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Sacrament of Unity and Love

St. Fulgentius of Ruspe, bishop



This excerpt from a book addressed to Monimus (Lib. 2, 11-12: CCL 91, 46-48) by Saint Fulgentius of Ruspe, bishop, treats beautifully of the relationship between the Church and the sacrament of the Eucharist, the sacrament of unity and charity (agape or caritas) leading to spiritual fellowship (Greek koinonia and Latin communio). It is used in the Roman Catholic Office of Readings for Tuesday of the 2nd week of Easter with the accompanying biblical reading of Revelation 2:1-11.

The spiritual building up of the body of Christ is achieved through love. As Saint Peter says: *Like living stones you are built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.* And there can be no more effective way to pray for this spiritual growth than for the Church, itself Christ's body, to make the offering of his body and blood in the sacramental form of bread and wine. *For the cup we drink is a participation [Greek koinonia; Latin communio] in the blood of Christ, and the bread we break is a participation in the body of Christ. Because there is one loaf, we who are many are one body, since we all share the same bread.* And so we pray that, by the same grace which made the Church Christ's body, all its members may remain firm in the unity of that body through the enduring bond of love.

We are right to pray that this may be brought about in us through the gift of the one Spirit of the Father and the Son. The holy Trinity, the one true God, is of its nature unity, equality and love, and by one divine activity sanctifies its adopted sons. That is why Scripture says that *God's love has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit he has given us.* The Holy Spirit, who is the one Spirit of the Father and the Son, produces in those to whom he gives the grace of divine adoption the same effect as he produced among those whom the Acts of the Apostles describes as having received the Holy Spirit. We are told that *the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul*, because the one Spirit of the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is one God, had created a single heart and soul in all those who believed.

This is why Saint Paul in his exhortation to the Ephesians says that this spiritual

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unity in the bond of peace must be carefully preserved. *I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, he writes, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, with all humility and meekness and with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit.*

God makes the Church itself a sacrifice pleasing in his sight by preserving within it the love which his Holy Spirit has poured out. Thus the grace of that spiritual love is always available to us, enabling us continually to offer ourselves to God as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to him for ever.

The Fathers of the Church - Who They Are and Why They Matter

If you are not familiar with the Fathers of the Early Church, Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio, in this single, upbeat talk, full of examples and stories about some of the Church's most intriguing personalities. Marcellino D'Ambrosio explains who people are talking about when they refer to the "Fathers of the Church" or "Early Church Fathers. Though the ranks of the fathers include a tremendous variety of cultures, locales, and personalities, there is surprising consensus that emerges from them on a variety of the most important questions of our day. In this talk, Marcellino makes clear just how much these figures have to teach us today.



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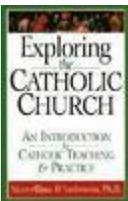


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The Catholic Church has always emphasized how important the seven sacraments are for our lives. Yet many take these 7 sacraments for granted. With little understanding of the sacraments, many are simply going through the motions. This CD set will give you new insight into the meaning of these seven unique embraces of divine love that will unlock the power of the sacraments in your life!

Getting More Out of the Mass-

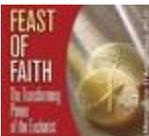
Is Christ really present in the Mass? This dynamic and entertaining talk explains what is meant by the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and how to unlock the transforming power of the Mass in your life.



Exploring the Catholic Church

Exploring the Catholic Church: An Introduction to Catholic Teaching and Practice by Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio is an accessible, affordable Roman Catholic Book--perfect gift for anyone!! -- the inactive Catholic, the Sunday Catholic wanting to know more, Protestants who want to know why Catholics do what they do. This makes the perfect gift for anyone in RCIA!!

Feast of Faith DVD & Workbook



The Eucharist is truly a feast and in this enlightening, four-part series developed to help Catholics and those becoming Catholics understand and appreciate the Eucharist. Dr. D'Ambrosio offers profound reflections and practical suggestions to make the Holy Eucharist more truly the **“source and summit”** of our Christian experience.