

The Place and Purpose of the Sacraments

(continued from the last issue)

BY THE EDITOR

THE baptismal situation in the Church of England to-day is so unsatisfactory that the urgent need for an effective form of sacramental discipline can hardly be questioned. Sacramental discipline which is founded upon the great doctrinal principles of Holy Scripture must be imposed if people in general are to realize that the sacraments of the Church do after all *mean* something. The indiscriminate administration of baptism to the children of parents who ordinarily have no connection with the life of the Church, and for many of whom having their children "done" is little more than a mark of social respectability, or an atavistic superstition, constitutes a grave scandal within the Church of Christ. It is a hard statistical fact that the majority of children brought to the baptismal font grow up like heathen in separation from the fellowship and instruction of the Church. This makes their baptism a shameful mockery.

What should be done to remedy this scandalous situation? In the first place it must be determined which children are eligible for baptism, or rather which parents are eligible to have their children baptized. Parents whose children are candidates for baptism should themselves be active members and worshippers of the Church. There can be no possible justification for according the seal of God's covenant of grace to children who, because of parental unconcern, will grow up in ignorance of the promises and responsibilities of that covenant.

Secondly, the Church must realize that the primary challenge of this situation is that of evangelization, and, indeed, that it is to a large degree a *missionary* situation with which she is confronted in England, which means that in meeting the urgent evangelistic challenge she must think more concretely in terms of greater numbers of *adult* baptisms—baptisms, that is, of those who, having grown up as pagans outside her influence, have been brought to conversion through the message of the Gospel. And if they are parents, their children should be baptized with them. It is converted, believing, committed parents who, in co-operation with the Church, are fitted to give effect to the requirement of the baptismal service that their children should be "virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life". And it is the children of such parents who are the proper recipients of the sacrament of baptism.

Thirdly, baptism should normally always be administered *publicly*. That this is the intended practice of the Church of England is shown both by the title of the service—"The Public Baptism of Infants"—and by the rubrical instruction prefixed to the service requiring that its ministrations should take place "when the most number of people come together". And yet it is the common practice to-day to administer baptism when the least number of people come together, that

is, in the presence of the parents, godparents, and a few friends, and in the absence of the regular worshipping congregation. The sacraments, however, are not individual acts. They are corporate, collective acts of believers, that is, of Christ's body, the Church. Individual administration of the Lord's Supper, or celebration at which the congregation does not participate, destroys the nature of Holy Communion. Individualism has done great harm to the sacrament of baptism; for baptism, properly understood, is public confession, in the congregation, of the Gospel word of regeneration. It is not merely an individual occasion, limited to the one to be baptized, nor a domestic occasion, limited to the family and friends of the one to be baptized, but an ecclesiastical occasion which is the concern of the whole Church. This being so, it is most undesirable that baptism should be administered in isolation from the worshipping congregation. It should be public, in the church. It should, in short, ordinarily be administered in the course of Morning (or Evening) Prayer.

Baptism of this truly public nature would in itself have a strong disciplinary effect, in that many who are strangers to the worshipping and witnessing fellowship of the Church, while blandly submitting to a semi-private family ceremony, would find themselves unwilling to face the solemn implications of presenting their children for baptism in the presence of the whole congregation.

A further reason why the service should be public is that every baptism should have significance for *all* those who witness it: it should remind them of their own baptism and of everything which it signified; it should cause them to examine themselves whether they be in the faith (II Cor. xiii. 5). Accordingly, one of the purposes assigned in the Prayer Book rubric for baptism in public is "that in the baptism of infants every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in his baptism".

