

The Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist

© Robert J. Spitzer, S.J. May 2023

NT#11: Did Jesus Intend to Give Us His *Real* Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist?

Jesus' intention to give us His real body and blood in the Holy Eucharist has been obscured significantly by erroneous exegetical analyses since the time of the Protestant Reformation and has grown vague in the minds of many Catholics today. If we are to extricate ourselves from this misleading exegetical analysis, we must return to **Jesus'** mindset, which was Jewish, prophetic, messianic, and imbued with His divine Sonship (see above **NT#7**).

We may summarize Jesus' intention as follows. At the Last Supper, He placed Himself at the center of a ritual self-sacrificial act, separating His body (given before the Supper) and His blood (given after the Supper) precisely as would be done with a sacrificial animal offered for the forgiveness of sins. His intention was not only to give us His body and blood, but also His whole self – crucified and risen in an act of unrestricted love which would redeem our sins, protect us from evil, heal and transform our hearts, and lead us to eternal life with Him. We will explain this in three sections:

1. The Meaning of Jesus' Eucharistic Words (Section I).
2. The Double Collapse of Time and Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist (Section II).
3. The Eucharist in Saint Paul and Early Church Fathers (Section III).

I.

The Meaning of Jesus' Eucharistic Words

If we are to enter into this celebration of unrestricted love more fully, we will first want to understand Jesus' Eucharistic words. When He said, "This is my Body which is being given for you" (Lk 22:19), the Greek word used to translate His Hebrew (*zeh bašari*) or Aramaic (*den bisri*) was *sōma* rather than *sarx*. *Sarx* means "flesh" and would certainly refer to Jesus' *corporeal* body given on the cross, while *sōma* is much broader and refers to the *whole* person (mind, soul, will, as well as corporeal body). It might, therefore, be roughly translated as "person" or "self." If we substitute the word "self" for "body" in the Eucharistic words, we obtain, "This is my whole self given up for you." This is remarkably close to Jesus' definition of love ("gift of self") given in the Gospel of John -- "greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13). Thus, in the Eucharist, Jesus is giving us not only His whole self – His whole person – He is also giving us His love, indeed, His *unrestricted* love – that is, a love which cannot be exceeded.

This unrestricted love is confirmed by the gift of His blood (which, according to Jewish custom, is separated from the body of the sacrificial offering¹). When Jesus offered His blood separately from His body, He showed Himself to be an intentional self-sacrifice which He interpreted to be an offering of unrestricted love.

¹ See John L. McKenzie *Dictionary*, p. 757.

Blood (the principle of life for the Israelites²) was the vehicle through which atonement occurred in sin or guilt offerings.³ Jesus' reference to His sacrificial blood would be seen as the blood of a sin-offering – with the notable exception that the sin-offering is no longer an animal, but rather, Jesus Himself, the exclusive beloved Son of the Father. Jesus humbled Himself (taking the place of an animal -- a sacrificial sin-offering) as the Beloved One of the Father, to take away the sin of the world forever. Jesus' Eucharistic words in both Mark/Matthew and Luke/Paul use “poured out” (and in Mark/Matthew alone, “For the forgiveness of sins”). This is an allusion to Isaiah 53:12, which is a messianic prophesy indicating that the Messiah would give up His life for the forgiveness of sins (see **OT#24**) – “he [the Messiah] poured out his soul to death, and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” Thus, Jesus, in his eucharistic words, is taking the place of Isaiah's messianic innocent suffering servant to redeem the sins of the world.

Jesus goes beyond identifying Himself with the new sacrificial sin-offering, and further identifies Himself with the Paschal lamb. His use of blood within the context of the Passover supper (which He celebrates with His disciples on Thursday evening) shows that He intended to do this. He loved us so much that He desired to *become* the new Passover sacrifice, replacing an unblemished lamb with His own messianic divine presence.

