

Week 40: Catechism Stories (The Sacrament of the Altar)

- Water from the Rock – Exodus 17:1-7
- Touching the Hem of His Garment – Luke 8:40-56
- Jesus Celebrates the Passover – Matthew 26:17-35
- The Feeding of the Five Thousand – John 6:1-21
- Jesus is the Bread from Heaven – John 6:22-44

Where did the Israelites camp?

In Rephidim.

What problem did they encounter?

There was no water for the people to drink.

When had this happened previously? (See Exodus 15:22-27.)

Three days after crossing the Red Sea at Marah, they couldn't drink the bitter water.

Did they remember?

No, they did not remember.

How do we remember properly? (See John 8:31-32 and 14:26.)

We should hold to the teaching in the Word.

With whom did the people contend?

They quarreled with Moses.

Whom were the people really accusing?

God.

What did the people wish they had done?

Stayed in Egypt.

What did Moses worry?

He thought the people were ready to stone him.

What did the LORD tell Moses to take?

He told Moses to take some elders with him and also the rod with which he struck the river.

Where was Moses to stand?

By the rock in Horeb.

What was he to do?

He was to strike the rock, and water would come out of it for the people to drink.

How is this rock identified in the New Testament? (See 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.)

The rock was Christ.

What name did Moses give to the place?

Massah and Meribah.

What do the names mean?

Massah means "testing" and Meribah means "contention" or "quarreling."

How is the question of the Israelites in verse 7 related to the life of the baptized? (See Matthew 28:19-20.)

The LORD is among us according to His word of promise in Baptism.

Meditation:

Faith cannot be built on experience, but only upon the Word of God. Both at the Nile and at the Red Sea, Israel had experienced the command of God over water. They had known the wonder of bitter waters made sweet, but they still questioned whether the LORD was among them. Yet, the LORD in His mercy used the wooden staff to open up the Rock and pour forth life-giving water, just as the Rock, Jesus, was split open by the cross to pour forth the life-giving waters of Baptism. Because we have been marked with water and the Word, we are certain of our salvation and the Lord's presence among us. Daily we return to our Baptism to claim the victory which is ours through Christ. Likewise, from the side of Christ the blood flows that we may drink His blood and have eternal life.

Who came to Jesus?

Jairus.

What was he?

A ruler of the synagogue.

What was wrong with his daughter?

She was dying.

How old was she?

Twelve.

What happened as Jesus was going to the man's house?

The multitudes crowded Him.

What was wrong with the woman who could not be healed?

She had a flow of blood which would not stop.

How long had she suffered?

Twelve years.

What did she do?

Came up behind Jesus and touched the edge of His garment.

What was the result?

Her bleeding stopped.

What did Jesus ask?

Who touched Me?

What did He say when no one responded?

He knew power had gone out from Him.

What did the woman do?

Fell down before Jesus and declared what she had done.

What did Jesus call her?

Daughter.

Why is this important for the story?

It connects her to the other daughter, the daughter of Jairus.

How was she healed?

Her faith received the power of the resurrection.

What news came from the house of Jairus?

His daughter was dead.

What did the messenger say to Jairus?

Do not trouble the Teacher.

What did Jesus promise Jairus?

Believe, and she will be made well.

Who went with Jesus into the child's room?

Peter, James, and John, and the child's father and mother.

What were the people doing?

Weeping and mourning.

What did Jesus say to them?

She is not dead, but sleeping.

How did the people react?

They laughed at Jesus.

What did Jesus do to the child?

Took her by the hand and told her to get up.

What did Jesus instruct the parents to do?

Give her something to eat.

Of what should we be reminded?

The Lord's Supper, where we receive the body and blood of Christ for our life and salvation, follows upon our receiving new life in Holy Baptism.

What does the number twelve represent in the story?

The tribes of Israel and the apostles.

What do the two daughters represent?

The Church of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Meditation:

The woman who had been bleeding for twelve years represented Israel who had endured the hardships of exile and had been slowly dying as they rejected the words of the prophets. The woman touched Christ's clothing in faith that He would save her, and her bleeding was stopped for He is the Word made flesh. His clothing is to be ours through Baptism, and the power which flows forth from Him is the healing power of His own body and blood. The twelve-year-old girl represents the New Testament church built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. Christ has raised up the Gentiles from the death of unbelief. He now touches us with His own body and blood in the Sacrament that He might drive away the power of death as certainly as He did for this little girl. Jesus bids us to come and be fed at His table as those who have died and been raised again in Holy Baptism. He bids us to believe His words and receive exactly what they say: forgiveness of sins.