One further matter which may briefly be mentioned here in connection with the question of baptismal discipline is that of the function of godparents or sponsors. In the mediæval period the radical incompatibility between nature and grace propounded by the Church (resulting from the assimilation into her system of certain non-biblical, philosophical elements) led to the view that a child's parents, being his parents in the order of *nature*, were thereby disqualified from acting for him in the realm of grace. The latter was declared to be the province of the Church, which was regarded as the sphere of grace as distinct from nature, and spiritual responsibility was entrusted to *god*-parents who (though this had not been the case in the early Church) came in this sense to be set in a position of antithesis to the natural parents. Indeed, fathers were expressly excluded from the baptism of their children! Scripture, however, knows no such divorce between nature and grace, and in fact speaks with great emphasis of the spiritual responsibilities involved in parenthood. The value of godparents is open to question, but if they are to be retained, then the door should be closed upon the mediæval doctrine to which I have referred by making it compulsory (not merely permissible) for at least one parent, preferably the father, to act as sponsor (that is, one who accepts responsibility for the spiritual upbringing of the child) at a child's

baptism. At the same time at least one sponsor should belong to the regular worshipping congregation of the parish in which the child is baptized. Such measures would at least help to create a situation in which the Christian upbringing of the child in both home and Church may be fruitfully co-ordinated. There will be some reasonable certainty that he will grow up within the covenant sphere of the Christian community in its twofold but integral aspect of home and Church.

Baptism, then, is not a mere addition to the church cradle roll ; nor is it simply the dedication or offering by parents of their child to God. It is the acknowledgment of the divine initiative and goodness, of the priority of God's grace. It is, in fact, *God* claiming what is His own, declaring that the child's true destiny is one of salvation, that he is born to be born again, that he is by right a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, that he is to grow up and be educated in the redeemed society, that he is a beneficiary of the covenant of grace and heir to its promises. If, as he grows up, his baptism makes no impression upon him, if he remains unaware of its significance, the fault must lie with both Church and parents, whose duty it is to instruct him concerning his spiritual heritage and to expound to him with care and perseverance the meaning of God's covenant in Christ Jesus. If Church and parents faithfully discharge this duty, then in due course it becomes the responsibility of the child who has been baptized to confirm his baptism and to declare his allegiance to the terms of the covenant. At the same time he is faced with the awful possibility of repudiating his spiritual birthright.

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The significance of the sacrament of Holy Communion may be summarized under four heads. Firstly, it is a symbol of spiritual nutrition. As bread and wine nourish the body, so they are fit symbols to speak, as by a visible word, of the nourishment which Christ provides for the soul. The external elements of bread and wine point us to our Lord's promise: " He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day " (John vi. 54), and remind us of the inward truth that *to come to Him* is to eat His flesh and *to believe on Him* is to drink His blood, in accordance with His words uttered on the same occasion: " He that cometh to Me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst " (John vi. 35). Christ, therefore, as the second exhortation of the Communion Service declares, is offered to us as " our spiritual food and sustenance in that holy sacrament ",⁴ and those who receive the sacrament hear the invitation: " Feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving ", which reminds them that the true feeding on Christ is not physical or carnal, but spiritual, in the believing heart which closes with and appropriates as its own the Gospel promises of which the visible elements are signs and pledges.

Thus the third exhortation of the Communion Service affirms that, " if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament, . . . then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood ; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us ; we are one with

Christ, and Christ with us". Becon defines the Lord's supper as "an holy and heavenly banquet, in the which the faithful Christians, besides the corporal eating of the bread and outward drinking of the wine, do spiritually through faith both eat the body of Christ and drink His blood, unto the confirmation of their faith, the comfort of their conscience, and the salvation of their souls", and as "a spiritual food, in the which Christ Jesus the Son of God witnesseth that He is the living bread, wherewith our souls are fed unto everlasting life".⁴⁶ It was, indeed, customary for the Reformers to speak picturesquely of faith as the mouth of the soul. "This spiritual meat of Christ's body and blood is not received in the mouth and digested in the stomach (as corporal meats and drinks commonly be)," asserts Archbishop Cranmer, "but it is received with a pure heart and a sincere faith. And the true eating and drinking of the said body and blood of Christ is, with a constant and lively faith to believe that Christ gave His body upon the cross for us, and that He doth so join and incorporate Himself to us, that He is our Head, and we His members, and flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bones, having Him dwelling in us, and we in Him. And herein standeth the whole effect and strength of this sacrament. And this faith God worketh inwardly in our hearts by His Holy Spirit, and confirmeth the same outwardly to our ears by hearing of His word, and to our other senses by eating and drinking of the sacramental bread and wine in His holy supper."⁴⁷

