life and Liturgy*, Sheed and Ward, 1956.

## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

9“And you saw the **affliction of our fathers in Egypt** and heard their cry at the Red Sea, 10and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day. 11And you **divided the sea** before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters. 12By a **pillar of cloud** you led them in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night to light for them the way in which they should go. 13You came down on **Mount Sinai** and spoke with them from heaven and gave them right rules and true laws, good statutes and commandments, 14and you made known to them your holy Sabbath and commanded them **commandments** and statutes and a law by Moses your servant. 15You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and brought water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you had sworn to give them.

16“But they and our fathers acted presumptuously and stiffened their neck and did not obey your commandments. 17They refused to obey and were not mindful of the wonders that you performed among them, but they stiffened their neck and appointed a leader to return to their slavery in Egypt. But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them. 18Even when they had made for themselves a golden calf and said, ‘This is your God who brought you up out of Egypt,’ and had committed great blasphemies, 19you in your great mercies did not forsake them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud to lead them in the way did not depart from them by day, nor the pillar of fire by night to light for them the way by which they should go. 20You gave your good Spirit to instruct them and did not withhold your manna from their mouth and gave them water for their thirst. 21Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.

22“And you gave them kingdoms and peoples and allotted to them every corner. **So they took possession of the land** of Sihon king of Heshbon and the land of Og king of Bashan. 23You multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, and you brought them into the land that you had told their fathers to enter and possess. 24So the descendants went in and possessed the land, and you subdued before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and gave them into their hand, with their kings and the peoples of the land, that they might do with them as they would. 25And they captured fortified cities and a rich land, and took possession of houses full of all good things, cisterns already hewn, vineyards, olive orchards and fruit trees in abundance. So they ate and were filled and became fat and delighted themselves in your great goodness.

26“Nevertheless, **they were disobedient and rebelled** against you and cast your law behind their back and killed your prophets, who had warned them in order to turn them back to you, and they committed great blasphemies. 27Therefore you gave them into the hand of their enemies, who made them suffer. And in the time of their suffering they cried out to you and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave

2

## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

them saviors who saved them from the hand of their enemies. **28** But after they had rest they did evil again before you, and you abandoned them to the hand of their enemies, so that they had dominion over them. **Yet when they turned and cried to you, you heard from heaven, and many times you delivered them according to your mercies.** **29** And you warned them in order to turn them back to your law. Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey your commandments, but sinned against your rules, which if a person does them, he shall live by them, and they turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not obey. **30** Many years you bore with them and warned them by your Spirit through your prophets. Yet they would not give ear. Therefore you gave them into the hand of the peoples of the lands. **31** Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

**32** “Now, therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, **who keeps covenant and steadfast love, let not all the hardship seem little to you** that has come upon us, upon our kings, our princes, our priests, our prophets, our fathers, and all your people, since the time of the kings of Assyria until this day. **33** Yet you have been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly. **34** Our kings, our princes, our priests, and our fathers have not kept your law or paid attention to your commandments and your warnings that you gave them. **35** Even in their own kingdom, and amid your great goodness that you gave them, and in the large and rich land that you set before them, they did not serve you or turn from their wicked works. **36** Behold, we are slaves this day; in the land that you gave to our fathers to enjoy its fruit and its good gifts, behold, we are slaves. **37** And its rich yield goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sins. They rule over our bodies and over our livestock as they please, and we are in great distress.

**38**° “**Because of all this we make a firm covenant in writing;** on the sealed document are the names of our princes, our Levites, and our priests.

3. In the Ezra’s thanksgiving,
  - 3-1. the whole story or the Redemption of Israel as proclaimed in the Bible was summed up in praise,
  - 3-2. the people thus created by God was dedicated anew to him,
  - 3-3. and a petition was made for a future and final intervention of God by which he would accomplish the work he had begun and himself bring to perfection the offering of the people.
4. Now these characteristics of Ezra’s prayer endure as conspicuous features of the worship of the synagogues and prepare directly for the worship of Christians.
5. Let us therefore distinguish them with more precision and see how they appear in the Jewish liturgy.
  - 5-1. First of all, the thanksgiving is pronounced not by anybody, but by the head of the people and their divinely appointed representatives.
  - 5-2. Secondly, the thanksgiving comes as the culmination of the whole service, after the Word of God has been heard, at the point where, in more

## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

ancient times, **the sacrifices of the covenant had to be offered**; and the thanksgiving makes explicit reference to these sacrifices.

