

The Effect of Sin on Eucharistic Beings

The creation of the world and its re-creation in and through Christ Jesus are interconnected by various links in the history of salvation, one of which is human hunger. Man and woman are created as beings who suffer hunger according to the book of Genesis. God, in turn, gives them creation to satisfy their hunger. “*See, I give you every seed-bearing plant all over the earth and every tree that has seed-bearing fruit on it to be your food.*” (Gen 1:29) When God re-creates the world in and through His Son Jesus Christ, the image of satisfying that hunger is central: “*You will eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom.*” (Lk 22:30) The prophet Isaiah describes the Heavenly banquet with these words: “*On this mountain the Lord of hosts will provide for all peoples a feast of rich food and pure, choice wines.*” (Is 25:6) Therefore, man is described by Divine Revelation as a being that suffers hunger in his body but also for the courts of the living God. “*Oh God, you are my God, for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry weary land without water.*” (Ps. 63:2-4) “*My soul shall be filled as with a banquet.*” (Ps. 63:6) “*My soul is thirsting for the living God; when will I enter the courts of the Lord and see the face of God?*” (Ps. 42:2-3) Consequently, man and woman do not simply suffer hunger in the flesh but also in their spirit; their soul suffers hunger for God, for the sacramental life of the Church that Jesus has given to her from his pierced side. Man and woman hunger for the Eucharistic God.



But from the origins of man and woman and their hunger in the Garden of Eden we also encounter the disfiguration and contortion of that hunger caused by Satan and his deceit. The horror of the sin of the Garden of Eden is that man refused to return God's love with their obedience. Man chose instead to love the world as an end in itself, and not as a gift of God. Man looked at the material world created by God as desirable because he was deceived into believing it would give him something God had not. Instead of receiving creation as a gift from God, man and woman lusted for it. St. John warns of the effect of original sin and its poisonous fruit, *lust*:

Have no love for the world, nor the things that the world affords. If anyone loves the world, the Father's love has no place in him, for nothing that the world affords comes from the Father. Carnal allurements, enticements of the eye, the life of empty show, all these are from the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

Before man and woman sinned they saw the world spiritually, as a gift, as “life of God”, as Eucharistic, filled with life, meaning and spirit. In the world before sin there was perfect communion between God and man, between man and nature and between nature and God. Now, in the full maturation of the contradiction sin infuses in opposition to the truth that life gives, namely, that the world is in fact a gift of God, **man lives as if it is natural not to live a life of thanksgiving for God's gift of the world.** Sinful unredeemed man and woman lives not as a Eucharistic being, one who receives all from God as a gift. Rather, man and woman became graspers and takers, using their energy, intelligence and reason to possess and own as much of the world as they can. Because of sin, it seems natural not to be Eucharistic beings. The consequences of this inversion of reality are grave. Man fails to offer the world to God and in return receive the gift of life from God. Instead man tries to take the gift of life (*symbolized in the eating of the tree of life*)*. Instead of being dependent on God, he becomes dependent on the world, and this misdirects his love from being turned toward God in gratitude to being turned toward the world and his **self** poisoned by greed. Man and woman are still hungry, but their hunger is turned toward the world and not toward God. Therefore, he is enslaved to the world. This is precisely why Jesus exclaims: “I give you my assurance, everyone who lives in sin is the slave of sin.” (John 8:34) But less we lose hope, God has given us the Son to set us free from the enslavement of sin, for only if Jesus Christ frees us will we truly be free. (cf. John 8:36) That is what living a Eucharistic life gives to the believer. He lives in the freedom of God which is not a freedom that gives free rein to the flesh, but a freedom for truth, love and thanksgiving, a freedom to receive creation as a gift from God.

*A modern image of this is the science of fertility and cloning. Both represent man's taking of life and not receiving it.