

# The Concept of Sacrifice in Christianity and in Hinduism

## A Comparative Study

Dissertation of the University of Lucerne, Faculty of Theology

Submitted by

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Thesis approved on November 29, 2013

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Lucerne, 2016



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Urn Number: urn:nbn:ch:bel-85469

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## **Acknowledgements**

As i finish this work, i would like to gratefully remember all those to whom i am indebted for this accomplishment. I remember sincerely and gratefully my moderator Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Müller OP, for his scholarly guidance and fraternal

correction and encouragements. He helped me in a spirit of friendship, laying at my disposal his valuable time and scholarly knowledge.

I am also grateful to all the staff of the Faculty of Theology of the University Luzern, Switzerland for all the knowledge that i have received from them. I remember with gratitude the Diocese of Basel, Switzerland, for the scholarship which i received for my doctoral studies. I express my sincere thanks to my loving parents, brothers and sisters who accompanied me on my journey and supported me with their prayers. I am grateful to my Dominican Family, all my former Provincials and the present for their encouragements. I am grateful to all my benefactors, friends and well-wishers in Switzerland who supported me in the course of my studies in one way or another. I remember all of them with great gratitude and love. May the Lord bless them all.



## **ABSTRACT**

Every religion is something good. In this dissertation the author tries to discover some similarities in both the Christianity and Hinduism. Both the religions are good in themselves. India is a country with multi religious cultures and differences. They exist side by side. They have something unique to offer to the society. The goal of the research and study of the author is to bring out some converging points in both the religions where we can meet together and dialogue with each other. The Hindu religion has its own practices and religious traditions which need to be respected and appreciated. The Hinduism itself is a way of life to encounter the divine and to reach out to the ultimate goal. The Vedic sacrifice was an ancient traditional practice of the Hindus by which the people tried to connect themselves with the divine. The Vedic sacrifice was the centre and pillar of the Vedic people through which the people were able to draw strength and inspiration from the God whom they worshipped. The Vedas are the important Scriptures which are directly revealed by God. The ancient fathers of the Hindu traditions were able to meditate on the word of the Vedas and were inspired by the word of God. The ancient people had a profound desire to relate themselves with the divine. Hence the sacrifice was one of the means of transcending above themselves to the God who provided them with all they needed. The fundamental yearning of the people to be related with the God was a basic need of the ancient people. The Vedic people always desired to be redeemed by their God. Hence they used sacrifices for attaining salvation. One had to constantly sacrifice in order to obtain salvation.

The ancient Vedic people performed various kinds of sacrifices such as animal sacrifices and human sacrifices in order to come to the experience of the divine. Such sacrifices are not done today in this modern world. This is mainly due to the elaborate expenses and arrangements. But the Vedic sacrifices have taken different forms and modes in the modern Hindu culture. The very spirit of the Vedic sacrifices is being kept alive even today in Hinduism.

## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

### **I Motivation**

First of all I would like to mention the motivation and the ground for my study of the concept of sacrifice. The inspiration that prompted me to do a research on this particular theme 'sacrifice' is none other than my own personal interest and desire to deepen my knowledge of the Eucharist and Hinduism. This knowledge and sufficient information about Hinduism which I may obtain from this study, I thought, is ultimately necessary in order to appreciate and accept it as an authentic way of life and to understand better the existing religious situations in India. Hinduism is one of the major religions in India and to work as a Catholic priest in such a multi- religious situations meaningfully, one must, by all means, have a deep and profound knowledge of the religious practices, customs and traditions. The knowledge about the various religious traditions in India, especially about Hinduism, enables one to approach the people compassionately and to enter into a meaningful and friendly dialogue with them without any prejudices and fear. No Christian can be a good Christian without having a fraternal and healthy relationship with his brothers and sisters, especially those belonging to other religions. Today it is an urgent need of the Indian Church to know the culture, language and the religions of the people. My study would surely enable me to develop within me a basic thirst and love to enter deep into the lives, culture and the problems of the people of other religions and to understand them better. It helps me to understand their languages, to address their problems and questions they ask and to recognize the truth which they profess. Ultimately my research on this topic can be a starting point and a basis for the process of dialogue with the people of other religions. This comparative study helps me to know the hidden truth in other religious traditions and is really an impetuous to work further in this line of dialogue and mutual co-operation with other religions together to discover the truth of our faith and that of other religions. It is not possible for the Indian Church today to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ to all our brothers and sisters and to read the

signs of the time unless and until it is prepared to open its eyes, ears and its heart to the other religious traditions and to their teachings. As the Second Vatican Council teaches one has to be prepared to find and accept the ray of truth in other religious traditions. The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions.<sup>1</sup> The present study has ultimately the intention of understanding, knowing and appreciating the cultural traditions and the truth of other religions especially of Hinduism so that the message of Jesus Christ the saviour of the world, can be made available to all those who search for it. My goal in this study is not to bring out numbers of differences between the two religious traditions or to prove that one is better than the other. But this study strives at discovering some common features and elements which can be a foundation or ground for coming together for fruitful discussions and debates.

## **II The Modern Tendency**

As I venture into this research on the comparative study of the concept of sacrifice in Christianity and in Hinduism, I am very well aware of the danger of encountering the modern situation and thoughts on the concept of sacrifice especially in Europe, which can be challenging and contrary to my study. In Europe today a few people tend to think and teach on the concept of sacrifice of Jesus on the cross differently from the traditional teachings of the Catholic Church. I know very well that the theme I am going to develop here is not much of interest and relevance to such people in European situation. After having read, and heard from the discussions with a few people, I understand that there are still a lot of debates, discussions and questions going on in European Church, regarding the sacrifice and death of Jesus and its relevance and meaning today. There is a clear tendency today in the European situation not to associate Christianity with cross and sufferings and death of Jesus. Some say that the death of Jesus is ended long ago in the history and that now is the time to think of the life and resurrection of Jesus which he offers to us

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<sup>1</sup> Nostra Aetate, 2.

in the Eucharist. There is a group of people who feel totally uncomfortable and uneasy to think and speak of the suffering and death of Jesus today. They look at the sufferings and death of Jesus as something negative. A few people understand that the Eucharist is the celebration of life and hence it is not needed to speak and think of the death of Jesus on the cross. There is also an argument today that if God loves the people unconditionally, the crucifixion of Jesus becomes a condition to express his love to the humanity. According to such modern thinking crucifixion becomes a condition. They also argue that not only the death of Jesus on the cross that liberated us from the sins but also the whole life, and activities of Jesus freed us from sins and that without the death on the cross he was able to show us his solidarity and love. The modern thinkers say that our God is not a cruel God to send his only son to the cross and ask how a loving God can permit such a cruel death of his son on the cross. Some also interpret the words of Evangelist Mathew to argue against the concept of sacrifice. "I desire mercy and not sacrifice, for I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance" (Mathew. 9. 13) and also the words from the book of Hosea which say "I desire mery and not the sacrifice, knowledge of God more than burnt offerings" (Hosea. 6.6).<sup>2</sup> According to some modern thinkers it is not possible anymore to speak of the sacrifice of Jesus from the religious point of view. One has to be liberated from the concept of sacrifice.<sup>3</sup> The question today asked is 'can Christianity which is the religion of love, be based on the sacrifice? A few find difficult to base Christianity on the sacrifice of Jesus because they argue that Christ came into the world not to die but to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God and to give his life. They view that the sacrificial death of Jesus cannot make any sense to Christianity and that a loving and liberating God should be its central

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<sup>2</sup> The above thoughts are the results of my personal discussion with a few people who personally expressed their own thoughts on the concept of sacrifice in Christianity and also the situation in Europe.

<sup>3</sup> Jürgen Werbick, Erlösung durch Oper?; in: Erlösung auf Golgota der Opfertod Jesus im Stret der Interpretationen, Herder, Freiburg, 2012, PP.59 ff. (translated)

message.<sup>4</sup> It is also expressed by some that the Christian faith would not be centered on the crucifixion of Jesus if it were to be independent of the theology of the cross of St. Paul.<sup>5</sup> “He said to them this is my blood of the new covenant which is poured out for many” (Mark. 14 .24), and the words taken from first letter to the Corinthians, “in the same way he also took the cup after Supper, saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink in memory of me” (1 Corinthians. 11.25). Some argue that Jesus had no understanding and thought of his death while expressing and pronouncing these above words, but they say that these words are the expressions of the faith of the early Christians. It is also expressed that these words do not prove the positive and healing effects of his death.<sup>6</sup> In spite of all these modern interpretations of the concept of the sacrifice of Jesus and the debates and discussions that are progressing in the European Church, I personally would like to go ahead with my research on the theme of the comparative study of the concept of sacrifice between Christianity and Hinduism because the concept of sacrifice is an indispensable and unavoidable thought in Hinduism and in Indian Church.

