



The Sacrament of The Eucharist



Luke 22: 19 Then Jesus took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which will be given for you; do this in memory of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which will be shed for you.

[**Corinthians 11: 23-27** For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord.

Jesus told his Apostles at the Last Supper to "do this in remembrance of me" and in so doing he ordained them to re-enact his action of blessing and distributing bread and wine with the words, "Take; this is my body" {Mark 14: 22}; "This is my blood..." {Mark 14: 24}.

John 6: 51, 54, 56 Jesus said: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live for ever;...he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life and... abides in me, and I in him."

VISIBLE SIGN / ACTION Bread and wine are offered in sacrifice on the altar.

THE EFFECT OF EUCHARIST By the consecration the **transubstantiation** of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is brought about. Under the consecrated species of bread and wine Christ himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner: his Body and his Blood, with his soul and his divinity. {CCC 1413}

For those who are properly disposed to it, the fruits of Holy Communion are:

- Augments our intimate union with Christ Jesus. {John 6: 56} {CCC 1391}
- Preserves, increases, and renews the life of grace received at Baptism. {CCC 1392}
- Separates us from sin and preserves us from future sins. {I Corinthians 11: 26} {CCC 1393-95}
- Strengthens our charity {love} and this living charity wipes away venial sins. {CCC 1394}
- By the same charity the Eucharist preserves us from future mortal sins. {CCC 1395}
- Expresses and strengthens the unity of the Church. {CCC 1396}
- Commits us to the poor. {CCC 1397}
- As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God. {CCC 1414, 1032}

GOD'S WORD Almost, if not all, the words of the liturgy of the Mass come directly from or are based on Sacred Scripture. There are four direct readings from the Bible at each Sunday and Solemn Holy Day Mass and three readings at weekday Masses and lesser Holy Days.

APPROPRIATE MINISTER A Catholic bishop or priest. Only validly ordained priests *and bishops* can preside at the Eucharist and consecrate the bread and the wine so that they become the Body and Blood of the Lord. {CCC 1411, CAN.900}

{see CCC 1322-1419 for a complete description of the Eucharist/Mass}



The Mass is a sustaining Sacrament and is offered every day of the year except Good Friday and Easter Eve during the day.

The Eucharist is the highest form of prayer because it is the best way to stay close to Jesus. {CCC 1324-27, 1405, 1407, CANs.897-898}

The Mass is the way in which God keeps the power and love of Jesus' death on the Cross present to human beings in every time and place. "*Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.*" Matthew 28: 20

A Christian is bound, out of need, to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist/Mass at least once a week on Sundays and on Holy Days of Obligation. We cannot live without spiritual food! It is a serious {mortal} sin to voluntarily miss Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation. {CCC 1389, 2042}

Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the Sacrament of Penance. {CCC 1415, CAN.916}

Eucharistic Fast We should fast from food and drink (water & medication are permitted) for one hour prior to receiving holy communion and show respect to the sacrament by our gestures and the way we dress. {CCC 1387, CAN.918}

Genuflection, that is, bending one knee to the ground, is the proper gesture one should make when approaching or passing by a tabernacle in which the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. {CCC 1378}

A person who has already received the Most Holy Eucharist can receive it a second time on the same day within a Mass in which the person participates. {CAN.917}

The Body of Christ present in the Eucharistic Bread is reserved in a tabernacle in the church so that it is available to take to the sick and so that the faithful can spend time in adoration in its presence. Pope Paul VI said, "To visit the Blessed Sacrament is ... a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord." {CCC 1418} *Page A Visit*

A candle or oil lamp is kept burning near a tabernacle when the Blessed Sacrament is present inside it. {CAN.940}

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament is a liturgical celebration during which the reserved Eucharist is exposed for worship and solemn veneration by the Christian faithful. The Eucharistic presence of Christ is displayed in what is called a monstrance, from the word *demonstrate*. The monstrance is used to display, expose, demonstrate the consecrated host. {CCC 1378, CAN.941-943}

The inexhaustible richness of this Sacrament is expressed in the different names we give it. Each name evokes certain aspects of it. It is called **Eucharist** (a Greek word meaning thanksgiving), the **Lord's Supper**, the **Breaking of Bread**, the **Eucharistic Assembly**, the **Memorial of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection**, the **Holy Sacrifice**, the **Holy Sacrifice of the Mass**, the **Sacrifice of Praise**, the **Spiritual Sacrifice**, the **Pure and Holy Sacrifice**, the **Holy and Divine Liturgy**, the **Sacred Mysteries**, the **Most Blessed Sacrament**, **Holy Communion**, **The Bread of Angels**, the **Bread from Heaven**, the **Medicine of Immortality**, **Viaticum** (means food for the journey) and the **Holy Mass** (*Missa*), because the liturgy in which the mystery of salvation is accomplished concludes with the sending forth (*missio*) of the faithful, so that they may fulfill God's will in their daily lives. {CCC 1328-1332}

