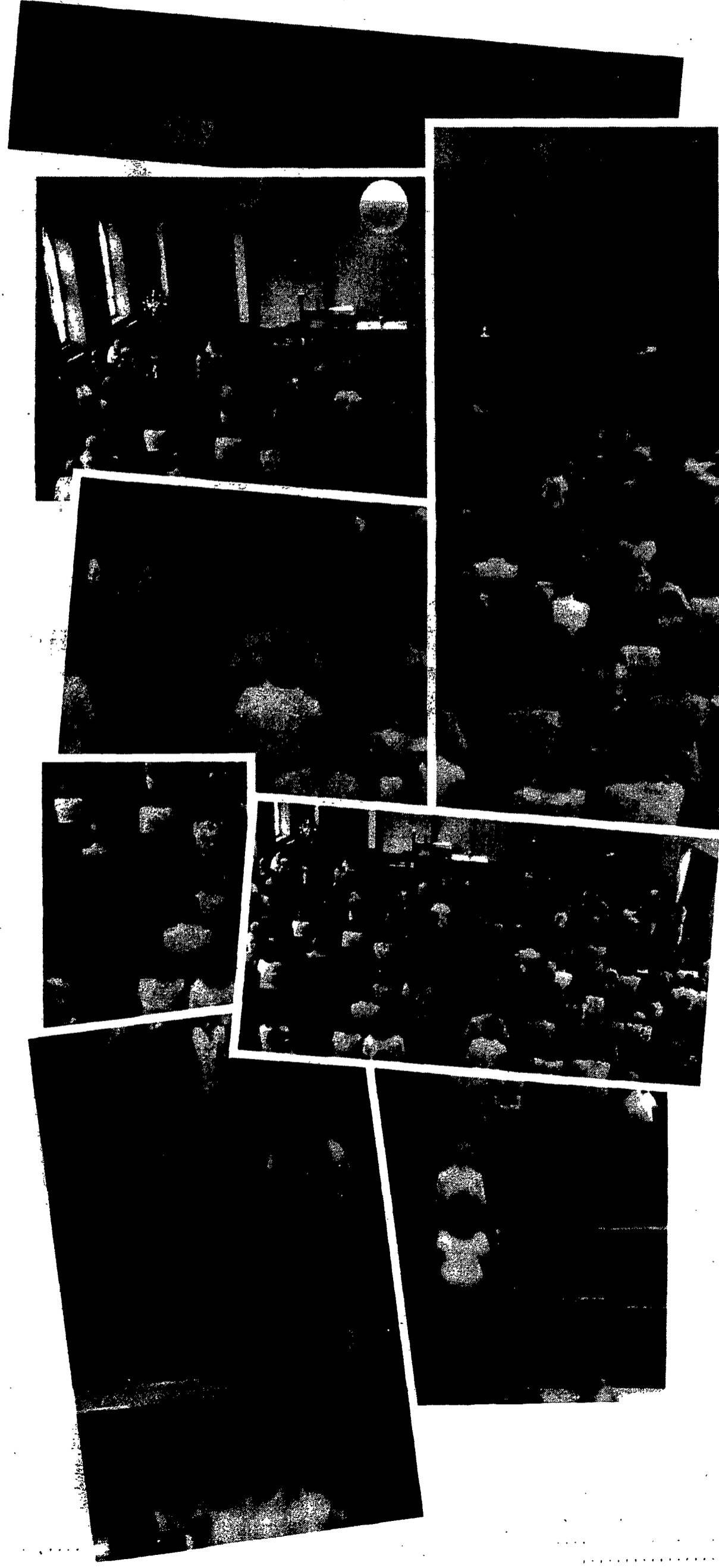


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'A shared story and a shared meal'

Modern Mass traces structure to early church

Some 2,000 years ago, Jesus gathered his closest disciples about him to celebrate Passover. He observed the Jewish custom of taking bread and breaking it, and taking a cup of wine, and sharing both.

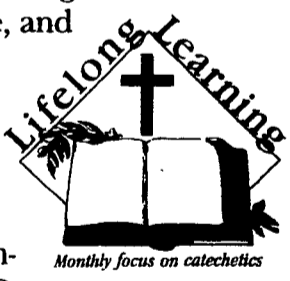
But Jesus added to that ritual the declaration that the bread was his body, the wine was his blood, and the command to his followers, "Do this in remembrance of me."

Today, Jesus' actions are recalled on a daily basis in Masses worldwide.

Indeed, as the assembled bishops of the Second Vatican Council noted in "The Pastoral Constitution of the Church," the Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life."

It is a summit, moreover, that "unfolds according to a fundamental structure which has been preserved throughout the centuries down to our own day," as the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* notes.

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Story by Lee Strong