

The Holy Eucharist

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St Basil before the holy altar, celebrating the Divine Liturgy. Byzantine fresco of the 11th century in the church of St Sophia in Ohrid, in modern-day FYROM.

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks [Gr. euchariste’sas], He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me’” (1 Cor. 11:23-25).

With these words – quoting the same words of Christ in Luke 22:19, 20 – St. Paul instructs the Corinthians concerning the Eucharist, the giving of thanks. Some two

thousand years after Jesus gave Himself “for the life of the world” (John 6:51), there are in Christendom at least three different interpretations of His words.

How do we view the Eucharist?

For the first thousand years of Christian history, when the Church was visibly one and undivided, the holy gifts of the Body and Blood of Christ were received as just that: His Body and Blood. The Church confessed this was a mystery: The bread is truly His Body, and that which is in the cup is truly His Blood, but one cannot say how they become so. ([περισσότερα...](#))