

# Seven Steps To Heaven

by FATHER HENRY ATWELL

## VII - HOLY EUCHARIST

The sacraments of the Church, we are taught, are signs to point the way to heaven.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was not content, however, just to indicate the direction must go. He chose to make himself a companion to us on our journey.

And He selected the most sacred night of His life as the time to institute that sacrament.

Every Christian knows the story well.

On that first, great Holy Thursday evening, the Saviour gathered His chosen twelve to be His banquet guests at the Paschal meal for His last supper. Every Jew each year ate this ritual dinner as a reminder and as a prophecy of God's special care for those He loves.

THE PASSOVER recalled the dramatic events when Moses led the Jews, then slaves in Egypt, across the Red Sea to freedom. At Mt. Sinai God and the Jews made a contract—a testament or covenant—the people promised to keep God's ten commandments, God promised to provide for all their needs. The bargain was sealed in the blood of animals sacrificed on that occasion and the annual Passover in each generation the memory of all these stirring events.

The Jews also knew that God would come one day again visit His people to make a new contract, or testament with them, to give them a new sacrifice and a new banquet. Each Passover, therefore, recalled the past even as it also looked toward the future.

What the devout Jewish people had awaited at last became reality at our Lord's Last Supper.

As His Father had spoken on Sinai, so Christ now spoke in the Cenacle, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." (John 13, 34)

TO SEAL THIS new commandment, a new sacrifice was needed. The shadow of the cross was already darkening the Last Supper table. Jesus was on his way of betrayal. With His eyes already looking at tomorrow, Jesus took bread and blessed and broke and gave it to His disciples and said, "Take and eat, this is My body." And taking a cup, He gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, "All of you drink of this; for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is being shed for many unto the forgiveness of sins." (Matthew 26, 26-28)

Then to perpetuate the memory of this law and His love, Jesus added the words, "Do this in remembrance of Me." (Luke 22, 19)

For the twenty subsequent centuries Christians have kept that sacred command—whether in cathedrals or churches or chapels, in caves or concentration camps or exile. Wherever there are Christians, there they "do this" as our Lord commanded.

When they "do this" they make the Saviour to be present in that special sacramental way we call His Eucharistic Presence.

He is present on our altars to renew the sacrifice He offered on the cross, to be the nourishment of our souls in Holy Communion, to be the

silent guest in the tabernacle to hear our prayers.

He has uniquely kept His promise, "Behold, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world." (Matthew 28, 20)

THE CHURCH has shown its faith in this mystery by surrounding the Eucharistic rite instituted by the Saviour with rich ceremonial customs in each century.

The vast basilica of Amiens, the 13th century cathedral of France, the choir of English parish churches, the 18th-century structures in America—all take their turn in presenting the best each nation in each century can produce as the sanctuary where Christ will dwell veiled by the radiating white of the water.

Music, ranging from the simple, impressive Gregorian melodies of the early Middle Ages to the complex forms of Palestrina create a symphony of praise which seek to rival the chant of angels.

Painting, sculpture, vestments, lights, flowers, rituals are all and a part of the church of adoration to Christ present in the Holy Eucharist.

The mystery is so simple little children can grasp it with reverence yet it contains depths theologians cannot fathom.

Like most of God's gifts, the Eucharist had its days of neglect. A chill swept the Catholic world which kept the people from Holy Communion. To remedy this situation, Pope St. Pius X inaugurated his pontificate in 1903 by his famous decree on early and frequent Communion.

He legislated that children should be admitted to their First Communion at about the age of seven. He urged all the faithful to receive this sacrament frequently, even daily.

To ease the centuries-old fastidious midnight hour, Pope Pius XII permitted Mass to be celebrated during the evening hours and required only an abbreviated fasting period. All that is now required for Communion at any hour is to fast from solid foods and alcoholic beverages for three hours, to fast from other liquids for one hour. Water or medicine may be taken at any time.

To increase the devotion of the people and to encourage them to assist at Mass and receive Holy Communion, Pope John XXIII has repeated the plea of his predecessors that the people say the prayers of the Mass together.

This Holy Thursday night in 1960 will find churches of the Catholic world filled at the very hour our Lord gathered His twelve for the Last Supper. They will pray together, even in the words He taught them by saying the Lord's Prayer; they will see Him lifted up at the elevation even as He was lifted on the cross; they will "take and eat" as He told them to do.

The sacred, final command of Christ is indeed still kept, "Do this in remembrance of Me."

The End

# US Said Neglecting Refugees

Washington — (NC) — A Catholic observer who compares the U.S. position on refugees with that of the Soviet Union has said the United States has done "nothing" to help the refugees who have fled from the Soviet Union.

Walter M. Harnfeld, president of the Catholic American Refugee Council, said in a statement (April 15) that the United States has been "neglecting" the needs of refugees who have fled from the Soviet Union. He said the United States has been "neglecting" the needs of refugees who have fled from the Soviet Union.

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## Czech Reds Jail Nun

Prague — (NC) — Czechoslovakia's communist rulers have jailed a nun for teaching religion, and a group of teachers for trying to organize a Christian-oriented political party, reports reaching here state.

According to the Czechoslovak newspaper Pochod, a Sister Pa — also identified as Helena Langerova — was sentenced to 30 months in jail. A teacher at a children's home in Zatec, who was accused of spreading religious influence among school children and teaching anticommunism.