Recall that the blood of the Passover lamb (put on the doorposts of every Israelite household) was the instrument through which the Israelite people were protected from death (the Angel of Death passing over those houses) which enabled them to move out of slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. When Jesus (the Son of God) took the place of the paschal lamb, He transformed a merely temporal and conditional freedom (given through the Passover ritual) into a *trans*temporal freedom from slavery to sin and death which is the entryway into an eternal life of unrestricted love. Thus, He made His self-sacrifice the new vehicle for protection from death itself (for all eternity) by outshining sin and darkness with His unconditionally loving eternal light.

There is yet a third dimension of Jesus' use of blood which He explicitly states as “the blood of the covenant” (Mt 26:28 and Lk 22:20). A covenant was a solemn promise that bound parties to an unbreakable agreement. When Jesus associates His blood with the covenant, He is *guaranteeing* the covenant with His life (because blood is the principle of life). When He sheds His blood on the cross (the following day), He elevates His guarantee from the status of word-based to action-based. By shedding His blood, He has guaranteed His covenant absolutely – there can be no higher proof of the guarantee.

So, what is this covenant or contract about? In addition to guaranteeing the forgiveness of sins and the freedom/protection from evil and death, Jesus' blood covenant makes those who receive the Eucharist His **family**. As McKenzie notes, “[the covenant of blood makes] the contracting parties one blood, one family (Ex 24:38).”⁴ When Jesus makes us family members through His blood covenant, He intends that it be this way throughout eternity (so long as we do not reject Him and break the covenant with Him).

² Ibid, p. 99.

³ See Ibid, pp. 755-758.

⁴ See Ibid, pp. 155 – 156.

We may summarize by saying that Jesus' blood of the covenant is a guarantee of His unrestricted love (by giving us His whole self), a guarantee of the forgiveness of our sins (by making Himself a sin-offering), a guarantee of freedom from darkness, emptiness, and slavery to sin and evil (by taking the place of the Pascal lamb), and a guarantee of eternal life (by making us members of His divine family). This is why the Eucharistic discourse in John 6 repeats again and again that whoever eats Jesus' flesh and drinks His blood will have eternal life (See Jn 6:39, 40, 44, 47, 50, 51, 54, & 58).

II.

The Double Collapse of Time and Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist

How do we know that Jesus intended to give us His *real* body and blood – His *real* crucified and risen self – rather than a merely symbolic presence in the bread and wine? We begin with the implications of John's Eucharistic discourse (Jn 6:30-66). Consider the following:

I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; *and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh*. ... He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him (Jn 6:51 & 56).

The Beloved Disciple here could not be more clear – the bread that comes down from Heaven **is** the bread that Jesus gives (in the Holy Eucharist) which **is** His flesh for the life of the world. This bread which **is** Jesus' flesh has real power to bestow eternal life on those who receive it, and to bind those who receive it to Him (in His family), enabling Him to live in us and us to live in Him.

It is a real stretch to interpret this passage to mean that the bread Jesus gives has only symbolic significance, because "is" ("*estin*") indicates identity in predication. If the Beloved Disciple wanted to indicate mere symbolic significance, he could have used many other expressions, such as, "is like," "represents," "points to," or even "symbolizes" – but he did not. Furthermore, how does a mere symbol bind us to Jesus so that He is living in us and us in Him? Where in Israelite literature does a mere symbol have life-giving power and the power to unite divine and human beings? If the Johannine grammar and the absence of precedent indicating that mere symbols have power over life and death are not enough to convince the skeptic, the end of the Johannine discourse should make the Beloved Disciple's intention clear. In Jn 6:60 & 66, many of Jesus' disciples leave Him after hearing His discourse:

Many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, 'This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?' ... After this many of his disciples drew back and no longer went about with him.

If Jesus meant only that the bread was a mere symbol of His body and blood, it would hardly have scandalized His disciples enough to cause them to abandon Him *en masse*.

