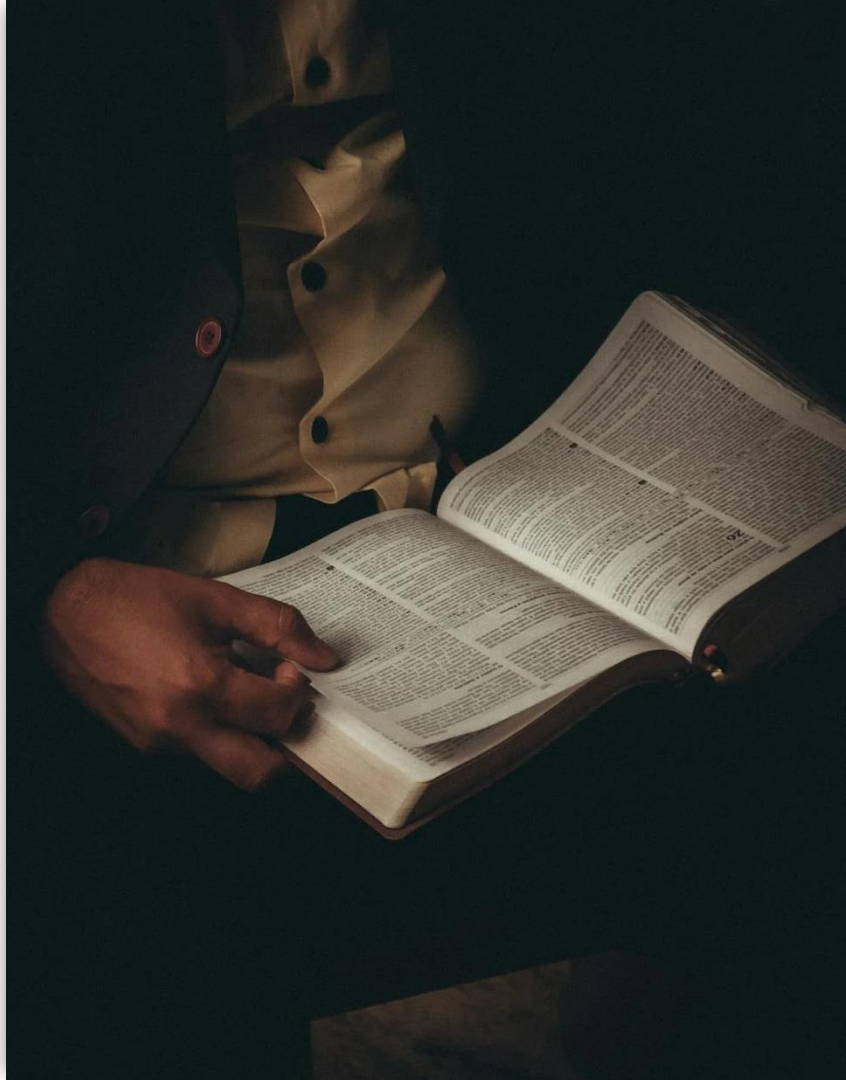

The Sacraments of Initiation: Eucharist



Scripture Readings

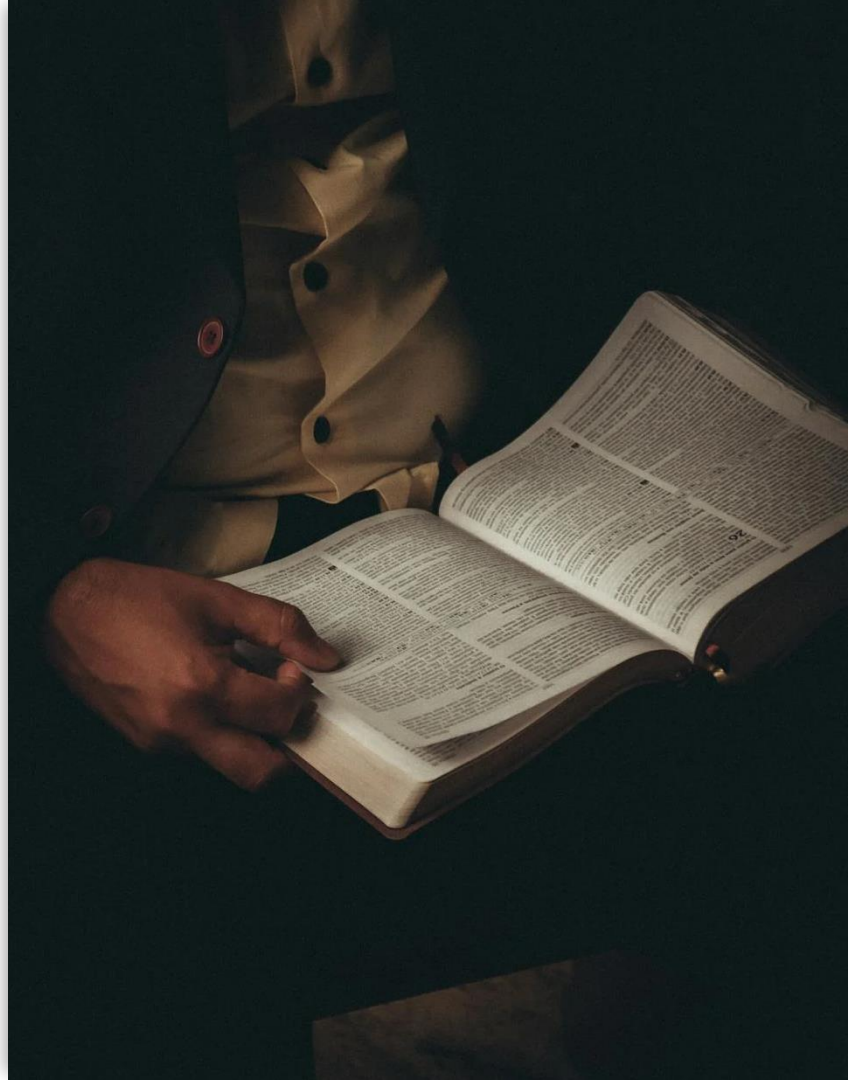
2 Kings 5:14–17: Naaman obeys Elisha, bathes seven times in the Jordan, and is cleansed of leprosy. He returns to give thanks and professes faith in the Lord, asking to take earth from Israel so he may worship the Lord henceforth.

2 TIMOTHY 2:8–13: Paul exhorts Timothy to remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead. Endurance with Christ leads to life and reigning with him; even if we are faithless, Christ remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself.



Scripture Readings

Luke 17:11–19: Ten lepers are healed as they go in obedience; only one, a Samaritan, returns to glorify God and give thanks. Jesus highlights gratitude and faith: “Your faith has made you well.”



Summary of the Readings

All three readings reveal that God's saving work invites a response of obedient faith and grateful worship. Naaman's cleansing prefigures sacramental healing and conversion that flows from trust in God's word. Paul ties endurance in suffering to communion with Christ's Paschal Mystery—dying and rising with him. The ten lepers show that healing calls for thanksgiving: faith flowers into Eucharist, literally thanksgiving.



What is the Eucharist?

CCC1328 ...Eucharist, because it is an action of thanksgiving to God. The Greek words *eucharistein* and *eulogein* recall the Jewish blessings that proclaim - especially during a meal - God's works: creation, redemption, and sanctification.

CCC1327 In brief, the Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: "Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking."

THE EUCHARIST AND CHRISTIAN INITIATION

- The Eucharist completes initiation (Baptism → Confirmation → Eucharist) and ushers us into full communion with the Church.
- From the earliest centuries, the newly baptised were immediately admitted to the Eucharistic table.
- The order of initiation highlights that the Eucharist is both goal and source of Christian life.

Socratic Questions

Why is the Eucharist considered the climax of initiation?

If Baptism gives new life and Confirmation strengthens it, what distinct grace does the Eucharist give?

