

**Love and Transformation** Solemnity **St. Margaret Mary Alacoque**, virgin, (parish patroness) Anniversary of the Dedication of a Church Tuesday, October 16, 2018 2  
**Chr 5:6-10, 13—6:2;** Eph 3:14-19; **Jn 2:13-22** (Her favorite symbol was the Sacred Heart, but it's the whole action of God becoming human, living out a mission, serving others, suffering injustice, betrayal, and eventually death—all pouring out the love of God.)

**“Therefore when he was raised from the dead his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they came to believe the Scripture and the word Jesus had spoken.”**

This is very significant. The disciples really didn't believe what Jesus said until the resurrection. The resurrection is the turning point; without it there is nothing. **Without the resurrection there's no Church.** But in this incident that I just read about the **cleansing of the temple** Jesus is already in a prophetic way, through signs and actions which prophets often used, **talking about the new temple that is his body.** Don't forget Jesus is the Word of God who has entered into humanity and joined humanity to himself. This is the **marriage of divinity and humanity. And this is to make of humanity a new temple**, which makes the old temple and the sacrifice of the old temple obsolete, mere shadows or foreshadows of something real.

Now you may have remembered that in the first reading from Chronicles there were **two cherubim who are on either side of the mercy seat in the temple.** The mercy seat is the place where in the Jewish mind, in the Israelite mind, God dwelt in some sort of quasi-physical sense; he aboded himself there. And it is to the mercy seat that the sacrifice of atonement on Yom Kippur was brought and poured forth. But when Jesus was raised from the dead and the disciples went to the **tomb, there were two angels on either side of where he had lain**, because that is now the new mercy seat. The tomb is, in a way, the new temple or better it's the place where the new temple had been. **Now the new temple is given life and is raised up in glory.** Hebrews has Jesus going into the holy of holies of heaven, that's the heaven of heavens, the true presence of God the Father, and bringing his blood, so that the sacrifice is a living sacrifice, which term we use in the Third Eucharistic Prayer, a living sacrifice. So **the sacrifice, when we talk about Eucharist, is the bread and wine, and the body and blood and life of Jesus that died on the cross, but it's also the living sacrifice of Jesus' heavenly priesthood.** And this is what was being prophetically foreshadowed in the expulsion of the old things: the sheep, the doves, the goats, the past. That's

what used to be. They are just in a sense trifles. Now we are entering into **true worship in Spirit and truth**, to use an expression found in the story of the Samaritan Woman.

This is something **St. Margaret Mary** understood very well. She understood that God became human in pouring out his love. **Her favorite symbol was the Sacred Heart, but it's the whole action of God becoming human, living out his mission, serving others, suffering injustice, betrayal, and eventually death—all pouring out the love of God.** For what reason? So that we could return to God his love. **She understood the Eucharist very well and the meaning of the Sacrifice of the Mass: it completes the circle of glory: from God back to God.** She saw that the only thing we can offer God is God's own love and this is what repairs the damage done by sin.

So in many ways the saints have led us to **a life of giving oneself, pouring oneself out, living in utter simplicity the infinite love of God poured forth in Christ**, which we are privileged to receive in all the sacraments, but **primarily the Eucharist, whose work it is to transform us into the image of God.**

Now it's true we are created in the image of God in some sort of potential sense, but in many ways **human life**, as it tends to be, as it arises naturally, you might say, in human culture and society, **is very distorted.** The potential is there for reason, for love, for will, for freedom, but it's distorted, it's become self-important, self-centered, corrupted by egoism. But the **Eucharist transforms it**, transforms the image of God in our souls into the real thing. This is what Margaret Mary herself demonstrates, as do really all the saints. **So we ourselves are called to that same sainthood, that same holiness, that same likeness to God.**