**5-3-** And thirdly, as to the content and form of the eucharistic prayer, the thanksgiving itself, we can observe three features:

- i. the way in which it **embraces in a single view all that God has done in the course of history** for his People as being the single act of the one God, and, particularly, the way in which this prayer unites a commemoration of creation with that of the redemptive intervention by which Israel was brought out of Egypt;
- ii. the very strong expression of the fact that the people, acknowledging by their praise that all that it has and is comes from God, not only must **"give thanks"** to him for all his gifts in a more or less solemn fashion, but also, through this very thanksgiving, is to **dedicate its whole life** and being to its Creator and Redeemer;
- iii. the very characteristic way in which the prayer ends by **asking God himself to achieve what he has begun**, that is, clearly to make that new intervention in history which will be the New Covenant promised by Jeremias and Ezekiel, in which the law of God will be written in the very hearts of his People.

6. Let us now follow, therefore, the development of this type of eucharistic prayer in the Jewish liturgy as it was to be known and carried out by our Lord himself.

### Worship in the synagogues

7. The morning service of the synagogue, the commemoration of God's action on behalf of his people throughout their history, centered on the *Shema Israel*, that is, a passage from Deuteronomy 6.4-13:

**4**“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. **5**You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. **6**And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. **7**You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. **8**You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. **9**You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

**10**“And when the LORD your God brings you into the land that he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you—with great and good cities that you did not build, **11**and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and when you eat and are full, **12**then take care lest you forget the LORD, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. **13**It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear

8. The president of the assembly introduced this summary of the Word of God with this versicle:

"Praise the Lord, worthy of all praise,"

## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

- 8.1. To which the people answered:  
"Praised be the Lord, worthy of all praise forever."
- 8.2. Then the president exclaimed:  
"Truly right, faithful and unshakeable, just, and trustworthy, lovable and pleasing, precious and full of delight, reverend and magnificent, assured and proved, useful and salutary, is that promise in our favour, always and forever".
- 8.3. Then he proceeded from the thought of the Word which had been proclaimed to the actual thanksgiving, saying  
His ministers stand in the high places and reverently proclaim with a loud voice the order of the living God, the King of the world, all beloved, all elected, all powerful. All perfectly and reverently fulfil the commandment of their Creator, and all in holiness opening their mouths dedicated to psalmody and canticles, praise and exalt, magnify and worship, sanctify and glorify the name of the Almighty, the great King, tremendous and all-powerful, the Holy! Everyone in his own rank performs the service of the heavenly kingdom and they excite one another to magnify the holiness of their Creator in joy and gladness. All of one accord pronounce the holy words and say reverently; Holy, holy, holy, the Lord Sabaoth! All the earth is full of His glory. The *Ophanim* and the holy *Hayoth* fly up with a great voice before the Seraphim and answer in their turn: Blessed be the glory of the Lord in the place of His dwelling."
- 8.4. In the same way, in the *Shemoneh Esreh*, the eighteen prayers in which the expectation of Israel is renewed every day, the president says:  
"We will hallow Thy Name on earth as it is in heaven, according to what has been written by Thy prophet: And they cry to one another, saying";
- 8.5. And this time the whole assembly answers:  
"Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Sabaoth, All the earth is full of His glory!"
- 8.6. Then the president adds:  
"Facing one another they say"
- 8.7. And the faithful answer:  
"Blessed be the glory of the Lord in the place of his dwelling."