Secondly, this sacrament is intended as a symbol of unity. It is an expression of Christian oneness, or communion, symbolized by the one loaf and the one cup of which all who are present partake. "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ?" asks the Apostle. "The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ? seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body: for we all partake of the one loaf" (I Cor. x. 16f.). One purpose of the institution of this holy banquet was, says Becon, "that it should be a sign and a token of the unity and concord, of the hearty good will and singular friendship, and of the perfect agreement in doctrine and religion that ought to be among them that profess Christ".⁴⁸ It is at the Lord's table, more than anywhere else, that Christ's followers should by their common participation in this sacrament testify to the world of their indissoluble oneness, through grace and faith, and in love and destiny, with Christ and therefore with each other. Yet to-day we are confronted with the shocking scandal that in the Christian Church the table of the Lord has become a place of division and disharmony instead of fellowship and unity. It has been degraded into a denominational board from which, all too frequently, those of other ecclesiastical connections, however genuine their devotion to the common Lord, are excluded.

Much of the current fashionable talk about reunion has an ironically hollow ring about it when it is found that its advocates are unable, because of theories of sacramental exclusivism, to come together for brotherly participation in this sacrament of unity. In the light of scriptural realism a far more urgent and practical step than that of organization for reunion would be the removal without compunction by the various denominations of the barriers which at present prevent

fellow-Christians from expressing before the world their true oneness with each other in Christ. If this were done—and it should be done for the honour of our one Redeemer—we should cease to speak of different denominations as different “communions”, and we should at last be able to display to the world a measure of that true communion in Christ by obediently uniting round *His* table, however much diversities of denominational emphasis might remain—and remain they will, human personality being as diverse as it is. Such an expression of real communion in freedom, without insisting on uniformity, could not fail to produce a powerful effect on the watching world.

Thirdly, the significance of the sacrament of Holy Communion is commemorative. In accordance with our Lord’s command, “Do this in remembrance of Me,” it is commemorative of Christ Himself, our only Saviour and Redeemer, by whose death we have been reconciled to God. This sacrament was ordained by Him (as the third exhortation of the Communion Service explains) “to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His precious blood-shedding He hath obtained to us”. It is a proclaiming of His death (I Cor. xi. 26), of His body broken and His blood shed for us on the cross, as symbolized by the bread broken and the wine outpoured.

And, fourthly, it is anticipatory. Not only is it retrospective but also prospective, looking forward to Christ’s return in glory as well as backward to His atoning death. “*Hoc mysterium duo tempora extrema conjungit*,” says Bengel in a fine epigram. It forms as it were a bridge linking our Lord’s personal departure from this earthly scene to His personal return at the end of the age. “As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup,” St. Paul instructs the Corinthians, “ye proclaim the Lord’s death *till He come*” (I Cor. xi. 26). Christ instituted this sacrament, as the prayer of consecration reminds us, “a perpetual memory of that His precious death, *until His coming again*”. And when He comes again to receive those who are His to Himself (John xiv. 3) there will be no further place for a sacrament celebrated in remembrance of Him. Then indeed (in the words of Bishop Christopher Wordsworth’s hymn) “faith will vanish into sight, hope be emptied in delight”. In view of this truth, Holy Communion may be described as the sacrament of Christ’s bodily absence.

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It would be incongruous for us to do something in remembrance of a person who was bodily present with us! To speak of the Holy Communion as the sacrament of Christ’s bodily absence, however, is not to imply that Christ is absent from the sacrament. On the contrary, together with the fathers of the ancient Church and the divines of the Church of England, it is our conviction that Christ is really present at the sacrament which He instituted, but that this real presence of His is a *spiritual* presence, within every grateful and believing heart, not carnal or external or localized upon an “altar”, and the presence of Christ realized by all who worthily receive the

