

The Lamb's Supper

Discussion Questions for Part I, Chapters 3-4

1. What do you find most interesting about the early accounts of the Mass?
2. The rituals of Israel, the Passover Seder and the *todah* sacrifice, prefigured our celebration of the Mass. Consider each of these and identify their implications and emphases. How might they influence our prayer and worship today?
3. If you could travel back in time, do you think you would know what to do at a first- or second-century Mass? Would a first-or second-century Christian know what to do at your parish this Sunday?
4. The pagans of the ancient world thought the Mass was an act of ritual cannibalism. How is the Mass commonly misunderstood today?
5. The Mass has survived for two thousand years with its basic form intact. It is one of very few institutions that have survived that long. What, do you think, has enabled it to endure while civilizations have risen and fallen?
6. Why do you suppose the *Catechism*, published in 1994, used a text from A.D. 150 to describe the Mass today? Why not just produce something new?
7. Do you sense a dramatic “flow” or development in the way the Mass proceeds? If you had to outline your experience of the Mass, what parts would you highlight? Why?
8. From the New Testament onward, the Church has always observed the Mass in two parts: The Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Why do you think Jesus established it this way?
9. In what ways does the Mass engage your body and senses? What does this do for your spirit?
10. What does it mean to “consecrate the world itself to God”? How might this take place in the Mass?
11. As you read this chapter, did you learn anything new about told familiar parts of the Mass? If so, which parts?
12. What is your attitude toward ritual? What is your attitude toward spontaneity? Can a healthy spiritual life incorporate both? Should it?