### Liturgy of the meals

9. But it is perhaps not in the worship of the synagogue that we find the most typical and complete thanksgiving or eucharistic prayer of Judaism, but rather in the **liturgy for meals**.
- 9.1. [...] creation has been spoiled by evil, and God intervenes in history in order to re-establish his work in its primitive goodness.
- 9.2. Human life has been poisoned by sin even to death so the work of purifying us from our sin is like a new creation, a rebirth from death.
- 9.3. This is the reason for the insistence, in every mention of the saving acts of God in behalf of his people, on the fact that by means of his acts God has brought his People to the land flowing with milk and honey so that they could eat and drink and peacefully enjoy the life that God has given.



## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

9.4. The coming out of Egypt is like a return to Paradise. But since this is true, we see also that to eat is a sacred action for us because it is like being created anew, since all life comes from God.

9.5. And, more especially, to eat the bread and to drink the wine coming from the soil of the Holy Land is to be created by God in a new holiness.

9.6. What distinguishes the true Israelites in their eating from the Canaanites and all idolaters, is that they know and acknowledge that food and drink are God's gifts; to them they are no longer the products of natural agencies tainted by sin; they are the gifts of the grace of their Redeemer, who is also the Creator of all things.

10. We can, therefore, appreciate both the force and the deeply Jewish character of the thought which is expressed in om: of St. Paul's Pastoral epistles:

**1 Timothy 4.** **4**For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, **5**for **it is made holy** by the word of God and prayer.

10.1. This means that, through the Word of God and through thanksgiving which is its reflection in human heart, everything is restored to its original and holy condition of creaturehood, in its double relation to God and man.

10.2. This truth implies first that, in acknowledging through a thanksgiving, the truth and the reality of the Word of God, human beings discover anew the original meaning of creation, as a link of love between God and us.

10.3. But this sentence implies not only a perception of this by the human mind, but **a real event that is brought about by thanksgiving.**

10.4. The Word of God, accepted by the People of God and coming back to God from our lips giving thanks, actually **sanctifies (consecrates)** the creatures over which it is pronounced.

10.5. This thanksgiving is somewhat like Adam's giving of names to all creatures at the beginning. Human beings through the Word of God and their answer to that Word which proceeds from the Word itself, are made the priests of creation, and he re-consecrate it to its Creator.

11. And here we can grasp a most important point in Jewish thought.

11.1. in describing the action of our Lord in consecrating during the Roman liturgy it is said:

For on the night he was betrayed  
he himself took bread,  
and **giving you thanks he said the blessing,**  
broke the bread  
and gave it to his disciples, saying: This is my body...

11.2. This sentence well emphasizes the double aspect:

- i. the God-ward action. *Giving thanks*, from which follows
- ii. the world-ward action, *he said the blessing.*

11.3. These two words are used to translate only one single word, the Greek **eucharisteo** which itself is a translation of the Hebrew **barak**. To the Hebrew mind, to *bless* anything and to pronounce a *thanksgiving* over it are not two actions but one.

## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

- 11.4.** It is the *thanksgiving*, that is to say, the acknowledgment of God's own creative Word made over the things which that self-same Word had created, which fills these things with the heavenly blessing.
- 11.5.** And from this fact follows the character of consecration which was ascribed to the thanksgiving, to the *eucharist* as pronounced over a meal, and, more especially, to the Word of God as it echoed from the human heart in that prayer.
- 12.** It is only with all these ideas in mind that we can understand all the implications that the Book of Leviticus had for Jewish people.
- 12.1.** All its regulations meant to them the acknowledgment through God's Word that every creature is sacred,
- 12.2.** and that no creature can nourish the true life of human beings unless they explicitly recognize in it the gift of God.
- 13.** More especially, and explicitly, the **Passover meal**
- 13.1.** from having the primitive significance common to all agricultural feasts connected with the return of Spring, of a partaking in the energies of nature in their circle of renewal after death
- 13.2.** took on for the Hebrew a new meaning, that of the deliverance from Egypt, as marking the new creation and the new and sanctified life which was to follow it for the people.
- 14.** [...] What began as a half-magical adoration of the powers of nature, as seen in their perpetual alternation of life and death, becomes, in the Jewish rites, through God's Word and our thanksgiving,
- 14.1.** the highest act of faith,
- 14.2.** our recognition of God's intervention which has once and for all renewed us and the world, which has condemned idolatry and redeemed us at once from the bondage of idols and the slavery of death. [...]
- 15.** The Passover meal, although it was certainly a sacrifice of the whole nation (since all the Paschal lambs had to be slain at the same time and the same place), was nevertheless eminently a **family meal**. [...]
- 16.** The first rite consisted in the solemn **breaking of bread** by the head of the family or the president of the community, accompanied by the **blessing**:
- "Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, King of all eternity, who didst make the earth produce bread."
- 16.1.** It is at this point that Our Lord, before he distributed the bread to his disciples must have added: "This is my body which is being given for you; do this in remembrance of me."
- 16.2.** Through these words, the true Lamb of God, like the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah's prophecy, gave his life for us. Afterwards, therefore, it would not be the fruit of this earth only that the disciples were to eat, but the true bread of heaven given them in the flesh of the **Word made flesh**.
- 17.** [...] when the meal comes to an end, the **last cup** was to be blessed very solemnly by

## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

the father or president, and this blessing was the eucharist, the thanksgiving par excellence. [...]

18. The president then said:

"Let us give thanks to the Lord our God"

18.1. The others answered:

"Blessed be the name of the Lord, now and forever"

18.2. The president continued:

"With your agreement we shall bless him who gave us to partake of his own goods,"

18.3. and the others added

"It is through his goodness that we live."

19. Then the officiant alone said the great eucharistic prayer"

**Blessed be Thou**, o Lord our God, King of all eternity, Thou Who dost feed the whole world by Thy goodness, Thy grace, Thy mercy and Thy tender compassion. Thou dost give to all flesh its food, for Thy mercy endures for ever. Through Thy great goodness, **food has never failed us**: may it never fail us, for the love of Thy great name, for Thou dost provide for and sustain everything that has life; to all Thou doest good, and Thou dost provide with food every creature that Thou hast created. Blessed be Thou, o Lord, Who givest this food to all things.

Blessed be Thou, o Lord, because Thou hast given to our fathers as **an inheritance a vast, good and desirable land**; and because Thou hast brought us, o Lord, out of Egypt, and delivered us from the house of bondage; and also for Thy covenant which Thou hast sealed in our flesh, for Thy Law which Thou hast taught, for Thy statutes which Thou hast made known to us: for the life grace and mercy which Thou hast poured out on us, and for the food with which Thou dost feed and sustain us always, every day and at all times and hours. For all this, o Lord our God, we give Thee thanks and we bless Thee. Blessed be Thy Name from the mouth of all the living, now and forever, according to what is written: Thou shalt eat and be filled, and Thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He has given thee. Blessed be Thou, o Lord, for this food and for that land.

**Have mercy**, o Lord our God, on Israel Thy people, on Jerusalem Thy city, on Sion the dwelling of Thy glory, on the Kingdom of the house of David, Thine anointed, and on the great and holy house which has been called by Thy name. O God our Father, feed us, maintain us, sustain us, support us, relieve us, and grant us soon, Lord our God, that we should not need the gifts of men or their alms, but only the gifts of Thy helping hand, which is always full, open, holy and giving freely, so that we might not be ashamed or confounded forever....

19.1. Here we notice once more

- i. the link between the **creation** and the Passover,
- ii. and we see how the **redemption** of Israel from Egypt was interpreted as a new creation of the people,