sacrament is not different in kind from that experienced by every regenerate heart at all times, in accordance with His parting promise before being visibly separated from His disciples: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). "Christ is really," declares Cranmer, "not only in them that duly receive the sacrament of the Lord's supper, but also in them that duly receive the sacrament of baptism, and in all other true Christian people at other times when they receive no sacrament; for all they be members of Christ's body, and temples in whom He truly inhabiteth."⁴⁸ Again, he complains to his adversary Gardiner: "You gather of my sayings unjustly that Christ is indeed absent; for I say (according to God's word and the doctrine of the old writers) that Christ is present in His sacraments, as they teach also that He is present in His word, when He worketh mightily by the same in the hearts of the hearers."⁴⁹ The sacrament of Holy Communion is the divine seal affixed to and confirming the apostolic word: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. i. 27), giving assurance, during this period of His bodily absence, of His inward, spiritual, holy presence to all who feed on Him in their hearts by faith.

It was, of course, necessary for Cranmer and his fellow-Reformers to explain that they used the term "really" (*realiter*) in a sense different from that intended by their papal opponents, who followed the understanding of medieval philosophy in giving it a physical and concrete significance. Men, indeed, are constantly prone to assign greater reality to that which is visibly and tangibly perceptible. Such a misconception would be avoided if only one of the basic truths of Scripture and experience were more consistently remembered, namely, that the greatest and indeed ultimate reality is the spiritual, the inward, and not that which is externally local and sensible. The presence of the ascended Christ with His people is no longer that of one who is alongside of them, in company with them, and yet separate as an object over against them. By the mystery of the new birth their relationship to Him is that of union and identification. Thus the ascended Christ was more *really* known by the Apostles, who by the inner operation of the Pentecostal gift of the Holy Spirit experienced the reality of "ye *in* Me, and I *in* you" (John xiv. 20; cf. xvii. 21ff.), than He had been known by them during His earthly ministry, when they had only been *with* Him, alongside of Him, the companions and witnesses of His physical and visible presence. This knowledge of Christ *after the flesh* was to be superseded and transcended by a knowledge incomparably more precious and intimate (II Cor. v. 16). Hence our Lord's question to one of the Twelve at the conclusion of His earthly ministry: "Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know Me, Philip?" (John xiv. 9). But now, since Pentecost, to have the Holy Spirit is to know Christ in the deepest and innermost sense possible until the day of His return when, seeing Him even as He is, we shall be like Him (I John iii. 2), fully conformed at last to the image of His glory (II Cor. iii. 18; Rom. viii. 29).

"He is there, indeed, sitting at the right hand of the Father," says Augustine, "and He is here also, for He has not withdrawn the presence of His majesty. In other words, in respect of the presence of His

majesty we always have Christ ; in respect of the presence of His flesh it was rightly said to His disciples, ' Me ye will not have always.' For in respect of the presence of His flesh the Church possessed Him for a few days only : now it possesses Him by faith, without seeing Him with the eyes."⁵¹ " Breath should fail me," says Becon, " if I should go forth to recite the sayings of all the ancient Greek and Latin writers which most constantly affirm that as the Lord Christ, in that He is God, is everywhere and filleth all places at all times, so likewise, in that He is man, He is only in heaven, and in no place else, where He shall remain until the day of judgment, according to the Scriptures."⁵² " There is no such thing in deed and in truth as they call transubstantiation," says Bishop Ridley, " for the substance of bread remaineth still in the sacrament of the body. Then also the natural substance of Christ's human nature, which He took of the Virgin Mary, is in heaven, where it reigneth now in glory, and not here inclosed under the form of bread."⁵³ " The body then which we eat is in heaven," says Jewel, " above all angels and archangels and powers and principalities. Our meat is in heaven on high ; and we are here below on earth. How may it be said that we may reach it, or taste it, or eat it? . . . By the hand of faith we reach unto Him, and by the mouth of faith we receive His body."⁵⁴ Participation in the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ should assure us not just that Christ is present with us at that time and in that place, but that it is God's purpose, as the Prayer of Humble Access in the Communion Service declares, " that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us ".