India is a large country with different cultures and religious traditions.<sup>7</sup> There are more than six official religions in India: Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Jainism, Sikhism, etc. All these religions try to live with each other, in peace and harmony in their own differences of religious convictions. Each religion in India is a blessing and a wealth for the people in India. Each religion is able to contribute to the spiritual and moral development of the country. This is one of the greatest examples of Indian religions that they are able to live with one another in peace, freedom and religious tolerance. Each has a respect for other’s religious freedom and traditions. Hence one can say that India is fundamentally a religious country with various religious traditions and practices. The people of all religions have ample

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<sup>4</sup> Meinrad Limbeck, *Abschied vom Opfertod das Christentum neu denken*, Stuttgart, 1980. The above ideas are taken from this book. These ideas are contained on the cover page of this book. (translated)

<sup>5</sup> Meinrad Limbeck, *Abschied vom Opfertod das Christentum neu denken*, P.83 ff. (translated)

<sup>6</sup> Meinrad Limbeck, *Abschied vom Opfertod das Christentum neu denken*, P. 62. (translated)

<sup>7</sup> Klaus K. Kloster, *Hinduism*, one world publications munshiram manoharlal publishers, Benaras, 1933, P.9.

freedom and opportunities to live and practise their faith. Each enjoys the right and freedom to worship its own God according to its religious rituals and traditions. This is manifested externally by the number of Churches, temples, and mosques that exist all over India.<sup>8</sup> For a Hindu India is a holy land. They call India 'Bharata Mata' which means Mother India. Many of the rivers and mountains of India are considered by the Hindus as holy. The rivers like 'Ganges and Yamuna' are considered holy. India is filled with lots of Hindu temples, shrines, and holy places.<sup>9</sup>

### **III Hinduism**

Hinduism is perhaps the oldest of all the religions. "Hinduism is both a way of life and highly organized social and religious system quite free from any dogmatic affirmations concerning the nature of God."<sup>10</sup> There is no definite date of its origin and has no particular founder associated with Hinduism.<sup>11</sup> Hinduism is called 'Sanatana dharma' a religion coming down to people through eternity. It is a unique religion. As sir Charles Eliot remarks in this connection "Hinduism has not been made, but has grown."<sup>12</sup> Some of the important religious texts of Hinduism are: the Vedas, the Upanishads, the puranas, the Dharma Sutras and the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and Bhagavad-Gita. The Vedas are the oldest and highest authority. The Hinduism has no 'well-defined rigid and dogmatic principles of faith or practice.' There are different practices and traditions among the Hindus themselves. Hinduism does not force into rigid rules of 'prayer and worship.' The Hinduism mentions three way of attaining salvation and realizing God: The 'way of knowledge' (Jnana marga), the 'way of action' (Karma marga), the 'way of worship and prayer' (Bhakti marga). Anyone can freely choose one of these ways to attain salvation. Hence it is broad hearted and liberal in its approach. The Hinduism is not only a religion but also a 'social system'. A person has to belong to one of these

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<sup>8</sup> Troy Wilson Organ, *The Hindu quest for the perfection of man*, Athens, 1998, PP.3-9.

<sup>9</sup> Klaus.K. Klostermaier, *Hinduism*, PP.13-14.

<sup>10</sup> Julius Lipner, *Hindus, their religious beliefs and practices*, Routledge, London, 1994, P.2.

<sup>11</sup> Klaus K.Klostermaier, *Hinduism*, P.9.

<sup>12</sup> Kedar Nath Tiwari, *Comparative religion*, motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1983, P.8. Here the author quotes the idea mentioned by Charles Eliot.

varnas or casts to become a Hindu. Varnas is an essential mark of a Hindu. A Hindu must also have a faith in the 'supremacy of the Vedas'.<sup>13</sup> 'The acceptance of Vedas as a 'revealed scripture' is the basic criterion and condition for a person to declare himself to be a Hindu.<sup>14</sup> The form of Hinduism appears different in different parts of India. The Hinduism is not controlled by a 'central power or agency'. They are locally built up 'beliefs and rituals'.<sup>15</sup>

#### **IV God**

Hinduism can be 'polytheistic', and 'monotheistic', all at the same time. Faith in Vedas and belongingness to one of the varnas are essential marks and characteristics of being a Hindu. A Hindu also believes in the sacred books of 'Ramayana', 'Mahabharata' and the 'Bhagavad-Gita'. The Hinduism believes in the spiritual reality. It believes in the 'immortality of the soul'. It teaches that no man can destroy human soul. Hinduism believes in the 'doctrine of re-birth.' It believes that the soul "migrates from one body to another" to begin a new worldly life. The re-birth is the goal of man. Hinduism teaches that one must have a sense of detachment in order to escape from the 'cycle of birth and re-birth'. The release from the cycle of birth and re-birth is the experience of 'moksha.' The moksha is the 'eternal life' in which the soul becomes free from the reality of worldly sufferings.<sup>16</sup> An average Hindu believes either in one God or several gods and goddesses. According to Mahatma Gandhi the 'essence of Hinduism' is the "search after truth through non-violent means."<sup>17</sup>

The deities of popular Hinduism are symbols and signs of the personal God. Their images are placed in the temples. It is said there are 'three hundred million and thirty thousand deities' who are worshipped by three hundred million people. Yet we can say that the Hindu religion is 'monotheistic.' A deity is worshipped for

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<sup>13</sup> Kedar Nath Tiwari, Comparative religion, PP. 8-11.

<sup>14</sup> Julius Lipner, Hindus, their religious beliefs and practices, P.3.

<sup>15</sup> Klaus.K.Klostermaier, Hinduism, P.14.

<sup>16</sup> Kedar Nath Tiwari, Comparative religion, PP.11-13. Hinduism is at its deepest a monotheistic religion. The supreme God or Brahman can be worshipped in many different forms. In Hinduism the God has many forms or avatars.

<sup>17</sup> Troy Wilson Organ, The Hindu quest for the perfection of man, P.5.

two purposes: either for the 'fulfilment of worldly desires or for the ultimate deliverance'. A Hindu experiences within himself a spirit of joy and peace by his worship in the temple. The atmosphere of the temple is generally joyous. A Hindu experiences the presence of God in the temple. Every worshipper who enters in the temple has a fundamental conviction and faith that God never abandons him, if he approaches him with devotion, love and contrite hearts. It is said that even the worst sinner when he worships God with great devotion, will be considered as a saint. According to the popular saying a Hindu celebrates 'thirteen holy days in twelve months.' These are special occasions for celebrations which are accompanied by 'congregational singing, pilgrimages', 'baths in sacred waters', and 'visits to various temples'. There are many 'symbols' which are used in the popular religion of modern India which are either 'natural objects' like tree, sun, river, fire or a 'special piece of stone'. The symbols have the special power of reminding the devotee of certain 'powers and attributes of godhead'. A Hindu finds God everywhere and everything is the "manifestation of his power, beauty and love".<sup>18</sup>

There is another kind of 'worship in the present day India which is associated with God's "incarnations on earth". 'Krishna and Rama' and other incarnations are worshipped by their respective devotees in order to obtain the worldly desires and also for the purpose of obtaining salvation.' According to some Hindu teachers the spiritual journey begins with some 'symbolic worship'. According to the teachings of puranas to see God present everywhere 'naturally' and 'spontaneously' is the 'highest spiritual stage'. The 'meditation' comes second. In the third place is the 'worship through symbols', the fourth is the 'performance of the rituals' and 'pilgrimage to sacred places.' The expert in spiritual life and experienced people are able to see God everywhere. When one has reached the highest stage of spiritual life he has the special ability to see God in 'images, stones, nature and in all living beings'. The worshippers look at God as their 'master, mother, friend, and beloved'.

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<sup>18</sup> Nikhilananda, *Hinduism, its meaning for the liberation of the spirit*, Sri Ramakrishna math, Madras, 1991, PP. 160-167. Indra and Varuna are the Vedic gods.