We now move to the distinctively prophetic-messianic meaning and power of Jesus' Eucharistic words and actions. Jesus' action at the Last Supper is prophetic – that is, it reaches

into the future toward its fulfillment – and in accordance with Jesus’ intention, brings the future fulfillment into the present.⁵ The first century Jewish view of time is quite different from our physical view of time. While *we* view time as physical, objectively determinant, and measurable, first century Judaism viewed it as sacred, malleable, and collapsible – particularly with respect to prophetic utterances about the future and ritual reenactments of past events.⁶

Recall from above that the prophet’s word is the living word of God which has power (apart from the prophet who uttered it) to transcend and negate the effects of time. As such, it could collapse the time between a future event (existing in the mind of God) and the present. Accordingly, when Jesus says, “This is my body which is being given for you” (Luke 22:19), He means it *is* really His body (on the cross at Calvary on Friday) transforming the bread He is handing to His disciples at the Last Supper on Thursday. Thus, through His prophetic word and action, He is bringing His future sacrificed body (existing in the mind of God which transcends time) into the bread He is giving to His disciples at the Last Supper.

This transcendence of time is implied in Luke’s account of Jesus’ Eucharistic words which uses the present passive participle “*didomenon*” which means “is being given.” Hence, Jesus’ words over the bread that He gave to His disciples were, “This is my body which is *being given* for you.” The implication is, “being given for you – *now*.” This corresponds precisely to the prophetic word going into the future to bring a salvific event into the present – the real body of Jesus on the cross on Friday being brought into the bread being handed to His disciples on Thursday.

The same holds true for the cup of wine/blood. Again, Jesus uses a present passive participle (in Hebrew/Aramaic which is translated into Greek) – “*ekchunomenon*” – which means, “is being poured out.” Thus, Jesus’ word over the cup of wine should be translated, “This cup *is being poured out* for you [*now*] is the new covenant in my blood” (Lk 22:20). In the first century Jewish view of time, Jesus is collapsing the time between the future pouring out of His blood on the cross (on Friday) and the time of the Last Supper when He hands the cup to His disciples (on Thursday).

In sum, when Jesus uttered His prophetic words at the table, He made present His *real* future body and blood sacrificed in love for humankind on the cross. For Him, the separation of time was transcended by His prophetic word and divine power – and therefore, the reality of His future body sacrificed on the cross was just as real at the Last Supper as it would be in the future.

⁵ According to Bruce Vawter, “The prophetic word lives a life of its own once it has emanated from the prophet” (Vawter, “Introduction to Prophetic Literature” **NJBC** p. 200).

⁶ See Johannes Betz “Eucharist” in *Sacramentum Mundi* ed. by Karl Rahner, Vol. 2 (London: Burns & Oates, 1968-70) pp. 260-261.

See also Joachim Jeremias *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (London: SCM Press, 1966) pp. 223-24. For an explanation of the ancient Jewish view of the collapse of time in the reenactment of the Passover, see Gerhard von Rad *Old Testament Theology, Volume II: The Theology of Israel’s Prophetic Traditions* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1965) pp. 104-108.

For studies concerned with “collapsible sacred time” in other ancient cultures, see Mircea Eliade *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1987) pp. 40-45.

See also Eliade *The Myth of the Eternal Return: Or, Cosmos and History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1971), the entire volume.

It is important to note here that first century Judaism did not have a view of a merely symbolic (abstract) prophetic utterance, but rather, the living and powerful word of God which had a life of its own.⁷ This is particularly the case for the divine Messiah – Jesus. In view of this, we should interpret Jesus’ words as He meant them – that the bread was His real crucified body being given on the cross – and that the wine was His real blood being poured out for us on the cross.

Jesus did not expect the bread to turn into the appearance of His flesh – or the wine to turn into the appearance of His blood. Though these appearances are very important to our scientific mindset, they were seen only as incidental by the first century Jewish mindset, which saw the bread as the medium through which the future salvific event is present – really present – irrespective of what it looked like.⁸

We now move to the second collapse of time, which is manifest in Jesus’ command to His disciples, “Do this in remembrance of me.” It is essential to note that Judaism (in the first millennium B.C. and into the first century A.D.) shared with other ancient cultures the view of sacred time in which the re-living or reenactment of a sacred event causes time between the present reenactment and the past event to collapse.⁹ This would enable the re-enactors to enter into the sacred moment of the past in which they could share the fruits of its saving action.¹⁰ Ancient Judaism had several rituals in which designated prophets or others would re-enact past sacred moments enabling the divine presence and salvific action of the past to become present and efficacious at the moment of re-enactment. For example, in the Jewish celebration of the Passover the re-enactment of the Passover event brought the divine presence and saving power of that event into the lives of those celebrating it.¹¹