## SHARP FAITH

SUNDAY THEOLOGY TALKS AT SAINT THOMAS CHURCH FIFTH AVENUE, NYC

- iii. how the life to be found in the **promised land** was seen as a restoration of primitive life, in its holiness together with its joy of thanksgiving.
- 19.2. And we can understand how it was that Our Lord was to insert just at this point, when the prayer passed from a commemoration of the past to a pleading for a new intervention of the saving God, his announcement of the new and definitive Passover. Then he could conclude with the prayer for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the restoration of the house of God, to be brought about in the resurrection of his own body, and give the cup to His disciples, saying:
- “All of you drink of this: for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is being shed for you and for many”.
- 19.3. Thus in the final thanksgiving of the preparatory covenant, Our Lord established the beginning of the new and eternal one, through his self-offering which was consummated the next day on the cross.
20. And when the disciples met again
- 20.1. to break the bread a bless cup of blessing” (1 Cor 10.16), as Paul still calls it, following the technical terminology of the Jewish liturgy,
  - 20.2. they knew that the risen Lord was with them,
  - 20.3. that in his apostles he was now again re-enacting what he had done once or all, that in him, through them, was nou g
  - 20.4. the almighty and all-creative Word of God was nourishing with the true bread of heaven the new "Qahal," the new family of God, and making one body of all those who had now eaten the bread.
21. Here we see how the Christian Mystery, in its very ritual celebration, proceeds directly from the proclamation, the *kerigma*, of God's word in its fullness in Christ.
22. Through our thanksgiving now performed in humanity by the Word of God itself, in the proclamation of Christ's death the human life,
- 22.1. the human world by which we must be nourished [symbolically represented by bread and wine],
  - 22.2. is consecrated and sanctified so that it becomes, in the thanksgiving itself, the human body of the eternal Word.
  - 22.3. It becomes that body in which God's love is not only revealed but incarnate and poured forth through death to be a well-spring of divine life for men, so that all of them may become one body in Christ to the glory of the Father.
23. From all that we have said, we can already see clearly the pattern of the Christian Eucharist, not only as a whole but in all its organic details not only as a whole but in all its organic details, developed from the pattern of the Jewish eucharist.

Louis Bouyer, “From *Qahal* to *ecclesia* », in *Life of the Liturgy*

Exodus 19 - 24 Covenant of Sinai	2 Kings 23 Josiah's religious reform	Nehemiah 8 - 10	Acts 2 : 42	Definition of liturgy
The multitude escaped from Egypt is summoned to Sinai by the Word of God.	The People are convened by the Word of God rediscovered by the priest in the sanctuary.	After the Exile, Ezra summons the Qahal and reads the Word of God.	Through the teaching of the Apostles, Jesus himself, Word incarnate, summons the People of God. The Word of God is no longer heard through prophets, but God himself speaks in Christ.	Meeting of the People of God gathered by the convocation of the Word of God through the apostolic ministry
Solemn proclamation of the Word of God, in a context of praise, adoration, supplication (especially the Ten Commandments)	Solemn reading of Deuteronomy.	Reading of the Word of God	Once it has listened to the Word, the community responds to it with prayers inherited from the synagogue,	so that this People, becoming aware of their gathering, can listen to the Word of God in Christ
The Word is accepted by the People and this acceptance constitutes the pact or Alliance between God and his People	After the reading the People accept the Word in jubilant praise and prayer and in so doing renews the Covenant			can adhere to this Word through prayer and praise in which the Word is proclaimed
But the alliance is not considered ratified until a sacrifice has concluded the meeting.	The renewal of the covenant is ratified by a solemn celebration of the fundamental sacrifice, the celebration of Passover.	<p><b><i>A new element:</i></b></p> <p><b>no sacrifice, because there is no Temple. Vow to celebrate a sacrifice once the temple has been rebuilt. In place of the sacrifice, Ezra offers a solemn Eucharistic prayer:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thanksgiving for the past</li> <li>• supplication for the future, imploring God to carry out his own purpose.</li> </ul>	<p>committing ourselves to this Word in the great Eucharistic prayer of the breaking of bread.</p> <p>In continuity with Jewish thanksgiving, this acquires a new meaning in Christ who seals the New Covenant in his blood.</p>	And thus seal by the Eucharistic sacrifice the Covenant accomplished by this same Word
Through this process those who fled Egypt are no longer simply a crowd but become the People of God, by and for the Word of God				And it is through this Word made flesh, to which we communicate by receiving on bread, that we become one body.