

# The Eucharist as a Way of Life

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## Opening Activity

What pre-All Souls experiences of the Eucharist have you had?

What theologies of the Eucharist were you taught?

How did those impact your life?

## Known by many names...

The Lord's Supper, Communion, Holy Communion, Sacrament of the Altar, Mass, Divine Liturgy, Eucharist from *εὐχαριστία* (eucharistia)

## 1. Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion on the Eucharist

### XXV. OF THE SACRAMENTS

Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

The Sacraments were not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same they have a wholesome effect or operation: but they that receive them unworthily purchase to themselves damnation, as Saint Paul saith.

### XXVIII. OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another; but rather is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

## 2. The Metaphysics of Christ's Presence in the Eucharist

A spectrum of views...

- Corporeal Mode
  - Roman manner
    - Roman - annihilation
    - Roman - transubstantiation (official Roman Catholic)
  - German manner (broadly Lutheran, Orthodox, some Anglicans)
    - German - consubstantiation
    - German - impanation
- Pneumatic Mode
  - Transignification manner (modern Roman Catholic)
  - Instrumentalism manner (Calvinian - Reformed)
  - Parallelism manner (Cranmer/ some Anglicans)
- Normal Mode
  - Memorialism manner (Zwinglian - Reformed, Baptist, Free, Evangelical, Pentecostal)
  - No Supper manner (Quaker, Salvationist)

## 3. The Eucharistic Life *via* Alexander Schmemmann's *For the Life of the World*

We are all priests

"*Homo sapiens*', '*homo faber*' ... yes, but, first of all, '*homo adorans*'. The first and basic definition of man [*sic*] is that he is the priest' (15).

"[The human] stands in the center of the world and unifies it in his act of blessing God, of both receiving the world from God and offering it to God—and by filling the world with this eucharist, he transforms his life, the one that he receives from the world, into life in God, into communion with Him. The world was created as the 'matter,' the material of one all-embracing eucharist, and man was created as the priest of this cosmic sacrament" (15).

Offering thanksgiving

"To bless [...] is to give thanks. In and through thanksgiving, man [*sic*] acknowledges the true nature of things he receives from God, and thus makes them to be what they are. We bless and sanctify things when we offer them to God in a Eucharistic movement of our whole being" (73).

Distinguishing

"Now, in the Bible a name is infinitely more than a means to distinguish one thing from another. It reveals the very essence of a thing, or rather its essence as God's gift. To name a thing is to manifest the meaning and value God gave it, to know it as coming from God and to know its place and function within the cosmos created by God. To name a thing, in other words, is to bless God for it and in it" (15).