This background sheds light on what Jesus was asking of His apostles at the Last Supper. When Jesus commissioned His disciples to “Do this in remembrance of me,” He and they would not have thought that this meant merely to call it to mind. This simplistic view of ritual re-enactment did not exist in first-century Judaism, and it would not have occurred to either party. Rather, the apostles would naturally have thought that Jesus was asking them to do a ritual re-enactment (with which they were familiar from their Jewish background) that would make His person and saving action present in the bread, wine, and ritual words being re-enacted. They would have, also, recognized that He was commissioning them and empowering them to do this very special re-enactment to bring His person and efficacious saving action to all future generations.

When Jesus commissioned the apostles to do the rite of Eucharistic remembrance, He simultaneously created a special charism for this celebration which was given to apostles and

⁷ See Vawter, “Introduction to Prophetic Literature” *NJBC* pp 199-200.

⁸ Betz *Eucharist*, p. 260.

⁹ See Mircea Eliade *The Myth of the Eternal Return*

See also Eliade *Myths, Dreams, and Mysteries* (NY: Harper and Row 1975).

¹⁰ Ibid. Eliade *The Myth of the Eternal Return*

See also, Eliade *The Sacred and the Profane* pp. 92-96 and 201-203.

¹¹ See Gerhard von Rad *Old Testament Theology*, pp. 104-108.

prophets – the two highest offices in the Church.¹² The *Didache* (composed around 70-80 A.D.) indicates that the apostles and prophets were set aside to celebrate the Eucharistic remembrance.¹³ It is not surprising that those who had the charism to bring the past salvific event into the present were called “prophets,” because the word they uttered was not their own, but the living divine word that could make past saving actions real in the present.

In sum, a ritual re-enactment was understood as a re-presentation of a *real* – not merely a symbolic or cognitive – saving event in which God’s presence and saving action are manifest. In the case of the Holy Eucharist, the divine presence is Jesus’ person (*whole self* – including His crucified and risen body and blood) bringing His unrestricted love and salvific action into the world through the self-sacrificial crucifixion and the Eucharistic celebration at the Last Supper. Johannes Betz synthesizes this complex act of “remembrance” (“*Anamnesis*”) as follows:

Anamnesis [remembrance] in the biblical sense means not only the subjective representation of something in the consciousness and as an act of the remembering mind. It is also the objective effectiveness and presence of one reality in another, especially the effectiveness and presence of the salvific actions of God, in the liturgical worship. Even in the Old Testament, the liturgy is the privileged medium in which the covenant attains *actuality*. The meaning of the logion [‘Do this in remembrance of me’] may perhaps be paraphrased as follows: ‘do this (what I have done) in order *to bring about my presence*, to make really present the salvation wrought in me.’¹⁴

In conclusion, the Eucharistic remembrance (re-enactment) brings the real objective presence of Jesus and His saving power and action of the past event into the present moment. So, when Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of me,” He meant that the apostles (and their successors – the “prophets”¹⁵) should engage in a ritual reenactment of His Eucharistic words which would make His person (whole self, including His crucified and risen body and blood), and saving action and power really present in the bread and wine.

¹² St. Paul lists the ranking of charisms/offices in the early Church in 1 Cor 12:28 – “God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues.”

¹³ See *Didache* 10:7 – “Charge the prophets to hold Eucharist as they will.”

Also in *Didache* Chapter 11 a set of rules is given to distinguish true apostles and prophets from false apostles and prophets, with the implication being that there were itinerant apostles and prophets who had to be tested before they would be allowed to celebrate the Eucharist and instruct the faithful.

¹⁴ Johannes Betz *Eucharist*, p. 260.