## Daily Mass Calendar

Prayers of the Rochester Diocese whose names are listed below died on the date indicated. Your prayers are requested for them.

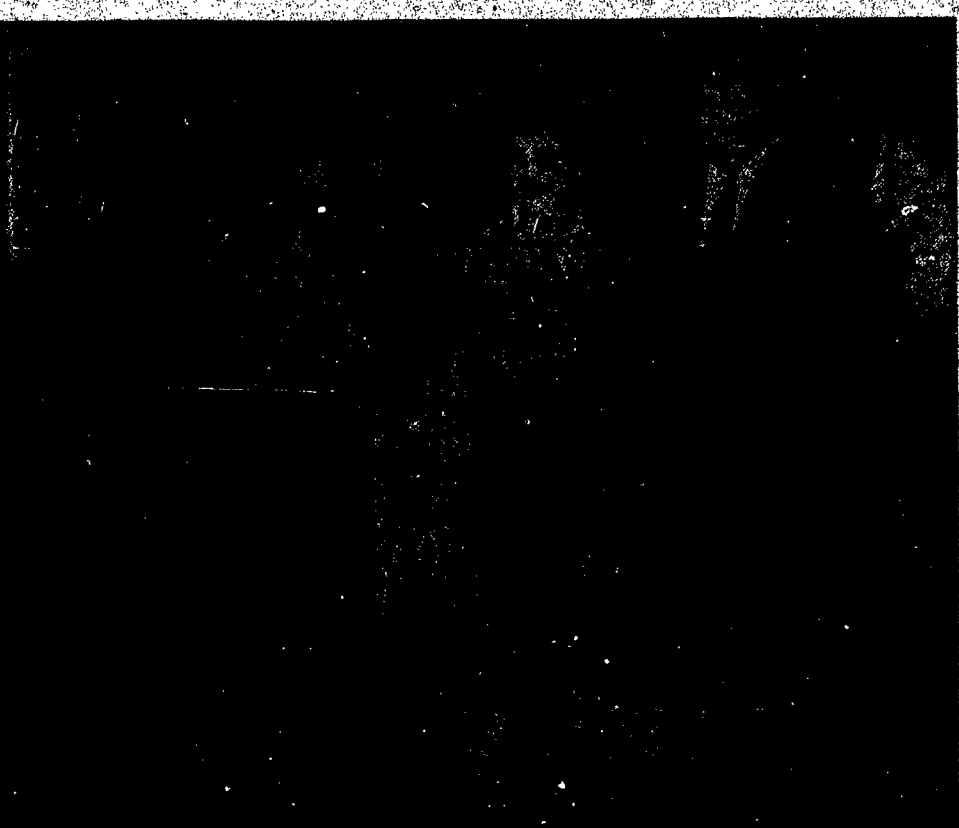
Sunday, April 17 — Resurrection of our Lord (white). Galt, Sequenza, Creed, Proches and canon prayers of Easter, 1960 — Rev. William W. Hotal.

Monday, April 18 — Masses: Mass (white) at 8:00 a.m. — Monsignor John P. Murphy, 1960 — Rev. William W. Hotal.

Tuesday, April 19 — at 7:30 a.m. — Masses: Mass (white) at 8:00 a.m. — Monsignor John P. Murphy, 1960 — Rev. William W. Hotal.

Wednesday through Saturday, April 20 through 23 — at 8:00 a.m. — Masses: Mass (white) at 8:00 a.m. — Monsignor John P. Murphy, 1960 — Rev. William W. Hotal.

Healed in Egypt — (NC) — Six young men have grouped together in Sydney's first secular institute of religious work in the world.



## Last Supper Rite In Home

Rutherford, N.J. — (RNS) — Catholic families are increasingly making special commemorations in their homes of the institution of the Holy Eucharist by Christ at the Last Supper. Above, Mrs. James (Lillian) of Rutherford lights candles to represent Christ, the Light of the World, looking on are Mr. Conlon and the couple's six children.

## Laymen, Bridge For Church

Detroit — (PNC) — More than 750 members of a Catholic laymen's group here were told that "the Catholic layman not only belongs to the Church, but that he is the Church."

The informed Catholic layman can act as an interpreter of the Church to his neighbor. He can open up the meaning and reality of the Church to his neighbor. He can open up the meaning and reality of the Church to his neighbor.

The Archbishop also stated that in the United States, many misunderstand and fear the Church. "How can these misconceptions be broken down if not through the patient and intelligent explanations to those who are misinformed?" he said. "We who know the Church do not fear it."

Although television and other communications media have made noteworthy contributions recently in highlighting these misconceptions, he said that intelligent informal discussions in the living room among acquaintances will get a better hearing than many books and speeches.

Archbishop Drarden also cited the duty of every Catholic to carefully study the complexities of the day. "When we approach these issues with a command of fact, our position standing in the event, he said will be more readily considered."

# THE Manger Hotel

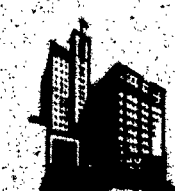
Home of the **Hearth and Embers**

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We are most grateful to the legion of loyal friends and patrons and we wish all

A Most Happy Easter



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Paul Morris General Manager

**B. Forman Co.**

THREE FORMAN STORES TO DRESS UP THE FAMILY FOR EASTER



Cotton- and rayon- dress wear. The own, kids-frocks. before Easter.

Start 7:30-9:00