This enables them to relate and associate themselves with the God easily. There are two kinds of 'humanized God': male and female. 'Brahma', 'Vishnu' and 'Siva' are the male gods. 'Rama', 'Krishna' and 'Nrishimha' are the incarnations worshipped by Hindus. The female deities named 'Kali' and 'Durga' who represent 'sakti' or the 'creative power of Brahman'. The deity is treated as a 'guest at home' and as a 'king of kings in the temple'.<sup>19</sup>In Hinduism God is known as the 'inner soul' (antaryami) of the 'entire universe'. He is 'infinite', 'eternal' and all 'pervading'. He is the 'creator', 'preserver', and 'destroyer' of the world. He is both 'immanent' in the world and 'transcendent to it as its creator'. He, who is the 'soul of the universe', is not affected by the changes of the world. God in Hinduism is considered neither as 'personal' nor 'impersonal' but the 'super-personal.' The 'Brahma', 'Vishnu' and 'Shiva' constitute the 'Hindu Trinity'. The Brahman is the 'author of creation'. He is not worshipped by the Hindus as a principal deity. The worship of Shiva is very popular among the Hindus.<sup>20</sup>

In Hinduism man has been given an important status and position. He is not only the highest creature but he is often given a 'status and position equal to God'. The concept of 'Nar-Narayana' speaks of this truth. Although man is a 'psycho-physical being', in the depth of his being there is soul which is "the spark of the Divine within". Hence man is essentially 'divine in nature.' The soul of man cannot be exterminated in any way even by death. 'This Atman or soul constitutes the real being of man' and it is 'infinite' within the 'finite man'. Hence man is the 'finite-infinite' in nature. In spite of this truth man constantly lives in ignorance and so he is in bondage. The ignorance leads one to be attached to the world. This ignorance (avidya) is 'beginningless.' Man needs to be freed and liberated from ignorance and this is the 'moksha.' Every man is 'capable of salvation.' In order to attain salvation man has to be liberated from the clutches of ignorance. The right knowledge is the cure for the ignorance. By knowledge man is able to eliminate and destroy 'avidya'

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<sup>19</sup> Nikhilananda, Hinduism, its meaning for the liberation of the spirit, PP.168-170.

<sup>20</sup> Kedar Nath Tiwari, Comparative religion, PP.13-14.

and experience liberation. In the true knowledge man is able to discover his real and true nature. According to Hinduism man shapes his own destiny. This is the doctrine of 'karma'. If he performs good actions he will reap the results and will be freed from sufferings.<sup>21</sup>

### **VEvil and Suffering**

Hinduism teaches that the 'evil and suffering' is caused by the selfish actions of man. 'God is not responsible for the sufferings of this world'. The ignorance is the root cause of all the sufferings. The Vedas treats the problem of evil as a 'cosmic problem.' Evil comes about due to the certain evil forces and powers and 'anti-gods.' The evil is due to the fight between the 'gods and the demons.' The Vedas further teaches that the sufferings are able to separate the human beings from the worldly attachments and enable them to do good actions. Ultimately the 'suffering is caused by ignorance which causes attachment'.<sup>22</sup>

### **VI Death**

Like all other religions Hinduism believes and teaches that life of man does not finish with 'physical death'. According to Hinduism after a person dies the 'soul has to enter into another new body' according to the past deeds and performance. The soul has to be reborn. The famous Gita says in this regard "Just as a person casts off worn-out garments and puts on others that are new; even so does the embodied souls cast off worn-out bodies and take on others that are new."<sup>23</sup> The Vedas believe that after death of a person the soul of man enters into heaven or hell depending on the kind of actions one has performed.

### **VII Sacrifice in General**

Since my study is on the theme of sacrifice, I find it extremely important to introduce the concept in detail. Sacrifice is one of the frequently used words in man's religious vocabulary. Yet its meaning differs depending on the 'religion and

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<sup>21</sup> Kedar Nath Tiwari, Comparative religion, PP.20-22.

<sup>22</sup> Kedar Nath Tiwari, Comparative religion, PP.22-24.

<sup>23</sup> Bhagavad-Gita, 11, 22.

culture'. Etymologically the word sacrifice derives from 'sacrum facere', 'to 'make something sacred.' It means 'to consecrate' which means "to make sacred by dedication to God."<sup>24</sup> E. Masure states "sacrifice is the expressive and if possible, efficacious sign of man's willed and suppliant return to his God who receives it."<sup>25</sup> It is the sign of 'man's own offering of himself'. According to Thomas Aquinas "a true sacrifice is any act that is done in order that we may cleave in a holy union to God."<sup>26</sup> A man who is interiorly aware of the 'union and intimacy with God and of his duties' towards him will feel forced to express his devotions, sentiments and respect in an external way. An internal sentiments and feelings need to be externally expressed in concrete actions or rituals. This is done through the sacrifice. Hicks says "sacrifice is a language used by all, but understood by none."<sup>27</sup> The actual practices of sacrifice and their elements like 'victims', the 'offerers', the 'priesthood', and the 'deities' are very much present in many religions of the world.<sup>28</sup> In the modern world generally nobody likes to hear the word sacrifice because the people look at it as a negative concept. The modern world 'associates it with 'death', 'blood', 'cruelty' and 'suffering.' In many of the cultures sacrifice is a normal 'established practice.' Man right from the inception of his existence on earth has manifested his awareness and likeness of 'transcendental reality'. Mircea Eliade thinks that man becomes aware of the 'Holy or the Sacred because it appears itself as something completely different from the profane.'<sup>29</sup> The worship is a man's 'reaction' and response to the personal experience of the sacred and almighty power. It is the committing of oneself especially by 'devotion and service' to the 'transcendental reality' on which man feels totally 'secure and dependent'. The sacrifice and prayers which are man's personal means to communicate and associate with the 'supernatural power' are the

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<sup>24</sup> Lucien Deiss, *It is the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist of Christians*, Collins, U.S.A, 1976, P.68.

<sup>25</sup> E.Masure, *Le sacrifice du Chef*, Paris, 1957, P.92.

<sup>26</sup> Augustine the city of God, X 6, Henry Bettenson (tran), penguin books (ltd), Harmondsworth, 1977.

<sup>27</sup> F.C.N. Hicks, *The fullness of sacrifice*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Macmillan, London, 1946, P.3.

<sup>28</sup> Godfrey Ashby, *Sacrifice, its nature and purpose*, S.C.M. press (ltd) 1988, London, P.1.

<sup>29</sup> Mircea Eliade, *The sacred and the profane*, Harper Torch books, New York, 1961, P.11.

fundamental acts of worship.<sup>30</sup> E.O James is of the opinion that religion exercises its proper function in the society through 'many cults'. The institution of sacrifice occupies a prominent position among the many cults' which have been employed in the religions.<sup>31</sup> The universally accepted definition of sacrifice is "an offering of a sensibly perceptible, external thing in recognition of God's majesty and lordship and of our subjection to him."<sup>32</sup> Sacrifice also establishes close connection and relationship between the sacred and the profane in which the intermediary has a significant role.<sup>33</sup> "The sacrifice comes from the communities or individual's need to enter into or continue a relationship with their deity."<sup>34</sup>The sacrifice also deals with the concept of sin and holiness, purity and impurity in order to show a difference between the humans and God. The sacrifice created a condition in which the gods and the humans dialogued with each other in order to solve the problems of distance between them.

The Latin word 'sacrificium' was the first word to give an explanation of the action of sacrificing. 'Sacer' means 'holy' and 'facere' means 'to make.' What is very much common to all the sacrifices is the 'action' that takes place between 'two parties', which are the 'human' and the 'superhuman'. Hence a familiar material is used for the sacrifice. However sacrifice is the 'product and result' of the faith in the supernatural power.<sup>35</sup> "Sacrifice is an action par excellence, a sacred action, mystically efficacious."<sup>36</sup>Through the means of sacrifice a strong relationship is built up between God and the humans. It is also a means to enter into a dialogue between the divine and the humans and to 'transfer the thing sacrificed into the realm of the holy'. Levi described sacrifice as a "ferry-boat between heaven and earth to make

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<sup>30</sup>The new Encyclopedia Britannica vol 16, article on sacrifice, Chicago, 1980, PP.128-130.

<sup>31</sup>E.O. James, The beginnings of religion, Arrow books, London, 1958, P.83.

<sup>32</sup> Paul O' Dea, The Mass and the passion, Clonmore and Reynolds, Burn and Oates, London, 1965, P.74.

<sup>33</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, Peter Lang, New York, 1995, P.46.

<sup>34</sup> Evan M. Zuesse, Ritual; in: Encyclopedia of Religion, vol 12, Macmillan publishing company, New York, 1985, P.405.

<sup>35</sup> Godfrey Ashby, Sacrifice, its purpose, PP.20-24.

<sup>36</sup> A. Loisy, Essai historique sur le sacrifice, Paris, 1920, P.9.

links and contact with each other".<sup>37</sup> According to Augustine 'a true sacrifice consists of the work performed in order to adhere to God in an intimate and holy fellowship.'<sup>38</sup>

The present work is divided into four chapters. In the first chapter an attempt is made to understand the concept of sacrifice in Hinduism. The study finally enables one to have a different perspective of both the religions. The main part of the study is concentrated on the Vedic concept of sacrifice and the later Vedic sacrifice. Naturally I am presenting a general study of the concept of sacrifice in Hinduism including the present day Hinduism and its traditions and practices. The concept of sacrifice in Hinduism is not just confined to one particular aspect. It has many implications and meanings. Naturally it is not possible to speak all of them in such a restricted work like this. Hence the important ideas are being described in this present work. In this chapter we study that this act of sacrificing was an indispensable part of the people during the Vedic time.