¹⁵ As the Church evolved, the “prophets” (who were set aside to do the Eucharistic remembrance) were known as “presbyters” (“elders”) because they also were leaders in local parishes and regions. Prophets and presbyters were later called “priests” because the separation of the Christian Church from the Synagogue enabled “priest” to be used without confusion with the Jewish priesthood. The term “priest” once again put the emphasis on Jesus’ Eucharistic *sacrifice* which embraces both the person and salvific action intrinsic to His crucifixion and Last Supper. By the late second century, the terms “priest” and “sacrifice,” are used and recognized, see Irenaeus *Against Heresies* Bk. 4, Chap. 8, par. 3.

We may now synthesize the double collapse of time initiated by Jesus at the Last Supper which actualizes Jesus' whole person –including his crucified and risen body and blood -- whenever the Eucharistic remembrance is celebrated:

- First collapse of time -- Jesus' prophetic utterance brings His real crucified body and blood (on Friday) into the present bread and wine in Jesus ritual during the Passover supper (on Thursday).
- Second collapse of time -- Future priests collapse the time between the Last Supper (in which Jesus' body and blood are really present in the bread and wine He offered to His disciples) into the present moment through the consecration at Mass -- the ritual re-enactment of Jesus' Eucharistic words.

It might be objected that time, according to science does not collapse. While it is true that *physical* time is not viewed by science as collapsible, time itself (with its earlier and later components) can only be held together by a transcendent mind which is not conditioned by time (i.e., a divine mind).¹⁶ If God is beyond all time (and time exists through the mind of God), then God can bring a future event into the present (as Jesus expects He will do in His prophetic utterance), and He can bring the reality of a past event into the present, which Jesus expects He will do when He commands His disciples to “Do this in remembrance of me.”

Given that Eliade, Jeremias, von Rad, and Betz are correct about the temporal implications of Jesus' prophetic utterance and his command to ritually reenact the institution of the Eucharist, then when we receive a consecrated Eucharistic host, we receive the whole person of Jesus (His divine personhood and human personhood, including his crucified and risen body and blood) within the saving events of His crucifixion and resurrection. This gift is divinely redemptive, protective (from evil), transformative, and life-giving (unto eternity). If we take Jesus at His word (understood through a 1st century Jewish hermeneutic), there could be no greater gift, no greater love, and no greater hope, than the Holy Eucharist.

III.

St. Paul and Early Church Fathers and the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

What did St. Paul and the early church fathers believe about the Eucharistic bread and wine? As we shall see they universally proclaimed that they were the *real* body and blood of Christ. Let us first begin with two passages from 1 Corinthians that show St. Paul's belief in the real presence of Jesus' body and blood in the Eucharistic bread and wine.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. (1 Cor 10:16-17)

¹⁶ See Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 2001), pp. 90-121.

See also, Robert J. Spitzer *New Proofs for the Existence of God*, pp. 183-196

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. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. (1 Cor. 11:27-29)

Beyond the fact that Paul identifies the bread and wine unqualifiedly with the body and blood of Jesus, he asserts that the body and blood have the power to unify us, and that their unworthy reception jeopardizes our salvation. How can a mere symbol have such power and salvific consequences?

Let us now turn to the early church fathers, who follow the beloved disciple (Jn 6:32-59) and St. Paul very closely:

I have no taste for corruptible food nor for the pleasures of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ . . . and for drink I desire his blood, which is love incorruptible. (St. Ignatius of Antioch 110 A.D.)¹⁷

We see the same conviction about the bread becoming the body of Christ and the wine becoming the blood of Christ which produces the effects of self-transformation, healing, unity, and eternal life in additional Church fathers: St. Justin Martyr (151 A.D.) *First Apology* 6, St. Irenaeus (189 A.D.) *Against Heresies* 4:33 & 5:2; Tertullian (210 A.D.), *The Resurrection of the Dead* 8; Hippolytus (217 A.D.), *Commentary on Proverbs* 9:2; Origen (248 A.D.), *Homilies on Numbers* 7:2; Cyprian of Carthage (251 A.D.), *The Lapsed* 15-16; Cyril of Jerusalem (350 A.D.), *Catechetical Lectures* 19:7; Ambrose of Milan (390 A.D.), *The Mysteries* 9:50, 58; Augustine (405 A.D.), *Explanations of the Psalms* 33:1:10.