In his sermon preached in the University Church at Oxford on Whit Monday, 1955, in commemoration of the Reformation martyrs who had been burnt at the stake in that city four hundred years previously, the Bishop of Rochester, Dr. Christopher Chavasse, reminded his numerous and distinguished audience that it was our Reformers who had recovered for us the eucharistic doctrine of the early Church, and that transubstantiation (which they unequivocally repudiated as contrary to Scripture and subversive of the unique and never-to-be-repeated reconciling work of Christ on the cross) " was, literally, the ' burning ' question of the Marian reaction, as the examinations of all its martyrs reveal ". In this connection he quotes Archbishop Laud's pointed comment: " Transubstantiation is either a fundamental point, or it is not. If it is not fundamental, why did the Papist put the Protestant to death for it? And why did the Protestant suffer death? " " Eucharistic doctrine," continues Dr. Chavasse, " is, indeed, fundamental both to faith and worship. It is the touchstone whether God is worshipped in spirit and in truth, or whether a church is falling away into superstition and error. To worship the Blessed Sacrament as ' He ', instead of reverencing ' It ', to teach that the consecrated bread and wine *contain* a localized Christ, instead of *conveying* to the worthy receiver a Presence that is already ' in the midst ' ; this, on Ridley's showing, is ' false doctrine ' and an ' idolatrous use '. History, too, exposes such a conception as one that inevitably exchanges the Living Christ for a mediatory Church and a priesthood that creates the ' Victim of the Altar '."⁵⁵

These errors, rejected by our Reformers, were brought back into the Church of England by the leaders of the Oxford Movement last century. While it is true that the theology of contemporary Anglo-Catholicism disowns theories of transubstantiation, yet it can hardly be by accident that the normal and necessary accompaniments of this doctrine have been embraced, such as the concept of a sacerdotal ministry whose highest function is concerned with the sacrifice of the altar, the mass vestments, eastward position, fasting communion, and the reservation and adoration of the consecrated wafer. The Anglo-Catholic mind has, indeed, shown itself fertile in producing a considerable variety of hypotheses concerning the precise nature of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist; and the views propounded have this in common, that they all postulate an analogy between Christ's presence in the sacrament and His incarnation.

The following is an explanation of the method or "mechanics" of the localization of Christ's presence on the eucharistic altar which has been offered by Dr. E. L. Mascall, one of the best known Anglo-Catholic thinkers of our day: "Just as, in the case of the Incarnation, it is right to say that Christ 'came down from heaven' to Bethlehem, so long as we remember that this took place 'not by conversion of Godhead into flesh but by taking up of manhood into God', so, in the case of the Eucharist, it is right to say that Christ 'comes down from heaven' on to our altars, so long as we remember that the manner of this descent is not a conversion of Christ into bread but a taking up of bread into Christ."⁶⁶ At the Eucharist, in other words, there is an assumption of "breadness" by Christ—an echo, this, of certain pre-Reformation speculations—though Dr. Mascall disavows that the eucharistic change supposedly effected is the same thing as a hypostatic union. In this aspect, then, it is not similar to the incarnation. Historic Anglicanism, however, does not speak of the descent and localization of Christ at the sacrament, but keeps closer to scriptural thought in regarding the Holy Communion as a means of grace whereby rather we may be uplifted in spirit to heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This idea is admirably expressed both in the *Sursum corda* of the Communion Service ("Lift up your hearts!") Answer: "We lift them up unto the Lord"), which immediately follows the "comfortable words" of the Gospel, and in the collect of Ascension Day: "Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thy only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell" (cf. Eph. ii. 6; Col. iii. 1).

Dr. Mascall seeks to sustain his hypothesis of the presence of Christ on the eucharistic altar by speaking of the incarnate body of Christ as existing under three different modes, in the following manner: "As a natural Body it was seen on earth, hung on the Cross, rose in glory on the first Easter Day, and was taken into heaven in the Ascension; as a mystical Body it appeared on earth on the first Whitsunday and we know it as the Holy Catholic Church; as a sacramental body it becomes present on our altars at every Eucharist when, by the operation of the Holy Ghost and the priestly act of Christ, bread and wine are transformed into, and made one with, the glorified Body which is

in heaven."⁵⁷ It is not our intention to enter here into a detailed discussion of the implications of this threefold concept. We shall offer only a few observations which are relevant to the subject under consideration in this article. In the first place, we are confronted with the extraordinary incongruity of Christ's *glorified* body being conceived as present on an *altar*, or on many altars, whereas the New Testament teaches with the utmost clarity that it was in His body of *humiliation* that Christ offered Himself, once-for-all, on the cross for us sinners. In His glorified body Christ is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High. To locate Him, under whatever mode, on an earthly altar, and to degrade His incarnation to a state of "impanation", is to place Christ in a situation that is far removed from the exalted glory which, according to the New Testament, He now enjoys.