What day is mentioned?

The first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

What was the Feast of Unleavened Bread? (See Exodus 12:5-6, 15-20.)

An Old Testament feast of seven days marking the day the LORD brought the armies of Israel out of Egypt, celebrated from the fourteenth to twenty-first day of the first month. Nothing leavened was to be eaten in those days, and a holy convocation occurred on the first and seventh days.

What did the disciples want to do?

Prepare for Jesus to eat the Passover.

When did Jesus issue similar instructions? (See Matthew 21:2.)

Before His entrance into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

How did Jesus actually prepare these things?

By His Word.

What was Jesus' time which was at hand?

The hour of His crucifixion.

Who was with Jesus at the Passover?

The Twelve.

What did Jesus reveal to them in verse 21?

One of the Twelve would betray Him.

What did each of the disciples say?

Lord, is it I?

How did Jesus identify His betrayer?

The one who dipped his hand with Jesus in the dish.

According to verse 24, why did these things happen?

According to the written word, that is, the Old Testament Scriptures.

What did Jesus say about His betrayer?

Woe to him. It would have been better for him that he had never been born.

Why did Jesus address Judas directly?

Judas asked Him the direct question.

What did Jesus take in His hand in verse 26?

The unleavened bread.

What did He ask His disciples to do with it?

Take it and eat.

What does Jesus say about the bread?

This is My body.

Why is the unleavened bread also the body of Jesus?

The word of Christ makes it the body of Christ.

What did Jesus take next?

The cup.

What was in the cup?

Grape wine.

What were they to do with the one cup?

They were all to drink from it.

What does Jesus say about the cup?

This is My blood of the new covenant.

Why is the wine also the blood of Jesus?

The word of Christ makes it the blood of Christ.

Why did Jesus use the term “covenant”? (See Exodus 24:7-8 and Jeremiah 31:31-34.)

The first covenant of the Law was sealed with the blood of bulls, but this covenant is sealed with the blood of the Son of God for the forgiveness of sins.

What term do we use to say that the bread and wine are really the body and blood of Christ?

The Real Presence.

According to Jesus, what is the benefit of this eating and drinking? (See verse 28.)

The remission of sins.

To what day might Jesus be referring in verse 29?

The evening of Easter Sunday when He ate and drank with them again.

What did Jesus and His disciples sing before leaving?

A hymn, probably Psalm 118.

Where did they go?

The Mount of Olives.

What did Jesus tell all the disciples?

That night they would all stumble because of Him.

What passage did He quote?

Zechariah 13:7.

What is the importance of this passage? (See Zechariah 12:10 and 13:1-7.)

A fountain is to be opened for sin and uncleanness just as the fountain that sprang from the side of Christ at the cross. The language of wounds in the hands that were given in the house of friends is also associated with the striking down of the Shepherd who would be looked upon when He was pierced.

What bit of Gospel did He give them to cling to in the hours ahead?

He reminded them that He would be raised from the dead and meet them in Galilee.

What was Peter's boast?

He would never stumble.

What did Jesus tell Peter?

Before the rooster crowed that night, Peter would deny Him three times.

How did Peter respond?

Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!

Who agreed with Peter?

All the disciples.

What is the foolishness of their offering to die with Him?

Only Jesus, God in the flesh, could atone for the sins of the world.

Would they eventually die with Him?

Yes.

Meditation:

Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! By His own word Jesus set aside the place of the Passover feast, for the time had come for Him to be sacrificed. As ancient Israel ate the Passover on the night of their deliverance from death and was marked by the sacrificial blood at Sinai, so now we are to be marked with the blood of the One who is the perfect sacrifice in order that death may pass over us. His Word makes common bread and wine become His true body and blood that, as we eat and drink, our sins might be covered over and completely forgiven. Faith clings to the words which Christ speaks so that we are not only strengthened in the physical body by this eating and drinking, but faith too is strengthened and life and salvation are freely given. Those who eat and drink with Him shall surely share in His sufferings that they may also share in His glory.

Where was Jesus?

By the Sea of Galilee.

Why was the crowd following Jesus?

Because He had performed miraculous signs.

Where did Jesus go with His disciples?

Up on a mountain.

What Jewish Feast was near?

Passover.

What question did Jesus ask Philip?

Where to buy bread to feed the people.

Why?

To test Philip.

What was Philip's response?

Two hundred denarii (about eight months' wages) couldn't buy enough bread.

