

Series on the Mass, Part 44: The Canon, Unde et Memores

January 3, 2021

The prayer immediately after the consecration begins with a recollection: "Therefore, Lord, in memory of the blessed passion of the same Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, of His resurrection from among the dead, and His ascension to heavenly glory". This expression of the memory recalls the last words of the consecration "do this in memory of Me". The Eucharist is a memory (but not a simple memory, rather a re-actualization) of the passion, the resurrection and the ascension of our Savior. The mention of the passion recalls our Lord's sacrifice whereby He conquered sin and death for us.

The mention of the resurrection recalls His victory over sin and death and the ascension recalls the reconciliation with the Father. "We Thy servants", the priest and his ministers, and "Thy holy people", meaning all the faithful, belong to God since the time of our baptism and, for the priest, in a particular way, since his ordination. Together we form the people of God as Israel did in times past.

We present to His Divine Majesty the offering from among the gifts He has given us, since all we have comes from Him. Here we present to Him the sacrifice of Calvary and our union to it with our own sacrifices and graces that God has given us. We are before God as little children who can only offer to their parents what the parents have given them. We need to realize this more and more each day so that we can become as little children (Matt. 18:3), like St. Teresa the Little Flower lived her life.

The priest then calls the Host on the altar the Victim perfect, holy and spotless, the holy Bread of everlasting life and the Chalice of everlasting salvation. We offer to God the only Victim that is perfect and worthy of Him, namely His own Son. We will eat of this Victim so that we may have eternal life and salvation. The priest makes signs of the cross over the consecrated host during this prayer, not to bless it, since it is blessed already through the consecration and transubstantiation, but as a means of piously pointing to the Victim that our prayer is mentioning at that time.

Sincerely in Christ,

Rev. Charles Van Vliet, FSSP
Pastor, Regina Caeli Parish