It will be observed, also, that this is a hypothesis which seeks to justify an identification of the outward and visible sign with the inward and visible grace which it symbolizes. We are asked to believe that the elements of bread and wine are "transformed into, and made one with, the glorified Body which is in heaven", or, as Dr. Mascall says in a later passage, "taken up into the supernatural order and identified with the holy things which they contain".⁵⁸ This concept is in harmony with the progressive organic evolutionism as propounded in modern Anglo-Catholic theology, which postulates that each new organic level in the evolutionary process includes and elevates within itself every lower and anterior level, and which regards the incarnation as the predestined consummation of the whole order of creation whereby the carnal is raised into the spiritual, the human into the divine.

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But to identify the outward and visible sign with the inward and spiritual grace which it symbolizes is to overthrow the nature of a sacrament, as it has been understood both in historic Anglicanism and in the ancient Church. Thus Augustine affirms that "those things are sacraments in which not what they are but what they display is always considered, since they are signs of things, being one thing in themselves, and yet signifying another thing";⁵⁹ and Hooker says that the sacraments "are not really nor do really contain in themselves that grace which with them or by them it pleaseth God to bestow".⁶⁰ The identification of the sacramental elements with the holy things which they signify leads inevitably to the reservation and adoration of the sacrament and to other associated practices of a like unscriptural, unprimitive, superstitious, and idolatrous character. This teaching of transformation and identification, moreover, carries with it the strange and disabling anomaly that, of every supposedly priestly act of consecration and transformation of the elements, that alone of Christ Himself, the divine Author of the sacrament, was void of effect; for when He said of the bread, "This is My body," and of the wine, "This is My blood," by no stretch of the imagination could His Apostles have understood these words in a literalistic sense, nor could they have interpreted them in a modalistic manner like that proposed by Dr. Mascall, as though Christ had meant, "I am locally present in these elements, though under a sacramental mode," for the

evident reason that at that very time when He was instituting this sacrament and uttering these sentences His humanity, flesh and blood intact, was locally and visibly present before them. The Apostles, in a word, could only have understood what He said in a symbolical manner.

A return to the pristine simplicity of the Lord's supper as described in the pages of the New Testament should be sufficient to show that the attempts of neo-scholastic speculation to devise an ontological metaphysic which will justify its doctrine of Christ's sacramental presence are remote from scriptural reality and overthrow the nature and purpose of scriptural symbolism. Hooker's answer to the question *where* Christ's presence is, is the answer of the whole Reformed Church, namely, that "the real presence of Christ's most blessed body and blood is not . . . to be sought for in the sacrament, but in the worthy receiver of the sacrament. . . . I see not," he continues, "which way it should be gathered by the words of Christ, when and where the bread is His body or the cup His blood, but only in the very heart and soul of him which receiveth them." And he goes on to make an astute comment on the inconsistency of those who identify the sacrament with the reality of which it is the sign in the case of Holy Communion, but forbear to do so in the case of baptism: "If on all sides it be confessed that the grace of baptism is poured into the soul of man, that by water we receive it, although it be neither seated in the water nor the water changed into it, what should induce men to think that the grace of the eucharist must needs be in the eucharist before it can be in us that receive it?"⁶¹ So also Ridley had maintained the same doctrine at his last examination, prior to his martyrdom, in Oxford: "The true substance and nature of bread and wine remaineth," he declared, "with which the body is in like sort nourished, as the soul is by grace and Spirit with the body of Christ. Even so in baptism the body is washed with the visible water, and the soul is cleansed from all filth by the invisible Holy Ghost; and yet the water ceaseth not to be water, but keepeth the nature of water still: in like sort, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper the bread ceaseth not to be bread."⁶² And Jewel writes: "One thing is seen, and another understood. We see the water, but we understand the blood of Christ. Even so we see the bread and wine, but with the eyes of our understanding we look beyond these creatures; we reach our spiritual senses into heaven, and behold the ransom and price of our salvation. We do behold in the sacrament, not what it is, but what it doth signify."⁶³

