

## **POSSIBLE ORIGINS OF THE MASS**

I've wondered many times about the origin of the mass. I've never been able to find a direct answer, but the following two stories could be examples:

1. The original disciples introducing Christ and his teachings to foreigners.
2. The story of 'The Road to Emmaus'.

### **TEACHING CHRISTIANITY TO FOREIGNERS.**

When the risen Christ showed his disciples the holes in his hands and feet made when he was crucified and the one in his side made by a Roman soldier's spear thrust, even the most sceptical were convinced he was the Son of God. They now had no hesitation to take the words of Jesus Christ to foreign lands.

The problem they must have had was convincing people to listen to them, but they did have two things to help them. One was that storytelling was a great form of entertainment. The other was that the Israelites had many great and exciting stories about their history:

The flood, Sodom and Gomorrah, Joseph, Moses, Kings David and Solomon, and many others.

This could have been a great way to get their audience to listen to them.

These stories were a great way of introducing their one God and the promise of a Messiah. Once their listeners were enthralled, they could introduce Jesus Christ as the Messiah and tell what had happened, with themselves being eyewitnesses. If their listeners were then interested, they could absolve their sins and give them consecrated bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ.

If this is what happened, then all this was a two-part process:

1. Listening to the Word of God as in the Israelite scriptures.
2. Taking the consecrated bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ.

Isn't this the simple format of the mass?

### **THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**

Immediately after the death of Jesus, the disciples, in fear for their lives, hid in a secret room in Jerusalem. On the third day after the death of their master Jesus Christ, two disciples thought they would be a lot safer if they were back in their hometown of Emmaus and set out to go there as fast as possible on foot.

Back in Jerusalem, Jesus rose from the dead as he'd promised. Meanwhile, a stranger approached the two disciples on the road home to

Emmaus and asked if he could walk with them. They agreed, and when he asked why they were so sad, they told him about the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth. He then engaged them in a debate about the scriptures and what these foretold about the Messiah.

When they reached Emmaus, the two disciples, impressed by the stranger's wisdom, asked him to stay with them overnight. He agreed, and when they started to eat, he took the bread, blessed it, and broke it just like Jesus had done at The Last Supper. They now realized that here was the risen Christ. He'd kept his promise and had risen from the dead. **He was truly the Son of God.**

They didn't hang around; they wanted their fellow disciples to know what they now knew. Disregarding their safety, they immediately returned to Jerusalem to tell the other disciples about seeing the risen Christ, telling them "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

The two disciples had gone back into the jaws of death to the city of Jerusalem, from which they'd fled in fear for their lives a few days earlier. They were now in no doubt that the stranger they had met was their lord and master, Jesus Christ. He had risen from the dead as promised, and they wanted their colleagues to have the same burning hearts that they'd experienced. Returning in fear for their lives as they had done was proof of what they'd seen and heard. They wanted their colleagues to know that they were no longer afraid and were ready to teach Christ's message of love to people worldwide.

The two disciples had been engaged with a stranger, learning more about the scriptures in a way that made their hearts burn.

They saw the stranger bless, then break bread, and bless the wine, as Jesus did at the 'Last Supper'.

Again this was a two part process:

1. Discussing the Scriptures - Liturgy of the Word.
2. Receiving Holy Communion - Liturgy of the Eucharist.

} THE  
} MASS

Isn't this the simple format of the mass as we know it today?

Could these happenings have been the source of the mass?