Evidently, virtually every early Church father from St. Ignatius of Antioch to St. Augustine expressed his conviction about the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. If this had not been a well-defined part of the apostolic tradition, it would never have become such a universally strong part of the ongoing living tradition through St. Augustine.

IV. Conclusion

In light of the above, we conclude that Jesus intended that his whole person (manifest through his crucified and risen body and blood) be really present in the Eucharistic species of bread and wine at the Eucharistic remembrance he instructed his disciples to celebrate. This is evident in all known New Testament and early Church sources, such as Jesus' Eucharistic words (when understood through the hermeneutic of sacred time intrinsic to first century Jewish thought), John's Eucharistic discourse (Jn 6:30-66), St. Paul's Eucharistic declarations (in 1 Cor 10: 16-17 and 11: 27-29), the apostolic tradition, and the ongoing living tradition until this very

¹⁷ St. Ignatius of Antioch. *Letter to the Romans*, 7:3.

day. The interpretation of the real presence as “transubstantiation” first occurred at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215, and St. Thomas Aquinas gave it a metaphysical explanation which continues to be professed to the current day.¹⁸ This conclusion is further corroborated by three contemporary, scientifically investigated Eucharistic miracles to be discussed in the next unit (NT#12).

NT#12: Are There Scientifically Investigated Eucharistic Miracles Manifesting Jesus’ Body and Blood?

Note: The scientific research and publications in this unit can be found in **SDC** (Chapter 4).

Though a Eucharistic miracle occurs during every mass, there are some scientifically inexplicable manifestations of living cardiac tissue growing out of a consecrated Eucharistic host that may provide a scientifically oriented world with evidence of Jesus’s intention to give us his real body and blood at the Last Supper. The first recorded Eucharistic miracle to undergo scientific investigation occurred at Lanciano, Italy in the 8th Century, and was tested by Dr. Eodardo Linoli in 1971 and 1981. His tests indicated that the tissue growing out of the host resembled cardiac tissue, and no artificial preservatives were used to cause its remarkable longevity. However, the host was quite old and the chain of custody uncertain, and so we will focus on three contemporary Eucharistic hosts with a secure chain of custody that have undergone considerable scientific investigation in several laboratories:

1. The Host of Buenos Aires (1996). The primary scientific investigators were Dr. Ricardo Castañón Gomez and Dr. Frederick Zugibe. Ecclesiastical oversight was by Archbishop Jorge Bergoglio – now Pope Francis (Section I).
2. The Host of Tixtla, Mexico (2006). The primary scientific investigator – Dr. Ricardo Castañón Gomez – supported by eight other scientific experts (Section II).
3. The Host of Sokolka, Poland (2008). The primary scientific investigators– Dr. Maria Łotkowska and Dr. Stanislaw Sulkowski of the Medical University of Bialystok (Section III).

We will here give only the major scientifically validated highlights of these hosts showing the strong likelihood of supernatural origin.

I.

The Host of Buenos Aires 1996

Note: The scientific studies and references for Buenos Aires can be found in **SDC** (Chapter 4, Section IV).

In 1996, a host was abandoned at the back of the Church of Santa Maria y Caballito Almagro in Buenos Aires. It was placed in a glass of water and put into a tabernacle and remained in water for over three years. Instead of the host dissolving, tissue began to grow out of the substance of the host which was later revealed to be *living* cardiac tissue. The host was

¹⁸ St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Venerabili Sacramento Altaris nec non de Expositione Missae*.
<https://www.worldcat.org/title/de-venerabili-sacramento-altaris-nec-non-de-expositione-missae-ex-operibus-d-thomae-aquinatis-excerptus/oclc/26191510>

examined by Dr. Ricardo Castañón Gomez (a former adamant atheist who after examining the host converted to a fervent Catholic) as well as Dr. Frederick Zugibe (one of the world's foremost pathologists and experts in diagnostic histochemistry at Columbia University), Professor John Walker (histopathologist at the University of Sydney), and Dr. Eodardo Linoli (Professor of histology and clinical microscopy) in Rome. They found the Buenos Aires host to be scientifically inexplicable in three ways.