In conclusion, let us hear the affirmations of two former archbishops of the Church of England. Firstly, Thomas Cranmer: "My doctrine is, that the very body of Christ, which was born of the virgin Mary, and suffered for our sins, giving us life by His death, the same Jesus, as concerning His corporal presence, is taken from us, and sitteth at the right hand of His Father; and yet He is by faith spiritually present with us, and is our spiritual food and nourishment, and sitteth in the midst of all them that be gathered together in His name. And this feeding is a spiritual feeding, and an heavenly feeding, far passing all corporal and carnal feeding; and therefore there is a true presence and a true feeding in deed, and not in a figure only. . . . This is the

true understanding of the true presence, receiving, and feeding upon the body and blood of our Saviour Christ."⁴⁴

Secondly, Edwin Sandys: "In this sacrament there are two things, a visible sign, and an invisible grace: there is a visible sacramental sign of bread and wine, and there is the thing and matter signified, namely, the body and blood of Christ: there is an earthly matter, and an heavenly matter. The outward sacramental sign is common to all, as well the bad as the good. Judas received the Lord's bread, but not that bread which is the Lord to the faithful receiver. The spiritual part, that which feedeth the soul, only the faithful do receive. For he cannot be partaker of the body of Christ, who is no member of Christ's body. . . . We must lift up ourselves from these external and earthly signs, and like eagles fly up and soar aloft, there to feed on Christ, who sitteth on the right hand of His Father, whom the heavens shall keep until the latter day. . . . Seeing then that Christ in His natural body is absent from hence; seeing He is risen, and is not here; seeing He hath left the world, and is gone to His Father; 'how shall I', saith St. Augustine, 'lay hold on Him who is absent? how shall I put my hand into heaven? Send up thy faith, and thou hast taken hold'."⁴⁵

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⁴⁴ Cf. also the post-communion prayer which speaks of "the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ".

⁴⁵ Becon; *Op. cit.*, pp. 228f.

⁴⁶ Cranmer: *Op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁴⁷ Becon: *Op. cit.*, p. 231.

⁴⁸ Cranmer: *Op. cit.*, p. 140.

⁴⁹ Cranmer: *Op. cit.*, p. 11.

⁵⁰ Augustine: *Tract.*, L. 13, on the Gospel of John.

⁵¹ Becon: *Op. cit.*, p. 276.

⁵² Nicholas Ridley, 1500-1555, Bishop of London and Reformation martyr: *A Brief Declaration of the Lord's Supper*, in *Works* (Parker Society), p. 12.

⁵³ Jewel: *Treatise of the Sacraments*, pp. 1118f. Cf. Cranmer: *Op. cit.*, p. 97, etc.

⁵⁴ C. M. Chavasse: *The Oxford Martyrs*, pp. 9f. (London, 1955).

⁵⁵ E. L. Mascall: *Op. cit.*, p. 198.

⁵⁶ Mascall: *Op. cit.*, pp. 161f.

⁵⁷ Mascall: *Op. cit.*, p. 197.

⁵⁸ Augustine: *Con. Maxim.*, ii, 22.

⁵⁹ Hooker: *Op. cit.*, V, lxxvii, 6.

⁶⁰ Hooker: *Loc. cit.*

⁶¹ Ridley: *Ut supra*, p. 275.

⁶² Jewel: *Treatise of the Sacraments*, p. 1117.

⁶³ Cranmer: *Op. cit.*, p. 185.

⁶⁴ Edwin Sandys, 1516-1588, Archbishop of York: *Sermons* (Parker Society), p. 88.