In the second chapter a general study of the Catholic sacraments is dealt with. Here an elaborate study has been done on the teachings of the Catholic Church on the sacraments in general. Such a study can to some extent, help one to make a comparison with the Hindu idea of sacrifice and sacraments. The many symbols used in the sacraments are very important to communicate spiritual graces and meanings. This chapter deals exclusively with the official teachings of the Catholic Church on sacraments and the teachings and thoughts of eminent theologians like Thomas Aquinas, Augustine, and Karl Rahner etc. The chapter communicates to the reader the meaning and various implications of the sacraments in general and their special characteristics. They are important for the Catholics to approach God and to experience his grace in their day to day existence.

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<sup>37</sup> S. Levi, *La Doctrine de sacrifice dans les Brahmanas*, Paris, 1966, P.73.

<sup>38</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 10, H. Bettenson (tran), pelican Classics, Penguin Books, London, 1972.

The third chapter comprises of three parts which are the sacrifice in the Old Testament, the sacrifice in the New Testament and finally the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The first part deals exclusively with the various sacrifices that existed in the Old Testament times. The second part describes the concept of Eucharist as the sacrifice and its relevance. Here it is elaborately explained how the Eucharist is a sacrifice in relation to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross. The chapter makes it clear supplying various official teachings of the Church that Eucharist is not only a meal but also is a sacrifice which presents to the faithful all the graces and values of the cross. The third part presents to us an important idea of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. This is the only authentic sacrifice in Christianity which is the death of Jesus on the cross. The chapter goes on to explain that it is out of the love that Jesus laid down his life for the whole world.

The fourth chapter is an important chapter in which an attempt is made to bring out a comparison between the Christian and Hindu concept of sacrifice. We cannot make clear-cut difference and similarities because each religion has its own particularities and unique traditions and teachings. But the comparisons which are pointed out between Christian and Hindu concept of sacrifice, can be a big help for appreciating and understanding mutually. In spite of all these, this work is also limited like any other work. In this chapter a few converging elements are brought about which will indicate that both the religions have a common goal.

## CHAPTER 1

### THE CONCEPT OF SACRIFICE IN HINDUISM

#### 1.1 The Vedas and the Vedic Religion

The Vedic sacrifices are very important for the understanding of the sacrificial ritual of the ancient Hindus. The most important aim of Veda is the “seeking after the truth, immortality, and light. There is a truth higher and deeper than the truth of the outer existence, there is a light greater and higher than the light of human understanding and there is an immortality towards which the human soul has to rise.”<sup>39</sup> One needs to be ‘reborn in truth’ in order to grow in it. The Vedas have one goal which is the ‘well-being and betterment of the entire world’ and of the creatures living in it and the ‘union of the self with the ultimate reality’. The Vedas declare that by following one path and worshipping one deity in great devotion and faith he is able to attain the truth. They believe and teach that there is one and only truth which is to be discovered by means of many paths.<sup>40</sup>

The Vedas consist of large body of texts originating in ancient India. The texts constitute the oldest layer of ‘Sanskrit literature’ and the oldest Scriptures of Hinduism. They are the ‘original teachings’ and instructions of Hinduism and they contain ‘spiritual knowledge’ and insights concerning different aspects of life. The Vedas which means God-knowledge, are the ‘foundational Scripture’ of Hindus.<sup>41</sup> They are supposed to be ‘directly revealed from God’ and so they are called ‘sruti’ which means ‘what is heard.’<sup>42</sup> Hence the Vedas are the “revelations of eternal truth”.<sup>43</sup> Over the years the Vedas have been handed down from generation to the

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<sup>39</sup> T.V. Kapali Sastry, *Unveiling the light in the Veda*, Sri satguru publications, Indian books, Delhi, 2001, P.38.

<sup>40</sup> Michael Oren Fitzgerald (ed), *Introduction to Hindu Dharma*, Motilal Banarsidass publishers, Delhi, 2010, P.51.

<sup>41</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, *Outline of Hinduism*, chetana, Bombay, 1956, PP.12-13.

<sup>42</sup> Varman Shivram Apte, *The practical Sanskrit dictionary*, 4 the revised and enlarged, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidas, 1965, P.887. See also Max Müller, *Chips from a German workshop*, New York, C. Scribner’s sons, 1981, PP. 17-18.

<sup>43</sup> S.N. Dasgupta, *Hindu mysticism*, Delhi, 1927, PP.3-28.

generation by 'oral tradition' and so it is called 'sruti' (that which is heard).<sup>44</sup>The word Vedas is often derived from five roots these days; 1.'Vid Jnane': to know, 2. 'Vidsattayam': to be, 3. 'Vidlabhe': to obtain, 4. 'Vid vicarane': to consider, 5.'Vid cetanakhyananivesesu': to feel, to tell, to dwell.<sup>45</sup> Hence the word Veda means "the means of which, or in which all persons know and acquire mastery in, deliberate over the various lives or subsist up on them."<sup>46</sup>The Vedas signify a vast body of 'sacred knowledge' concerning 'eternal spiritual truths' communicated to the sages during the meditation and contemplation.<sup>47</sup> The Sanskrit word 'Vedas' which also means wisdom or knowledge, is derived from the root word 'vid' to know.<sup>48</sup>

The Vedas are divided into 'Rig-Veda', 'Sama veda', 'Yajurveda' and 'Atharvaveda.'<sup>49</sup> The Rig-Veda contains hymns in praise of the gods; the Yajurveda consists of rituals to be performed and Samaveda contains the hymns to be sung. The Atharva Veda was later on added. In the beginning there were only three Vedas. The last part of the Vedas is the 'Vedanta', which is the end of the Vedas.<sup>50</sup> "The Vedas were regarded as revelations of truth, truths which no human reason could ever challenge."<sup>51</sup> The important element of the sacrificial mysticism of the Vedas is the belief that the sacrifices have a mysterious and sacred power to bring about or produce certain effects and advantages which we desire when they are performed with perfect accuracy. The Vedas were not the product or the creation of human minds but existed from the very beginning of time. They are considered to be the supreme authority and power which is the source of knowledge of ultimate truths which are beyond the powers of human reason.<sup>52</sup> According to the tradition the

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<sup>44</sup> Max Müller , History of Indian philosophy , vol. I reprinted , Motilal Benarsidas, Varanasi, 1975, P.10.

<sup>45</sup> T. Rengarajan, Dictionary of Vedas, eastern book linkers, Delhi, 1982, P.248.

<sup>46</sup> T. Rengarajan, Dictionary of Vedas, P.248.

<sup>47</sup> T. Rengarajan, Dictionary of Vedas, P.248.

<sup>48</sup>Williams Monier(ed) , Monier- Williams Sanskrit dictionary, Oxford,, 2006, P.1015. The Sanskrit word Vedas which means knowledge. It can also mean study related to liturgy or ritual.

<sup>49</sup> S.N. Dasgupta, Hindu mysticism, PP. 3-4.

<sup>50</sup> Y. Masih, The comparative study of religions, P.156.

<sup>51</sup>S.N.Dasgupta, Hindu mysticism, P.15. The Vedas are eternal truths, the highest truths and the function of the reason is to attempt to reconcile these truths with experience in our life.

<sup>52</sup> S. N. Dasgupta, Hindu mysticism , PP.17-18.



Vedas are as old as the universe and many scholars agree with this position. Max Müller is of the opinion that no power on earth can determine and fix the time when the Vedas were written.<sup>53</sup>

### 1.1.1 The Concept of Sacrifice

There are two important propositions regarding the 'supremacy' of cult in the Vedic life: 1. For the Vedic people, yajna is not just means to attain some desired end, but it is the 'end itself', 2. For the Vedic people, yajna is not only a 'redemptive act' as in other religions but it is also the 'creative act.' "Yajna was the soul of Veda."<sup>54</sup> Sacrifice is known in Sanskrit as 'yajna.'<sup>55</sup> The word yajna is derived from the root 'yaj' which means to 'worship', to 'sacrifice', to 'bestow'. The worship can be in the form of oblations, a sacrifice unto gods. Yajna is also defined as the 'Tyaga' which means 'giving up', 'renunciation' or offering of a 'dravya' a specialized material to a (devata), a specific deity. The rituals are to be performed by the worshipper. In the context of the ritual worship, the worshiper makes use of 'gestures, recitation, movements, actions, and postures' which communicate certain meanings and messages.<sup>56</sup> Hence sacrifice is an 'abandonment of a material for a deity'. "It is an act by which one surrenders something for the sake of the gods."<sup>57</sup> The ritual offerings of food articles were offered to gods which symbolize man's total 'dependence' on and 'surrender' to them.<sup>58</sup> The sacrifice was the 'centre and pillars' of the Vedic religious system. A Vedic injunction makes the sacrifice an "essential condition for salvation: svarga- kamo yajeta, 'the heaven- desiring must sacrifice."<sup>59</sup> The motive of the Vedic ritual was to enter into intimate communion with the divine world and

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<sup>53</sup> T. Rengarajan, Dictionary of Vedas, P.249.