First, the host/tissue did not decompose after three years of being immersed in water for which there is no natural explanation (validated by Zugibe and Castañón Gomez). Secondly, the tissue was identified by Drs. Linoli and Zugibe as being heart tissue from the myocardium (left ventricle) near the valve area. This is further corroborated by Dr. Walker who identified muscular cells in the blood and Dr. Lawrence who indicated that the tissue could be inflamed heart tissue.

Thirdly, according to Drs. Linoli, Walker, and Zugibe, there are intact living white blood cells in the heart tissue, indicating that the heart tissue *was alive* at the time of testing. Thus, the host was transformed into *living* heart tissue, for which there is no known natural explanation. Inasmuch as the samples tested by Drs. Walker, Linoli, and Zugibe originated on or before September 6, 1996, and there were intact white blood cells, indicating that the heart tissue was alive at the time of testing (between 2001 to 2004), it must be concluded that this tissue is beyond natural explanation, for how can heart tissue remain alive separate from an embodied circulatory system for eight years?

There is another enigma: Despite remnants of DNA molecules in the blood, and two attempts to amplify a profile (through polymerase chain reaction), no profile could be obtained. This also occurred with the host of Tixtla – see below.

II.

The Host of Tixtla, Mexico, 2006

Note: The scientific studies and references for Tixtla can be found in **SDC** (Chapter 4, Section II).

On October 22, 2006, a religious sister looking at a host in a pix at the Church of Saint Martin of Tours in Tixtla, Mexico saw that it was effusing a reddish substance that looked like blood. After showing the host to several priests, it was secured in a tabernacle after which a scientific investigation was initiated by the Bishop who appointed Dr. Ricardo Castañón Gomez to oversee it. Several laboratories in the U.S. and Latin America were commissioned and several scientific experts joined the investigative team including an anatomical pathologist, two experts in surgical histopathology, experts in DNA biotechnology, forensic genetics, biochemistry and pharmacy, an expert in legal and forensic medicine, and two computer imaging experts.¹⁹ Scientific testing took place between 2009 to 2012, and Dr. Castañón Gomez documented all the laboratory results in Appendices 1-19 in his Volume on the miracle.²⁰ Since the evidence of

¹⁹ For a list of all the individual physicians, geneticists, and laboratories, see *Ibid.* Chapter 8.

²⁰ Dr. Ricardo Castañón Gomez, *Cronica De Un Milagroro Eucaristico: Esplendor en Tixtla Chilpancingo*, trans. by English Coaching (Fiverr), Kindle, Mexico: Grupo Internacional Para La Paz (GIPLAP) 2014.

scientific inexplicability was so well-documented and overwhelming, Bishop Alejo Zavala Castro of Chilpancingo-Chilapa declared the host to be miraculous on October 12, 2013. A scientific team concluded that three aspects of the host were scientifically inexplicable:

First, Human blood with living red blood cells and white blood cells is issuing from the Host—which die within one hour of being removed from a living circulatory system. The white blood cells (e.g., macrophages) are engaged in healing activities—phagocytizing lipids (engulfing and digesting harmful fat cells), indicating that the blood is *living* blood and that the tissue is injured. There are four indications of human blood – AB blood type, human hemoglobin, immunoglobulins, and whole blood. Since fresh blood continued to issue from the host during testing in 2010, we must ask how a consecrated host (unconnected to an embodied circulatory system) could produce fresh blood.

Secondly, there is living cardiac tissue in the interior of the host from which the blood is issuing, provoking the question of how living cardiac tissue is integrated with the substance of a consecrated host which is molecularly and structurally distinct from that host. Since fresh living blood is effusing from this tissue, it must be *living* tissue (like the Buenos Aires host). Inasmuch as the bleeding from the host began in 2006 and the activity of the white blood cells was taking place during testing in 2010 (indicating that the tissue and blood were still alive), we must ask how the tissue and blood could remain alive for four years when the tissue and blood of the host are not connected to a living circulatory system. This is not scientifically or naturalistically explicable.