Protestant churches have not preserved the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Holy Orders. It is for this reason that Eucharistic intercommunion with these communities is not possible for the Catholic Church. {CCC 1400}

How to Receive Holy Communion

When receiving Holy Communion, the communicant bows his or her head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence... {GIRM160}

The Priest raises the host slightly and shows it to each, saying, *The Body of Christ*. The communicant replies, *Amen*, and receives the Sacrament either on the tongue or, where this is allowed, in the hand. As soon as the communicant receives the host, he or she consumes the whole of it. {GIRM161}

When receiving Communion in the hand, the communicant should be guided by the words of St. Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386): "When you approach, take care not to do so with your hand stretched out and your fingers open or apart, but rather place your left hand as a throne beneath your right, as befits one who is about to receive the King. Then receive him, taking care that nothing is lost."

{#41 of Norms for the Distribution & Reception of Holy Communion under Both kinds in the Dioceses of the U.S.A.}

THE MASS and THE MISSION OF CHRIST'S CHURCH

The proclamation of the Gospel constitutes the Church's reason for being and her mission. (Benedict XVI) The Church does this principally and constantly by celebrating the Mass. The Mass is the proclamation of the Gospel.

The Mass begins with the SIGN OF THE CROSS professing belief in the Triune God and salvation by the one sacrifice of Our Lord on the cross. (Phil. 2:5-11) This is the very heart of the Gospel.

GREETING is taken from the greetings in the Epistles of St. Paul (1 Cor. 1:3; Rom. 1:7; Gal. 1:3; Phil. 1:2; Col. 1:2)

SENTENTIAL RITE: "Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy" is the prayer of the blind man on the road to Jericho (Luke 8:38), the humble prayer of the Publican in the Temple (Luke 18:14) and the pleading prayer of the ten lepers. (Luke 17:15)

GLORIA is the song of the angels at the birth of the Lord. "And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.'" (Luke 2: 13-14)

LITURGY OF THE WORD begins with a reading from the Old Testament. The Responsorial psalm is from the Book of Psalms. On Sundays and Solemnities there is also a reading from the New Testament and then a reading from one of the Gospels.

OMILY is an explanation of the Scripture Readings and application of them to our daily lives. "Were not our hearts burning within us while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:32)

CREED is a profession of faith in the principle truths of the Bible. "This summary of the faith was not composed at man's whim; the most important sections were chosen from the whole of Scripture to constitute and complete a comprehensive statement of the faith." (St. Cyril, 4th century)

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL is our response to the Lord's command, "Ask and you will receive" (Matt. 7:7) "If you ask anything of me in my name, I will do it." (John 14:14)

PREFACE ends with the Hosanna that the crowds welcomed Jesus with on his entry into Jerusalem. "On the next day when the great crowd that had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem they took palm branches and went out to meet him and cried out, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'" (John 12:12-13)

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST is the fulfillment of our Lord's promise (John 6) and his last will and testament at the Last Supper. "Take this all of you and eat it. This is my body which will be given up for you." Then he took some wine that was left over, poured it into the cup, blessed it, and gave it to his apostles saying, "Take this all of you and drink from it. This is the cup of my blood which will be shed for you and for all, so that sins may be forgiven." Then Jesus commanded them to, "Do this in memory of me." This is the way the Lord wanted to be remembered. (Matthew 26:26-28) (Mark 14:22-24) (Luke 22:14-20) (1 Cor. 11:23-26)

"OUR FATHER" is the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. (Matthew 6: 9-13) It has been called a resume of the entire Gospel.