What is the significance of the number 200? (See John 21:8.)

It connects this sign to the resurrection.

What did Andrew find?

A boy with five barley loaves and two small fish.

What do the five barley loaves symbolize?

The Law.

To what prophetic miracle are they related? (See 2 Kings 4:42-44.)

Elisha feeding the one hundred men with the twenty loaves of barley bread.

What do the two fish represent?

The Old and New Testament church.

What did Jesus have the people do?

Sit down.

Why did John make a point of saying "there was much grass in that place"? (See Psalm 23 and John 10:9, 11.)

It connects this feeding to the work of the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep.

How many men are present?

About 5000.

What is the significance of 5000? (See John 1:17.)

Since 5 is the number of the Law and 1000 is the number of fulfillment, this represents Jesus' fulfillment of the Law.

Of what should the opening words of verse 11 remind you?

The Words of Institution.

What is the importance of fish in this story? (See John 21:9-14.)

It is another connection to the resurrection.

Why did Jesus give instructions about the leftovers? (See Exodus 12:10 and 2 Kings 4:42-44.)

They identify Jesus as the Prophet and the new Passover Lamb.

What did the disciples do with the leftovers?

Gathered them up.

How much did they gather?

Twelve baskets of pieces of barley loaves.

What did the people confess about Jesus?

He is the Prophet who is to come into the world.

Why did they call Him the Prophet? (See Deuteronomy 18:15-20.)

It identified Him as the one who spoke the word of God and was the Messiah.

Why might they have said this? (See Exodus 16.)

Because Jesus provided bread just as Moses had.

What did Jesus know about the people?

They were about to come and make Him king by force.

Which sign of Jesus is this in John's Gospel? (See John 2:11, 4:54, and 5:8.)

The fourth.

Meditation:

The 5000 men remind us that our Lord is the fulfillment of the five books of Moses. The One greater than Moses gave earthly bread in abundance from the mountainside. He is the Good Shepherd who has come to feed His sheep in the abundant pastures to which He is also the Gate. The five loaves also point to the fulfillment of the Law while the two fish portray His gracious activity in filling the nets of the church with men of both the Old and New Testament time periods. The feeding took place at the Passover because Jesus was to be our Passover Lamb and free us from captivity to Satan. As He gathered His disciples around a similar meal of bread and fish after the resurrection, so now Jesus gathers us around a meal of the bread over which He has given thanks. The twelve baskets of leftovers signify that this great gift of the Lord's Supper is to be treasured by the church built upon the foundation of the prophets and twelve apostles. In this Supper our Lord bestows the healing power of the resurrection upon us.

What had happened the previous day? (See verse 19.)

Jesus walked on water.

What did the crowds do?

They got into boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

According to verse 26, why were they looking for Jesus?

Because they ate of the loaves and were filled.

What advice did Jesus offer?

Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to everlasting life.

In verse 28, were they asking a question of Law or Gospel?

Law.

Did Jesus answer with Law or Gospel?

Gospel.

What does Jesus want from us?

To believe in Him.

Whose work is faith?

God's.

Did they understand His words?

No.

What did they want from Jesus?

A miraculous sign.

What did Jesus explain about Moses?

Moses did not give the bread from heaven.

Who is the bread of God?

He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

When they asked for that bread, what did Jesus say?

I am the Bread of Life.

What did the Jews refuse to do even though they had seen Jesus?

Believe.

What promise is made in verse 37?

Whoever comes to Me I will not drive away.

Why has Jesus come down from heaven?

To do the will of the One who sent Him.

What is the will of the Father?

Everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life.

What did the Jews grumble about Jesus?

Isn't He the son of Joseph?

What important truth is stated in verse 44?

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.

Meditation:

Like the Israelites of old, the Jews sought the food which perishes. They wanted Jesus to be their earthly "Bread-King" who would supply them with all the food they desired. Israel had not been content with the first bread from heaven in the days of Moses, and now they were rejecting the Bread from heaven, the Word made flesh, who is the one greater than Moses. He offered them a better food, but they still asked what works they needed to do for God. Jesus called them to believe that He is that Bread, yet told them that even faith is a work of God. The Father gives the sheep to the Shepherd and He will not drive them away. Instead, the Shepherd feeds the flock upon His own flesh and blood that they may be raised at the Last Day and have eternal life. To believe in the Son is to believe His words which clearly proclaim that the bread and wine in the Sacrament of the Altar are His own body and blood for the forgiveness of sins.