<sup>54</sup> Maurice Phillips, Fundamental teachings of Vedas , B.P.S, publications, New Delhi, 2004, P.162.

<sup>55</sup> Benjamin Walker, Hindu world, Goreg Allen and Unwin (ltd), London, 1968, PP.316-321.

<sup>56</sup> V.Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajnas and sacrificial fire a critique; in: Journal of Dharma, vol 26, no.1, Dharmaram college, Bangalore, 2001, P.28. See, Michael Oren Fitzgerald(ed), Introduction to Hindu Dharma, Motilal Banarsidass publishers, Delhi, 2010, P.49. Devata is a special deity. Deva in Indian language means God.

<sup>57</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, Universita Gregoriana, Roma, 1982, P.185.

<sup>58</sup> Satapatha Brahmana VIII, 1, 2, 10.

<sup>59</sup> Benjamin Walker, Hindu world, P.316. The sacrifice was an integral part of the Vedic way of life.

hence to benefit certain advantages and graces.<sup>60</sup> The sacrifice is also a 'thanksgiving' to the gods for favours already which the people received.<sup>61</sup> According to V. Sujatha, a close study of the yajna reveals that sacrifice is a "spiritual sadhana' which enables to attain higher values."<sup>62</sup> The Hindu rituals are performed both at home and in the temple. They are performed in order to ask blessings and graces from the gods. There are ritual practices from birth until the time of death. It is the ritual in Hinduism that keeps the 'identity of the Hindu communities. The idea of 'purity' is central to the Hindu rituals. Anyone who undertakes the responsibility of performing ritual has to free himself from pollution and sins. The low caste forbidden to enter into the shrine of the houses. The 'bodily fluid' of every sort can bring pollution. An important aspect of the public ritual during festivals is the 'possession by the deities' of the temples. The divine can possess and enter the body of his devotee. The possessed person becomes a 'manifestation of the divine'. This possession is considered to be a blessing. One of the important marks of the Hindu rituals is the repetition of the 'sacred formulas which are called mantras having power within them.<sup>63</sup> What is yajna? "It is the performance of religious duty involving Agni, the sacrificial fire with the chanting of mantras."<sup>64</sup> Yajna is the 'supreme principle' which gives birth to the entire 'universe and the deities'.<sup>65</sup> This supreme Vedic sacrifice is manifested in different individual sacrifices for the sake of benefits.<sup>66</sup> Yajna or sacrificial rite consists of some 'material as oblation to deity.' The materials normally offered are 'butter, grains and soma juice'. The offerings were put on the fire which is lit on the altar. Hence fire (Agni) became the 'mediator between gods and men'. The idea is that man must sacrifice something which is

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<sup>60</sup> Louis Renou (ed), *Hinduism*, prentice-hall international, London, 1961, P.23.

<sup>61</sup> Hiriyan, *outlines of Indian philosophy*, George Allen and Unwin, India, Bombay, 1973, P.35.

<sup>62</sup> V. Sujatha, *The philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire: a critique*; in: *Journal of Dharma*, vol 26, P. 29.

<sup>63</sup> Gavin Flood, *An introduction to Hinduism*, Cambridge university press, London, 1996, P.198-222.

<sup>64</sup> Michael Oren Fitzgerald (ed), *Introduction to Hindu Dharma*, P.49.

<sup>65</sup> Noel Sheth, *Hindu sacrifice and the Christian sacrifice*; in: *Body , bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church*, Francis Gonsalves (ed), Vidyajyoti Publishing, Delhi, 2000, P.64.

<sup>66</sup> Noel Sheth, *Hindu sacrifice and the Christian sacrifice*; in: *Body, bread ,blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church*, Francis Gonsalves (ed), PP.64-65.

very intimate to him in faith so that he can receive something in return.<sup>67</sup> The Vedic men expressed their love, devotion and reverence for the gods by sacrificial meals. "For Vedic people the sacrifices were more powerful than gods. The gods could be pleased or displeased by the sacrifice."<sup>68</sup> According to Satapatha Brahmana yajna is the very 'self of all the mortal creatures and the immortal beings'.<sup>69</sup>

At the time of the Vedic period yajna was an important element in the Aryan or the 'Vedic culture'. In the beginning these sacrifices were very simple which expressed the 'religious piety' of the early Aryan people. The sacrifice in the beginning was regarded as 'the nourishment' to the gods who imparted blessings, good health and prosperity to offerer. For the Aryans the 'religious piety', 'moral purity' and 'prosperity' were essential elements for a good and upright life. The Vedic rituals were offered as part of a worthy and upright life. Hence many of the sacrifices and rituals were symbolic actions which expressed their harmony and relationship with the nature.<sup>70</sup> In the Indian situation the sacrifice is mainly the 'fire sacrifice' and a 'sacrificial meal'.<sup>71</sup>

The Vedic sacrifice was either 'perpetual' (nitya) or 'occasional' (anitya). The perpetual sacrifices were obligatory. They must be offered at a stipulated time or on a 'particular event'. The occasional sacrifices were not obligatory. They could be performed according to the desire of the sacrificer, especially when he has a 'vow for the attainment' of some wish.<sup>72</sup> The basic element of the sacrifice is the 'gift' (daksina) and the essence of it is the faith that offerer has in his heart.<sup>73</sup> The earliest Vedic sacrifices being not of a bloody nature, were oblations of butter and grains consumed and offered in fire.<sup>74</sup> The Vedic sacrifice had its deep root in the 'nature of

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<sup>67</sup> Satyavrata Patel, Hinduism, religion and way of life, associated publishing house, Delhi, 1931, P.61.

<sup>68</sup> S.N. Dasgupta, Hindu Mysticism, P.6.

<sup>69</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XIV. 3. 2. 1: Sarvesam va esa bhutanam.

<sup>70</sup> Saral Jhingran, Aspects of Hindu morality, Motilal Benarsidas publishers, Delhi, 1984, PP.45-46.

<sup>71</sup> Axel Michaels, Hinduism past and present, Princeton university press, Oxford, 1998, P.246.

<sup>72</sup> Maurice Phillips, Fundamental teachings of Vedas, PP.178-179.

<sup>73</sup> Brahadaranya Upanishad, 3. 9. 21.

<sup>74</sup> Cyril Papali, Hinduism, religion and philosophy, Pontifical institute of theology and philosophy, Kerala, 1977, PP.32-33.

man himself'. The sins had to be atoned for or the punishment had to be inflicted. The sacrifices came into existence on account of mans deep buried feelings of 'dependence on God and his moral relationship to him.'<sup>75</sup>

The sacrifice is an act of 'homage to the gods' which consists of a gift or an oblation, to obtain a favour such as prosperity, health, long life, abundance of cattle and so on. There is always an 'expectation in return' for the gifts offered. However the main aim of the ritual was "to establish a communication with the divine world and to obtain certain benefits."<sup>76</sup> This profound desire to be connected with the divine was very well expressed through the sacrifices and offerings. It is also a "consecration, a movement from the profane world to the sacred which transforms both the victim, or the gifts offered and the moral personality of the sacrificer and even the external objects."<sup>77</sup>

There are many ways to experience the Divine or the Supreme Being. The ritual action is one of the ways to experience the Divine. The ritual way is also meant as a 'preparation and formation of an atmosphere' in which the soul will be disposed and prepared for a higher spiritual experience of the divine. The sacred objects and the sacred symbols keep us in communion with the Divine. The rite of welcoming the God as a special guest, 'bathing God', 'dressing him' and 'putting flowers' around him, are all essential features of puja. These things enable man to have a religious spirit in him and help him to be imbibed in the divine spirit.<sup>78</sup>

Sacrifice is a 'source of immortality' for the humans and for gods. The sacrifice is very much connected with the concept of 'loka.' The performance of sacrifice guarantees the heavenly loka after death.<sup>79</sup> The consecration for sacrificer means symbolically the death and a new birth. The Jaiminiya Brahmana states that a "man remains unborn until he has sacrificed and has been born through the sacrifice.

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<sup>75</sup> Maurice Phillips, Fundamental teachings of Vedas, PP.186-187.

<sup>76</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.186.

<sup>77</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.186.

<sup>78</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, PP.204-205.

<sup>79</sup> "He makes the sacrifice attain union with the gods and obtain the same form and the same world as the gods." --devanam, yajamanam sayujyam sarupatam salokatam gamayati, Aitareya Brahmana, 2. 24.

