

St. Paul and the Lord's Supper (Corpus Christi, Year C)

1 Corinthians 11:23-26—Paul's and the Last Supper

²³ *For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread,* ²⁴ *and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."* ²⁵ *In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."* ²⁶ *For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.* (1 Cor 11:23-26)

1. Tradition: what I "delivered" (Greek *paradidōmi*) to you (11:23)
2. Eucharist: when he had "given thanks" (Greek *eucharisteō*) (11:24)
3. Haggadah: you "proclaim" the Lord's death (Greek *katangelō*) (11:26; cf. Passover)
4. Second Coming: until he "comes"; eschatological aspect (11:26)

Living Tradition

Vatican II: *Thus, the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved in a continuous line of succession until the end of time.* Hence the apostles, in handing on what they themselves had received, warn the faithful to maintain the traditions which they had learned either by word of mouth or by letter (cf. 2 Th. 2:15); and they warn them to fight hard for the faith that had been handed on to them once and for all (cf. Jude 3). What was handed on by the apostles comprises everything that serves to make the People of God live their lives in holiness and increase their faith. *In this way the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes.* (Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation 8)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (Corpus Christi, Year C)

1. What is the relationship between the celebration of the Eucharist and sacred Tradition? What do Paul's words reveal about the source and nature of sacred Tradition?

For Further Reading

1. Brant Pitre, Michael P. Barber, and John Kincaid. *Paul, a New Covenant Jew: Rethinking Pauline Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2019.