PEACE BE WITH YOU was the constant greeting of Jesus throughout his life. "On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked for fear of the Jews Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, 'Peace be with you.'" (John 20:19)

BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD who takes away the sins of the world. These are the words of John the Baptist pointing out Jesus to the crowd. (John 1:29)

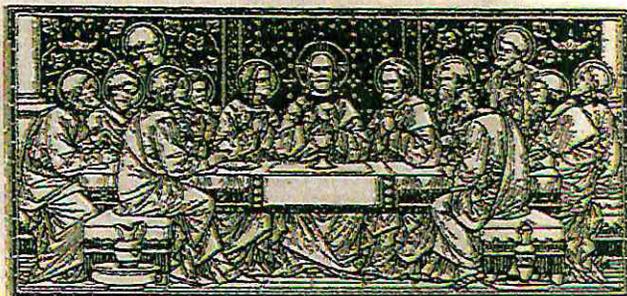
LORD I AM NOT WORTHY is the confession of the Centurion on the healing of his servant. "Lord, I am not worthy to have you enter under my roof; only say the word and my servant will be healed." (Matthew 8:8)

COMMUNION: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." (John 6:51) "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes." (1 Cor. 11:26)

DISMISSAL "GO AND ANNOUNCE THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD."

From beginning to end, the Mass is the proclamation of the Gospel. The Mass begins by accepting the invitation of Jesus, "Follow me" (John 1:43) So we assemble together as DISCIPLES to hear the Word of God in the Scriptures and to receive the Word of God in the Eucharist. Then we leave as APOSTLES. "Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations. (Matthew 28:19)

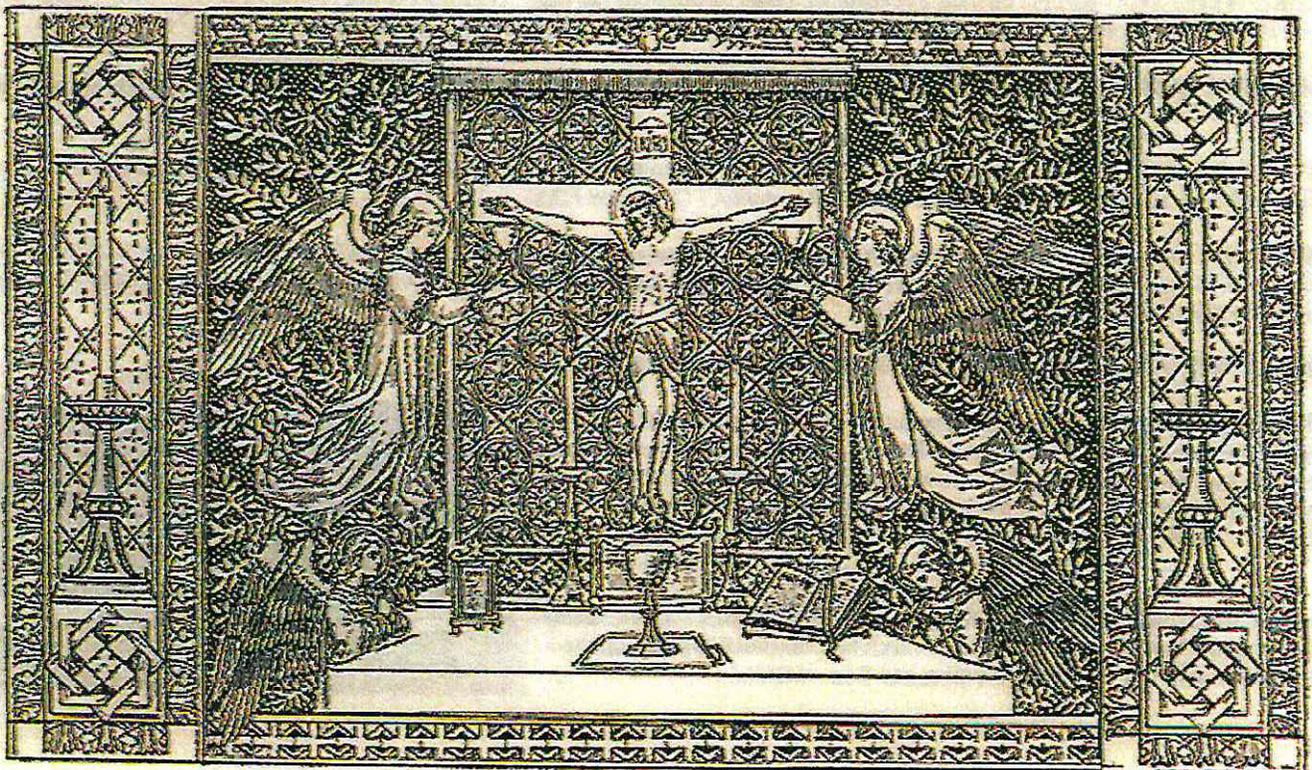
Because of the different time zones in the world several Masses are celebrated every minute of the day. This enables the Church to constantly proclaim the Gospel and thus fulfill her reason for being and her mission.