‘SUMMIT AND FOUNTAIN’ OF THE CHURCH’S LIFE

- The Eucharist is the Church’s highest worship (‘summit’) and inexhaustible source of grace (‘fountain’).
- We worship not primarily from fear or mere duty, but in grateful love—‘eucharistia’ means thanksgiving.
- All apostolic works flow to and from the Eucharistic celebration.

Socratic Questions

What does it mean that the Eucharist is the ‘summit and fountain’ of the Church’s life?

Why is thanksgiving essential to Eucharistic worship?

INSTITUTION NARRATIVE

- At the Last Supper, Jesus took bread and wine, gave thanks, and declared them his Body and Blood.
- He commanded: “Do this in memory of me,” entrusting the Church with a perpetual memorial.
- The earliest witness (1 Cor 11:23–26) shows how the first Christians obeyed this command.

Socratic Questions

What does ‘Do this in memory of me’ mean in biblical terms?

Why are bread and wine fitting signs?

PLEDGE OF THE KINGDOM

- Early Christians saw the Eucharist as a foretaste of the messianic banquet and Christ's return.
- Each Mass proclaims the Lord's death 'until he comes' —the Eucharist orients us toward the Kingdom.

Socratic Questions

How does the Eucharist look forward, not only backward?

What does this hope change in our present discipleship?

Via Pulchritudinis

🌟 Caravaggio — *Supper at Emmaus* (1601)
Location: The National Gallery, London, UK
Medium: Oil on canvas
Dimensions: 141 × 196.2 cm

Caravaggio's *Supper at Emmaus* captures the instant the disciples recognise the risen Christ "in the breaking of the bread." Chiaroscuro light falls on Christ's blessing and the simple loaf, while startled gestures and an empty place at table draw us in—making the ordinary meal blaze with sacramental presence, revelation, and thanksgiving that points directly to the Eucharist.



MEMORIAL MEAL

- Instituted during Passover, the Eucharist fulfils and transforms Israel's memorial of liberation.
- In Christ, the new covenant is sealed; his Body given and Blood poured out are re-presented sacramentally.

Socratic Questions

In what sense is the Mass a memorial?

How does Passover illuminate the Eucharist?

EUCCHARIST AS SACRIFICE

- The Mass is not a new sacrifice but the sacramental re-presentation of Calvary's once-for-all offering.
- We are drawn into Christ's self-offering to the Father in the Holy Spirit—our lives become a living sacrifice.

Socratic Questions

Why isn't the Mass a 're-sacrifice' of Christ?

How do we participate in the sacrifice?

THE REAL PRESENCE

- Catholic faith confesses that, after the Eucharistic Prayer, the bread and wine truly become Christ's Body and Blood.
- This change (traditionally termed 'transubstantiation') affirms a real sacramental presence, received by faith.
- Christ is present in four ways at Mass: in the assembly, in the minister, in the Word, and most profoundly in the Eucharistic species.

Socratic Questions

How is Christ 'really present' in the Eucharist?

Why does this presence matter pastorally?

A COMMUNITY EVENT

- The Eucharist is celebrated by the Church gathered; it builds and manifests ecclesial communion.
- Sharing the one Bread makes us one Body; charity and reconciliation are integral to authentic celebration.

Socratic Questions

What does 'one bread, one body' demand of us?

Why is active participation important?

PERFECT LOVE AND MISSION

- Through the Eucharist we offer perfect praise with Christ and are sent to love as we have received.
- All ministry flows from (and returns to) the altar — Eucharist shapes a missionary Church.

Socratic Questions

How does the Eucharist 'send' us?

What daily practice helps Eucharistic life take root?



Closing Prayer

Soul of Christ (Anima Christi)

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.

Body of Christ, save me.

Blood of Christ, inebriate me.

Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.

O good Jesus, hear me.

Within thy wounds hide me.

Suffer me not to be separated from thee.

From the malicious enemy defend me.

In the hour of my death call me,

and bid me come unto thee,

that with thy saints I may praise thee

for ever and ever. Amen.