

## **THE DIVINE EXCHANGE OF LOVE** by Rick McKinney, November, 2020

God the Father is a loving giver and the God the Son receives God the Father's love and gives love back to the Father through the Holy Spirit who is the Spirit of Love in the divine exchange of the divine persons of the blessed Trinity. Love begets love. It is by nature reciprocal. And from all eternity God's desire is to extend and enlarge this Trinitarian family of love and He has done so through the creation of we tangible beings, made in His image and likeness, who have been endowed with the physical, psychological, spiritual and volitional capability of knowingly receiving love and willingly giving love to both God and to one another.

A working definition of love would be recognizing and appreciating a person's unique value and desiring and working wisely for that person's best interest. God values each person made in his image and likeness and desires and works wisely for each person's best interest much as loving parents do for each one of their children for no other reason than they are their children.

It is written that God the Father so loved the people in the world that He gave His only begotten Son so that all people who believe in His Son, Jesus, might not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). Now love without sacrifice is cheap and not worthy of the name of love. Jesus means "Yahweh is savior," for God the Son is a tangible, loving and sacrificial savior. God the Son manifests himself and his glory by saving and giving himself up in love for we little people, His people.

Recently, at Mass when I heard the celebrant say, "This is my body, given up for you," the inspired thought came to me that before Jesus could say that to his disciples during the last supper, there was another person, who, in essence, said it before him, "This is my body given for you, my son." That of course was his mother, Mary, whose womb was his home for nine months while his body slowly developed, took human shape and was nurtured by Mary's body through his umbilical cord, where the vital cord blood exchange takes place. Christ was and is in Mary and Mary's life was and is in Christ. She is our model and our spiritual mother for we are hidden in Christ.

During Holy Communion a divine exchange also takes place. The Father offers the Son. The Son offers himself back to the Father and to us the recipients of the body of Christ, but we are also, in fact, the body of Christ and we offer ourselves back to God as true participants in the divine nature. Even the earth that received the blood Christ in its time participates in its offering of wheat which earth has given and human hands have made. Through the Holy Spirit there is a mutual giving and receiving among all the participants in this loving communion of persons which is a foretaste of heaven and the nuptial wedding feast of Christ, the bridegroom and we, his bride.

Angels, who are pure spirits and messengers and adorers of God, long to look at these things, but as onlookers for they were not made with bodies and are not members of the body of Christ or the bride of Christ, such is reserved for we, God's children.

I did not ponder these mysteries right away after Mass for I began painfully passing a kidney stone and sought distractions from the television, but to no avail, until I turned it off and began to think about what God had showed me at Mass. I was even given a song with the continuing verse, "This is my body given for you." After singing the verses awhile I noticed that my pain was gone and that the stone had passed or shall I say, it was rolled away by the risen Christ.