Unborn, indeed, is a man so long as he does not sacrifice. It is through sacrifice that he is born, just as an egg first bursts."<sup>80</sup>

The Vedas have provided the guidance for the performance of the sacrifice which was very much essential for the welfare and life of the Vedic people. The sacrifice was very important for the Vedic Indians that they thought that the world itself was 'created and caused by a 'primordial sacrifice.' The order and the system in the universe were also well maintained or preserved by the sacrifices. The kings used to organize and arrange the public sacrifices for the goodness and welfare of the people. The altars were also particularly made for the purpose of the sacrifices. The efficacy of the sacrifice depends on the kind of offering made. The noblest sacrifice according to the Vedic text was the 'human victim'. The efficacy of the sacrifice depended greatly on the "correct pronunciation of the mantra and the exact execution of the prescribed ceremony."<sup>81</sup> The Vedic sacrifices had to be performed meticulously without any mistake. In Vedic idea the sacrifices were more powerful than gods themselves. "The utterance of the chanting of hymns, with prescribed accents and modulations, pouring of the melted butter in the sacrificial fire with exactness is the sacrifice."<sup>82</sup> In Vedic times the life revolved around sacrifice. In the Vedic sacrifice the external complexities have been abandoned and the sacrifice has become an 'act of inner dedication and of the self-offering of the individual to the deity'. In a sense "every form of worship by a Hindu, whether daily ritual, temple worship, or private meditation, is reduced to a sacrifice and considered a valid substitute for Vedic Yajna."<sup>83</sup> There were two kinds of sacrificial rituals: the official 'srauta' sacrifice which was attended by many priests and the 'domestic sacrifice' which was attended by only one priest (purohit). 'Fire was very much central to the sacrificial system' and the animal sacrifice was also very important. Human sacrifice also played a great role in the ritual. "The yanja also served the function of

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<sup>80</sup> Jaiminiya Brahmana, 3. 14.8. It is through sacrifice that man is born just as an egg first bursts.

<sup>81</sup> Klaus K. Klostermaier, Hinduism, PP.42-44.

<sup>82</sup> S.N. Dasgupta, Hindu mysticism, PP.3-28.

<sup>83</sup> Bede Griffiths, India and the Eucharist, Richard de Smet, Lumen Institute, 1964, P.24.

bringingsomeone into contact with the higher states of being, the deities.”<sup>84</sup> The Hindu sacrificial system covers the ‘daily activity of life’. Any event of the ordinary life can become an occasion for performing the sacrifice.<sup>85</sup> “Sacrifice is the integral human act and each act of life is sacrificial act.”<sup>86</sup> According to the Scripture ‘sacrifice is man.’ Sacrificetakes place within man and ‘through man’ as long as he is ‘man of faith’, hope, and love. His existence itself is an ‘act of worship.’<sup>87</sup> It is through the sacrifice that man is born just as egg first bursts.<sup>88</sup> The satapatha Brahmana makes it clear that the sacrificial ritual itself was considered as a ‘vehicle’ to reach the heavenly world or ‘sarga loka’. It is said even the gods themselves reached the heaven (swarga loka) through the sacrificial ritual. The offerings were laid on sacrificial fire. The fire (Agni) is the ‘mediator between God and people’. The priests had to perform the sacrifice as the sacrificial system was complex and large. The sacrifices also had to be accompanied by ‘faith and total surrender to gods’. The ‘spirit of the sacrifice’ was more important than the sacrifices themselves.<sup>89</sup> If the sacrificer lights the sacrificial light with a rubbing stick, ‘he draws the sacrifice out of himself’. Hence the sacrifice is his ‘self’ (atman) and the self is the sacrifice. “The sacrificer being the sole and unchallenged master of his sacrifice performs his action (karman) in sovereign independence from the mortal world. This Karman is his self. The sacrificial fire, established through his own karman is equivalent with his inner self. Independent from the mortal world it cannot but be immortal and inalienable.”<sup>90</sup> The modern theories on Vedic sacrifice say that the sacrifice has a power and capacity to produce the thing that is ‘desired and willed’. It is also able to

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<sup>84</sup> Jeaneane Fowler, *Hinduism ; Beliefs, practices and Scriptures*, adarsh books, New Delhi,1999, PP.103-104.

<sup>85</sup> Benjamin Walker, *Hindu world*, P.317.

<sup>86</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), *The Vedic experience, mantramanjari*, Darton Longmann, London, 1977,P.409.

<sup>87</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), *The Vedic experience*, P.409.

<sup>88</sup> Jaiminiya- Upanisad Brahmana, 3. 14 . 8.

<sup>89</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, *Outline of Hinduism*, PP.40-43.

<sup>90</sup> Heesterman, *Vedism and Hinduism*; in : Oberhammer,1997, P.58.

bring about 'order' (rta) and harmony in the universe.<sup>91</sup> According to Aurobindo, who was an Indian philosopher and a spiritual teacher, "the true sacrifice is the complete and undeserved self-giving to the eternal without any expectation in return."<sup>92</sup> According to him the true essence of sacrifice is not 'self-immolation', it is a 'self-giving.' The sacrifice of the self is the 'self- abandonment' to the infinite divine person present in the universe. This self sacrifice of the person creates within himself a great love for the almighty God and the other creatures.<sup>93</sup> Man needs to be 'egolessness' in order to offer a genuine and authentic sacrifice. The result of the self-sacrifice is the 'realization of the Divine and closeness to the Divine'.<sup>94</sup> In a way sacrifice appears to be mere 'bargain'. Men need things like rain, health, wealth and so on and the gods are 'hungry' and look for offerings from men. There is a 'mutual giving and receiving' on both sides. Hence sacrifice is 'reciprocal'. Through the sacrifice the worshippers enjoyed 'prosperity in this world and happiness in heaven'. The Hindus believed in the 'utilitarian' aspect of the sacrifices. The gods and men were mutually dependent on each other.<sup>95</sup> "The basic characteristic of yajna is that of an action that reaches where it intends to reach, that really and truly offers something, that stretches out and extends itself. In other words sacrifice suggests an action that effectively creates, that is, it acts, is efficient, and produces what it intends".<sup>96</sup>

### 1.1.2 The Inner Meaning of Yanja

The outer and external form of sacrifice is 'symbolic'. According to the universal law of yajna or sacrifice, the supreme 'purusa', supreme personality, the Lord offered the 'substance of his own being' for the world creation. The gods, by

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<sup>91</sup> Kurian T. Kadankavil, *The quest of the real*, Bangalore, 1975, PP.82-85. The Brahmanas stress the importance of sacrifice which maintains the order of the universe and gives strength to gods.

<sup>92</sup> George Neduplakunnel, *Realization of God according to Sri Aurobindo*, a study of a Neo-Hindu vision on the divinization of man, Clarition publication, Bangalore, 1979, P.115.

<sup>93</sup> George Neduplakunnel, *Realization of God according to Sri Aurobindo*, a study of a Neo- Hindu vision on the divinization of man, PP.118-120.

<sup>94</sup> George Neduplakunnel, *Realization of God according to Sri Aurobindo*, a study of a Neo- Hindu vision on the divinization of man, PP.120-122.

<sup>95</sup> Nikhilananda, *Hinduism, its meaning for the liberation of the Spirit*, Sri Ramakrishna math, Madras, 1991, PP. 160-164. Indra and Varuna are the Vedic gods.

<sup>96</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), *The Vedic experience*, P.347.

accepting the offerings of the 'yajamana', (one who offers the sacrifice), embrace also the yajamana himself and the gods manifest themselves in him. "By the means of the sacrifice the mortal beings become the immortal beings and the gods are taking their second birth in man. There is an interchange and mutuality of spiritual relationship between gods and the individuals".<sup>97</sup> The essence of sacrifice is to surrender ones' possessions and 'substance to God with a sincerity of heart and faith'.<sup>98</sup>

### 1.1.2.1 The Primordial and Ideal Yajna of Purusa- Prajapati <sup>99</sup>

The supreme act of sacrifice is realized and materialized in the person of the purusa. This supreme act is presented by a glorious hymn to purusa called 'purusa-sukta'. The central theme of it is the 'total manifestation of the universe'. The supreme sacrifice which is the act par excellence includes in itself three terms: 'offerer', 'offering', and 'receiver'.<sup>100</sup> According to Agrawala the primordial man, the purusa is the unique and significant principle and power behind all this 'universal manifestations' which we see in three different forms: plants, animals and men.<sup>101</sup> Panikkar describes purusa in his style: "the primordial man is not simply another name for a heteronomous God, nor a mere euphemism for an autonomic individual man, but a living expression of the ontic man, that total reality of which we are a reflection, a reflection that contains the whole, indeed, but in a rather limited and all too narrow way."<sup>102</sup> In the beginning there was neither 'being nor non-being'.<sup>103</sup> It is the 'prajapati- sacrifice' which gives birth and existence to the 'beings' to 'beings'. At the origin of every being there was a sacrifice that produced it.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> T.V. Kapali Sastry , Unveiling light in the Veda, P.98. Purusa in Sanskrit means man. This word is used in many of the Indian languages which means man. It is a cosmic man. It is the self which pervades the world. "yajamana is a person who institutes or performs a regular sacrifice and pays the expenses of it, a person who employs a priest or priests to perform a sacrifice or any fixed or occasional religious ceremony, see, Monier Williams, A Sanskrit- English dictionary, Oxford, 1960, P.802.

