

7 Preparation of the Gifts Fr Jerome

Building on what we explored during the liturgy of the word, we're going to go deeper with what it means to say that "The *Word of God* IS ALWAYS *becoming more and more flesh*... while *Flesh* IS ALWAYS becoming more and more *Word*..."

You see, there is a *Silent language of exchange* that exists between THE GIFTS OF BREAD AND WINE along with the offering that's been collected from the worshiping community in order to be placed before God's Holy Altar.

First thing to notice is that it's the BAPTIZED WHO ARE BRINGING UP THE GIFTS - gifts that represent our life's work – don't just see the bread and wine as bread and wine, see how every single life along with all of creation is being brought up in those gifts.

CAPTURE THIS - because this is huge! For bread and wine to exist, two things are necessary: THE NATURAL ELEMENTS OF CREATION *combined with* HUMAN BEINGS. What I mean by that is this: Bread and wine don't just grow out from the ground, *WHEAT* grows from the ground, *GRAPES* grow from the ground.

For bread and wine to exist, 2 things are involved with the making of these elements. The **cosmos** and **history**. The cosmos means the whole of the created order is involved with the making of bread - and history is a human reality. Dogs, horses and cows do not have history, **history is a human reality** and it is what humans cause to happen in the world.

The bread comes from both of these realities functioning together (from human beings functioning together with nature). THERE IS BREAD BECAUSE THERE IS WHEAT, AND THERE IS WHEAT BECAUSE SOMEBODY PLANTED IT AND THEN HARVESTED IT. IF IT HAS GROWN, IT IS BECAUSE SEASONS HAVE PASSED, AND THE SUN CAME OUT AND THE TEMPERATURE WAS RIGHT AND THERE WAS ENOUGH WATER AND ALL THE REST.

Much the same could be said about wine. And that's why we need to *SEE* contained within the bread and wine being brought up THE ENTIRETY OF OUR WORLD – that is nature and humanity – in our brokenness and poverty. And we're bringing it all up here for one purpose!

That purpose being: *TRANSFORMATION*...

When the priest lifts up the bread and wine on behalf of the community before God the Father, it's as though he is saying to Jesus Christ: "Lord, 'make our work, our lives, and our world say to the Father what you said with your work, your life, and with *Your Crucified Body*...'"

Why are we doing all this?? Because, OUR ORDINARY LIVES, without the Spirit from Above, remain just like the lifeless body of our Lord in the tomb, just like the ORDINARY bread and wine brought to the altar prior to consecration:

...DEAD THINGS...

Present to the eyes of others – and yet, unable to reflect the Glory of Heaven. But once *OUR ORDINARY LIVES* are invaded, become POSSESSED by the Spirit, like the bread and wine on the altar of sacrifice do, then we become charged with *the Divine*.

But in order for all that to happen, we need GOD'S HELP!!

And that's why we cry out in unison with all the Angels and Saints in Heaven: "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD, God of Power and Might..."

At that moment, countless Angels surround us as our space and time intersects with the heart of the ETERNAL HOUR that NEVER PASSES – namely Christ's OFFERING of HIMSELF on the CROSS for the Salvation of the World!

At this moment, we are standing on the edge of what it means that we, made in the image and likeness of God, are about to literally become more and more the living word by the power of his spirit.

The gifts brought up to the altar by the baptized say all of these things in a silent language that can only be captured by the ears of the heart.