How Do We Know Our Form of Worship is The Correct One?

CCC 1345 As early as the second century we have the witness of St. Justin Martyr for the basic lines of the order of the Eucharistic celebration. They have stayed the same until our own day for all the great liturgical families. St. Justin wrote to the pagan emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161 A.D.) around the year 155, explaining what Christians did:

Gathering Rite	⇨ On the day we call the day of the sun, all who dwell in the city or country gather in the same place.
Liturgy of The Word	
Readings	⇨ The memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read, as much as time permits.
Homily	⇨ When the reader has finished, he who presides over those gathered admonishes and challenges them to imitate these beautiful things.
General Intercessions	⇨ Then we all rise together and offer prayers for ourselves and for all others, wherever they may be, so that we may be found righteous by our life and actions, and faithful to the commandments, so as to obtain salvation.
Exchange of Peace	⇨ When the prayers are concluded we exchange the kiss.
Liturgy of The Eucharist	
Offertory	⇨ Then someone brings bread and a cup of water and wine mixed together to him who presides over the brethren.
Eucharistic Prayer	⇨ He takes them and offers praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and for a considerable time he gives thanks (in Greek: <i>eucharistian</i>) that we have been judged worthy of these gifts.
Great Amen	⇨ When he has concluded the prayers and thanksgivings, all present give voice to an acclamation by saying: 'Amen.'
Communion	⇨ When he who presides has given thanks and the people have responded, those whom we call deacons give to those present the "eucharisted" bread, wine and water and take them to those who are absent.
Dismissal	



From the Jerusalem Catecheses – St Cyril of Jerusalem

(Cat. 22, Mystagogica 4, 1. 3-6. 9: PG 33, 1098-1106) *The bread of heaven and the cup of salvation*

*On the night he was betrayed our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples and said: "Take, eat: this is my body." He took the cup, gave thanks and said: "Take, drink: this is my blood." Since Christ himself has declared the bread to be his body, who can have any further doubt? Since he himself has said quite categorically, *This is my blood*, who would dare to question it and say that it is not his blood?*

Therefore, it is with complete assurance that we receive the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ. His body is given to us under the symbol of bread, and his blood is given to us under the symbol of wine, in order to make us by receiving them one body and blood with him. Having his body and blood in our members, we become bearers of Christ and sharers, as Saint Peter says, in the divine nature.

Once, when speaking to the Jews, Christ said: *Unless you eat my flesh and drink my blood you shall have no life in you.* This horrified them and they left him. Not understanding his words in a spiritual way, they thought the Savior wished them to practice cannibalism.

Under the old covenant there was showbread, but it came to an end with the old dispensation to which it belonged. Under the new covenant there is bread from heaven and the cup of salvation. These sanctify both soul and body, the bread being adapted to the sanctification of the body, the Word, to the sanctification of the soul.

Do not, then, regard the eucharistic elements as ordinary bread and wine: they are in fact the body and blood of the Lord, as he himself has declared. Whatever your senses may tell you, be strong in faith.

You have been taught and you are firmly convinced that what looks and tastes like bread and wine is not bread and wine but the body and the blood of Christ. You know also how David referred to this long ago when he sang: *Bread gives strength to man's heart and makes his face shine with the oil of gladness.* Strengthen your heart, then, by receiving this bread as spiritual bread, and bring joy to the face of your soul.

May purity of conscience remove the veil from the face of your soul so that by contemplating the glory of the Lord, as in a mirror, you may be transformed from glory to glory in Christ Jesus our Lord. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

From a work by St Thomas Aquinas (Opusculum 57, in fest Corporis Christi, Lect. 1-4

Since it was the will of God's only-begotten Son that men should share in his divinity, he assumed our nature in order that by becoming man he might make men gods. Moreover, when he took our flesh, he dedicated the whole of its substance to our salvation. He offered his body to God the Father on the altar of the cross as a sacrifice for our reconciliation. He shed his blood for our ransom and purification so that we might be redeemed from our wretched state of bondage and cleansed from all sin. But to ensure that the memory of so great a gift would abide with us forever, he left his body as food and his blood as drink for the faithful to consume in the form of bread and wine.