<sup>98</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, Outline of Hinduism, P.41.

<sup>99</sup> The Sanskrit term for creature and offspring is praja. Prajapati is the Lord or protector of praja. He is the creator and father of the offspring, see Partick Olivelle, The asrama system, Oxford university press, New York, 1993, PP.35-40.

<sup>100</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, X111, 6, 2, 12.

<sup>101</sup> V.S. Agarwala, Fire in the Rig-Veda, in East and West, Varanasi, 1960, P.28.

<sup>102</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), Vedic experience, P.73.

<sup>103</sup> Rig-Veda, X 129, 1.

<sup>104</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.348.



Prajapati is the 'Lord of creatures' whose name is not mentioned frequently in the Rig-Vedas.<sup>105</sup> According to narrative in the Brahmanas 'prajapati' is considered as the 'primordial being' or the first being before anything existed at all. The Satapatha Brahmana tells us that 'Prajapati' is sacrifice' and that prajapati performed an act of 'self-immolation', self-sacrifice in order to give birth to the creatures. Hence creation can be considered as result of the sacrifice of the prajapati. The creature is powerless and helpless by itself but it needs to perform sacrifice in order to 'reach its destiny and be divinized'. Prajapati created both 'Gods' (devadas) and the 'demons' (asuras). Both struggled to become immortal. They discovered that only by means of sacrifice they could be immortal.<sup>106</sup> "The purusa-sukta describes the sacrifice of the purusa from whose dismembered body the several elements of creation originated".<sup>107</sup> The Brahmanas identify the sacrifice with the 'creator God Prajapati'.<sup>108</sup> "Prajapati is the sacrifice personified, and the performer of the sacrifice from whom the whole of creation proceeds."<sup>109</sup> The gods, the humans and the whole universe receive their being and existence from Prajapati.<sup>110</sup> All things are produced and take their origin from the sacrifice of prajapati.<sup>111</sup>

### 1.1.3 The Constitutive Elements of Yajna

Whitney in his classical book, while discussing about a number of Sanskrit words, considered, three words: 'Yaj, Yat, and yam.' First he takes yaj noting its 'Vedic occurrences' and gives it the primary meaning 'offer.' This 'yaj' is also related

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<sup>105</sup> Prajapati is mentioned as God only four times in Rig-Veda, X, 85, 43; X, 169, 4; X, 184, 1, X, 121, 10.

<sup>106</sup> Maitrayani samhita, 1, 9, 8; 11, 5, 3. Sacrifice consists of self-immolation. This immolation is a dying for life. Sacrifice in the very act of dying, renews itself within the universe. The whole cosmos comes to be through sacrifice, see, Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, Darton Longman, London, 1977, PP.386-387.

<sup>107</sup> Rig-Veda, X. 90.

<sup>108</sup> The basis of the whole system is the identification of the sacrifice with Prajapati, who is the creator par excellence, See Keith, Religion and philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads, Vol 2, Motilal Benarsidass, Varanasi, 1976, P.445.

<sup>109</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 2.2. 4.1; 2.5.1.1; 6.1.1.8.

<sup>110</sup> Taittiriya Samhita, 7.1.5.1.

<sup>111</sup> Cyril Papali, Hinduism, religion and philosophy, P.33.

to 'yam' and 'yat.' Yaj originally means 'reach out, extend.'<sup>112</sup> Then yat means 'stretch' and yam 'reach.'<sup>113</sup> An observation can be made from this that yajna which is a noun form, is derived from yaj, has the original meaning of 'offering', 'the act of reaching out', of 'extending.' According to Benveniste "yajna is a Vedic act of sacrifice, namely an operation by which one transfers an element from the human world to the divine world, by which a communication is established between the two realms of reality."<sup>114</sup> Hence it is a positive act of 'reaching out', and an offering which does not involve 'destruction' and 'killing.' This 'reaching out and transference' from the 'human world to the divine world', from the material realm to the spiritual realm can be made possible through bloody offering as in later Vedic times. The Rig-Veda hymns show some evidences that in the primitive stages it was the simple cult of fire (Agni) with the offering of butter poured into it. The first verses of the opening hymn of Rig-Veda is noted:

" I magnify God, the Divine Agni  
The priest, minister of the sacrifice  
The offerer of oblation  
Supreme giver of treasure."<sup>115</sup>

### 1.1.4 Cult or Yajna as Unique Goal in Itself

Victor Warnach in his study about the nature of sacrifice, referring to a variety of religious contexts, comes to a conclusion that sacrifice "consists in a concrete gift to a higher being."<sup>116</sup> By higher being he meant a 'being higher than sacrifice itself'. But for the Vedic people the 'yajna or sacrifice is not oriented to something higher, but to itself. It is the supreme principle although there are different forms of yajnas. The lower ones are 'ordained to the higher ones'. And so we read: 'with the Rita I

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<sup>112</sup> W.D .Whitney, The roots verb-forms and primary derivatives of the Sanskrit language, Leipzig, 1885, P.129.

<sup>113</sup> W.D. Whitney, The roots verb-forms and primary derivatives of the Sanskrit language, PP. 129-130.

<sup>114</sup> E.Benvenist, Levocabulaire des institutions indo-europeennes, vol 2, 1969, P.205.

<sup>115</sup> Om agnim le purohitam,yajnasya devam rt vijam, hot aram ratnadhat amam Rig -Veda, 1, 1.1.

<sup>116</sup> Victor Warnach, Vom Wesen des kultischen Opfers, in Opfer Christi und Opfer der Kirche, B. Neunheuser (ed), Dusseldorf, 1960, PP.29-74.

worship the immovable rta.<sup>117</sup> One peculiar point that is taught by Aguilar is that “yajna is localized in a ‘mythical abode’ which is the summit of the universe”.<sup>118</sup> In many other religions the personal ‘God who is the ‘supreme principle’ is placed in the top of the universe.<sup>119</sup>In the Vedic religion this important position is given to ‘rta or yajna’. Hence the “gods are said to climb up there to sit on that ‘golden womb’ in order to attain the highest ‘power and sovereignty.”<sup>120</sup> There is also another uniqueness of the end of the sacrifice which is confirmed by the fact that the ‘sacrifices of gods are subordinated to it’. The sacrifice of the heavenly beings- ‘Devas and pitrs or ancestors’ are placed under the care of and within supreme rta from which they are thought of obtaining their sacrificial power.<sup>121</sup> Aguilar has brought out many examples which manifest the dependence of God’s sacrifice on a higher sacrifice.<sup>122</sup> “Just as the earthly sacrifice is conditioned by a higher sacrifice, in the same way the sacrificial order in heaven is conditioned by a higher sacrificial order, thanks to which the celestial inhabitants.....celebrate their own rta or yajna.”<sup>123</sup> This supreme rta or yajna may be seen as ‘birth of purusa.’<sup>124</sup> We can speak of the threefold sacrifice- the “supreme sacrifice”, the “sacrifice of the gods” and that of ‘men’ and the supreme sacrifice is the model for the other sacrifices. Hence it is clear that yajna in the ultimate analysis is the end in itself at least for the Rig-Veda people although in its heavenly and earthly aspects it could function as means to particular ends.

### 1.1.5 Yajna as Creative and Redemptive

From the sacrificial perspective, creation includes also the ‘re-integration’ and ‘redemption’. In Vedic tradition the sacrifice has a creative and redemptive aspect.

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<sup>117</sup> Rig-Veda, 1V, 3, 9. In Rig-Veda context rta and yajna are complementary and sometimes synonymous.

<sup>118</sup>H.Aguilar, The sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, Varanasi, India, 1976, PP.28-56.

<sup>119</sup> H. Aguilar The sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, P.33.

<sup>120</sup>Rig-Veda, 1, 25, 10; 111, 5, 7, v, 67, 2.

<sup>121</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 111, 1, 4, 3.

<sup>122</sup>H.Aguilar, The sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, PP.36-38.

<sup>123</sup> H.Aguilar, The sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, P.39.

<sup>124</sup> The identification of the supreme yajna with a primordial birth is related to the idea of Tapas.