Thirdly, the blood is moving from the interior of the host to the exterior (surface) of the host which is conclusively shown by pressure tests as well as the fresh blood being underneath coagulating (older) blood. This implies that new blood is being created in the interior of the host pushing outward. These effects exclude the possibility of someone fraudulently placing blood in the interior of the host. This has no naturalistic explanation.

Like the host of Buenos Aires, the blood and tissue samples used for DNA analysis showed evidence of DNA molecules, but after multiple attempts, researchers could not amplify a profile through polymerase chain reaction. This is a real conundrum because the blood and tissue were alive at the time of the testing (meaning they can't be too old to produce a profile) and the sample size was more than adequate. Why can't a DNA profile be found on the Tixtla and Buenos Aires host?

III.

The Host of Sokolka, Poland (2009)

Note: The scientific studies and references on the Sokolka host can be found in **SDC** (Chapter 4, Section III).

On Sunday, October 12, 2008, during a mass at St. Anthony's Church in Sokolka, Poland, a host was dropped by a vicar, who was distributing communion. He picked up the Host and after examining it, placed it into a glass of water and secured it in a safe. After one week, the sacristan

<https://www.amazon.com/Cr%C3%B3nica-Milagro-Eucar%C3%ADstico-Esplendor-Chilpancingo-ebook/dp/B00OQGJG40>

checked on the state of the host and found that it had a bright red stain which was later discovered to be cardiac tissue growing out of the host (see below). The host remained in water for 48 days, after which the Archbishop asked that it be removed and kept on a corporal in a dry place. After two and a half years, the Archbishop requested a scientific study be done, and samples of the host were given to two histopathologists at the Medical University of Bialystok for *independent* examinations -- Prof. Maria Elżbieta Sobaniec-Łotkowska MD, and Prof. Stanislaw Sulkowski, MD. They concluded that the consecrated host was scientifically inexplicable in three ways:

1. The host remained in water for 48 days without notable decomposition of either the substance of the host or the cardiac tissue growing out of it.
2. The tissue growing out of the host is *living* cardiac tissue. The indicators of cardiac tissue are cellular nuclei in the fibrils resembling contraction nodes as well as inserts that typify damaged *cardiac* muscle. The indications of the tissue being alive (non-necrosed) are segmentation and fragmentation that are typically produced by rapid beating of the heart shortly before death. These phenomena do not occur in necrosed fibers.
3. The substance of the host and the substance of the living heart tissue are inextricably integrated with only a few microns of separation. This was observed through both a light microscope and a transmission electron microscope. This is not only scientifically inexplicable, but as Dr. Sobaniec-Łotkowska declared: “Even NASA scientists, who have at their disposal the most modern analytical techniques, would not be able to artificially recreate such a thing.”

IV. Conclusion

The combined scientific analysis of the hosts of Buenos Aires, Tixtla, and Sokolka indicate through many different tests in many different laboratories with many scientific experts that living cardiac tissue is found to be growing out of consecrated Eucharistic hosts. In the case of Tixtla, fresh blood continues to issue from the host, and in the case of Sokolka (where transmission electron microscopic analysis was done), the integration of the substance of the host and the substance of the cardiac tissue was so complex and refined as to be unreplicable by the best technologies today. Despite the presence of DNA molecular structures in the samples from the Buenos Aires and Tixtla hosts, no DNA profile was amplifiable by polymerase chain reaction, which is highly unusual given that the tissue was alive at the time of testing. Is this linked to the fact that Jesus had no genetic contribution from a human father?

One last consideration – the cardiac tissue from all three hosts was wounded. This is evidenced in the living white blood cells performing healing functions in the Buenos Aires and Tixtla hosts as well as the fragmentation and segmentation in the tissue (caused by rapid beating from trauma to the heart prior to death) in the Sokolka host. What better sign of the real presence of Jesus’ body and blood given on the cross at calvary could there possibly be? The irony is that science has not undermined this miracle but has brought its supernatural character to light.