O precious and wonderful banquet, that brings us salvation and contains all sweetness! Could anything be of more intrinsic value? Under the old law it was the flesh of calves and goats that was offered, but here Christ himself, the true God, is set before us as our food. What could be more wonderful than this? No other sacrament has greater healing power; through it sins are purged away, virtues are increased, and the soul is enriched with an abundance of every spiritual gift. It is offered in the Church for the living and the dead, so that what was instituted for the salvation of all may be for the benefit of all. Yet, in the end, no one can fully express the sweetness of this sacrament, in which spiritual delight is tasted at its very source, and in which we renew the memory of that surpassing love for us which Christ revealed in his passion.

It was to impress the vastness of this love more firmly upon the hearts of the faithful that our Lord instituted this sacrament at the Last Supper. As he was on the point of leaving the world to go to the father, after celebrating the Passover with his disciples, he left it as a perpetual memorial of his passion. It was the fulfillment of ancient figures and the greatest of all his miracles, while for those who were to experience the sorrow of his departure, it was destined to be a unique and abiding consolation.

St Augustine Sermon 272

What you behold now on the altar of God you saw there last night as well. But you have not yet heard what it is, what it means, and of how great a reality it is the sacrament. What you see, then, is bread and a cup. This is what your eyes report to you. But your faith has need to be taught that the bread is the Body of Christ, the cup the Blood of Christ. Perhaps his rather brief statement might be sufficient for belief, but belief requires instruction, for the Prophet says; Unless you believe; you will not understand. (Is 7:9). So now you can say to me: "You have taught us to believe. Explain so we may understand."

For the Following thought may arise in anyone's mind. We know whence our Lord Jesus Christ took flesh, from the Virgin Mary. As an infant he was nursed. He was brought up. He grew. He attained manhood. He suffered persecution from the Jews. He was hanged on the wood, He was killed on the wood, He was taken down from the wood. He was buried. He rose on the 3rd day. When He willed, He ascended into heaven; to there he lifted up his body. Thence will he come to judge the living and the dead. Now He is there, enthroned at the right hand of the Father. How is the bread His body? And the cup, or what is in the cup, how is that His blood?

These things, my brothers, are called sacraments for the reason that in them one thing is seen, but another is understood. That which is seen has physical appearance, that which is understood has spiritual fruit. If, then, you wish to understand the body of Christ, listen to the Apostles as he says to the faithful. "You are the body of Christ, and His members (1 Cor 12:27) If, therefore, you are the body of Christ and His members, your mystery has been placed on the Lord's table, you receive your mystery. You reply AMEN to that which you are, and by replying you consent. For you hear "the Body of Christ" and you reply AMEN. Be a member of the Body of Christ so that your AMEN may be true.

But why in bread? I provide nothing of my own at this point, rather let us listen to the Apostle who said, when he was speaking about this sacrament, "We though many, are one bread, one body" (1 Cor 10:17) Understand and rejoice. Unity. Verity! Piety! Charity! "One Bread." What is this one bread? "Many...one Body." Remember that bread is not made from one grain, but from many. When you were exorcized, you were, after a fashion, milled. When you were baptized you were moistened. When you received the fire of the Holy Spirit you were baked. Be what you see, and receive what you are."

This is what the Apostle said about the bread, and he has already indicated quite well what we are to understand of the cup, even though he did not say it. For just as in the preparation of the preparation of the bread which you see, many grains were moistened into a unity, as if there were taking place what holy scripture says about the faithful, "they had one mind, one heart towards God." (Acts 4:32), so also in the case of the wine. Brothers, recall whence

wine comes. Many grapes hang in a cluster, but the liquid of the grapes is mixed in unity. So also did Christ the Lord portray us. He willed that we belong to HIM. He consecrated the mystery of our peace and unity upon His table. He who receives the mystery of unity and does not hold fast to the bond of peace, receives not a mystery for himself, but testimony against himself.

Turned towards the Lord God. The Almighty Father, with a pure heart, let us render great and true thanks to Him, as much as our incapacity can. With all our soul, let us beg His singular gentleness that He may deign to hear our prayers with favor, that He may also drive the enemy from our actions and thoughts by His power, that He may increase our faith, guide our minds, grant us a spiritual way of thinking, and bring us to His blessedness, through Jesus Christ His Son. Amen.

1 Cor 11:23-32

The Institution of the Lord's Supper

²³ For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for^[s] you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Partaking of the Supper Unworthily

²⁷ Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. ³⁰ That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died.^[s] ³¹ But if we judged ourselves truly, we should not be judged. ³² But when we are judged by the Lord, we are chastened^[s] so that we may not be condemned along with the world.