Vorbichler says “sacrifice is essentially a celebration and representation of the creative act, both in the sense of commemoration and re-enactment, which is destined to give further life to the creation on the part of God”.<sup>125</sup> The sacrifice is not just ‘ritualism’, but a ‘conscious discovery of great importance’ which is centered on fire (Agni) as devout object of contemplation.<sup>126</sup> “In the contemplation the Vedic sages have realized the manifestive (creative) and redemptive nature of yajna and they realized its supremacy which is above all other gods.”<sup>127</sup> In Vedic religion the adorable yajna is considered to be the ‘closest of realities’ and the ‘first of all divinities.’<sup>128</sup> The sacrifice is the source of ‘creative power’ and ‘source of immortality’. Sacrifice consists of ‘immolation’. All sacrifice involves the ‘reality of death’. This immolation is a dying for life. The sacrifice is a ‘stretching out’ and reaching out to ‘the divine realities’.

### 1.1.6 Ends of Sacrifice

There are many important ends of the sacrifice. The most significant of them is to provide ‘food, strength and sustenance’ for the gods who are said to consume the ‘essence of the offering’ and are sustained by the same. According to ‘Vishnupuana’, the gods are nourished and strengthened by the sacrifice. The sacrifices are also offered for the purpose of ‘expiation of sin.’ They were also performed by the kings in order to ‘acquire power and dominion or to establish their authority’. The ‘rajasuy’ sacrifice was performed for such an intention and the ‘Asvamedha’ was done for the ‘territorial expansion.’ There are also many other sacrifices performed on special occasions like marriage, the birth of a boy, etc.<sup>129</sup> The primary purpose of the Vedic sacrifice is to receive blessings from the deities and to live happily in this

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<sup>125</sup> Vorbichler, On the nature of sacrifice, P.96, cited by H.Aguilar, The sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, Varanasi, India, 1976, P.55.

<sup>126</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 111, 5, 3, 12. The sacrifice is a great inspirer of devotion.

<sup>127</sup> There is one verse in Rig-Veda which points to this discovery, Rig-Veda, X 181, 2. We read there: They discovered what have been out of their reach (yad athihitam a s t), the supreme abode of the sacrifice which is invisible (yajna asya dhama paramam guha yat).

<sup>128</sup> According to Sayana’s commentary to verse 1, 105, 4. Sayana here identifies Agni with yajna, see also Aguilar, the Sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, Varanasi, India, 1976, P.57.

<sup>129</sup> Benjamin Walker, Hindu world, P.317.

world. The second purpose of the Vedic sacrifice is to 'earn a residence or a dwelling place in the paradise'. It is also performed in order to invoke blessings from the gods for the welfare and growth of the world. According to Sankara by the selfless performance of the sacrifices one is able to attain the 'self-realization and purity of mind'.<sup>130</sup> According to Sujatha the "sacrifice is intended to 'bridge the wide gulf between the divine and the human.'" <sup>131</sup>

Man has an obligation to sacrifice as a gesture of gratitude for all the things and privileges that life has offered him. "By offering oblations into the fire, the sacrifice is able to attain access to the world of light and he is able to empty himself of all impurities to be filled with life from above. At the deeper spiritual life man is able to identify himself with the Supreme self. The sages obtained this higher world through the performance of sacrifice. Hence the sacrificer seeks to develop within himself the power to rise above the earthly dwellings to the powerful and higher world."<sup>132</sup> Sacrifice guarantees 'agricultural', 'animal' and 'human fertility' and the 'cycle rhythm of the seasons'. Hence one can affirm that Vedic sacrifice served to preserve and maintain varieties of life and keep the whole universe intact.<sup>133</sup> They were also performed for the gift of 'rebirth in a temporary heaven', for providing sustenance and nourishment to the gods and for obtaining various needs like food, wealth and, children.<sup>134</sup> They were also performed in order to cause 'harm and destruction to the enemies' and cause illness and 'abortion'.<sup>135</sup> The sacrifice eliminates all the sins. "Whatever sin we have committed in the village or in the forest, in company or by ourselves that we expiate by sacrifice."<sup>136</sup> Sin in the Vedic

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<sup>130</sup> Michael Oren Fitzgerald (ed), Introduction to Hindu dharma, PP.49-51.

<sup>131</sup> V.Sujatha, The Philosophical implications of Yajna and sacrificial fire: a critique; in: Journal of dharma, vol,26, P.29.

<sup>132</sup> Atharva Veda Samhita, 18. 1. 61.

<sup>133</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood , Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.65.

<sup>134</sup> Jose Thachil, The Vedic and the Christian concept of sacrifice, Pontifical institute of theology and philosophy, Alwaye, India, 1985, PP.197- 204.

<sup>135</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.65.

<sup>136</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 2. 5. 2. 20ff.

times is regarded as 'transgression of the heavenly law or order.' In the Rig-Veda "sin is an offense against the gods especially against Varuna".<sup>137</sup>

The sacrifice is one of the constituents of 'samsakaras.'<sup>138</sup> On an important occasions like 'birth of a child' or 'naming of a child', the parents of the child offered gifts to the gods. On the occasion of the funeral rites the sacrifices were offered for the welfare of the dead. The samskaras are the ceremonies which are "visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace".<sup>139</sup> The samskaras are also considered to be the 'domestic sacrifices' which are required for the attainment of long life, heaven and liberation. These samskaras which are the external rituals sanctified and perfected a person whole. The Agni or the fire is the most important element of samskara. The fire is kindled at the beginning of every samskara. This fire is also an important 'domestic deity' in the entire sacred householder. The fire played an important role of 'being a messenger between God and men' and the guardian of the people.<sup>140</sup>

The material gifts are offered to the deity and the deity gives 'prasada' in return. In the experience of 'darsana' too there is seen an element of reciprocity. The devotees look at the deity with devotion and they are seen by the deity. Through this reciprocal seeing and vision the devotees are able to receive spiritual advantages and nourishment. There is a 'spiritual power' that emerges out of the 'image which protects the devotees.' The devotees receive grace from the prasada which they obtain from the deities.<sup>141</sup> According to a German Indologist Paul Thieme "when the guests are offered hospitality, they are pleased, so too are the gods when they are

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<sup>137</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, PP.167-169.

<sup>138</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu samskara, Motilal Benarsidass, Indological publishers, Varanasi, 1981, P.40. The samskaras are the sacraments in Hinduism or the festive occasions in the life of a human being.

<sup>139</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu samskara, PP.15-35. The 'samskaras' in Hinduism are the series of sacraments, sacrifices and rituals which mark various stages of the human life. These samskaras mark the important stages of the human life. A baptism, marriage, are examples of samskaras. These are sacred ceremonies performed with the help of the priests and in the presence of the family members. Traditionally there are twelve samskaras. They are a religious purificatory ceremony in the life of an individual.

<sup>140</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu samskaras, PP.15-38.

<sup>141</sup> Diane P. Mines, "Exchange"; in: Studying Hinduism, key concepts and methods, Sushil Mittal (ed), Routledge, London, 2008, PP.140-141.

offered sacrifices".<sup>142</sup> Sacrifice is a requirement essential for the maintenance and order of the world and men. Man is not able to lead an authentic way of life if he is not performing sacrifice. Human life itself is treated a sacrifice.<sup>143</sup> The Vedas are essential 'kriyārtha' according to 'pūrvamīmāṃsā' tradition. The main purpose of the Vedas was thought to be the 'formulation of injunctions' and prohibitions (Vidhi and nisedha) concerning the performance of sacrifice. Therefore the true nature of sacrifice can be comprehended only through these Vedic injunctions.<sup>144</sup> The Brahmana- texts have given a number of examples to describe the origin of sacrifice. Some passages do say that Prajapati saw the sacrifice.<sup>145</sup> The variety of stories describe that there was no 'definite opinion about the origin' of the sacrifice during the Brahmana period. G. U Thite observes: "It can be concluded that the origin of sacrifice was not definitely known at the time of the Brahmana- texts and the sacrifice was already a well- established institute. Nevertheless, it was a developing institute. Many sacrificial rites were seen by different seers and were added to the then existing sacrifices."<sup>146</sup>

### 1.1.7 The Yajamana

The sacrifice must possess a particular purpose and this determines the object that is to be offered, the 'season' in which it is to be offered. All the sacrifices have great 'occult potency' (prabhava). The sacrifice is performed for the benefits of the 'yajamana or the one who pays for the sacrifice'. The Yajamana himself can arrange and perform the sacrifice just as the householder performs it at home. It is traditionally believed that the 'merit and the benefits of the sacrifice is enhanced' and multiplied according to the 'daksina' or gifts bestowed on the priest who

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<sup>142</sup> Michael Willis, *The Archeology of Hindu ritual*, Cambridge university press, 2009, PP.96-112.

<sup>143</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), *The Vedic experience*, P.407.

<sup>144</sup> Dandekar, *Srauta Kosa*, Vol. 1, part. 1, P.6.

<sup>145</sup> Gopatha – Brahmana, 1. 1. 12: Sa bhuyo sramyat tapyat, bhuya atmanam samtapatsa manasa eva candra masanniramimata nakhebhyo naksatrani, lomabhya osadhivanaspatin, ksudrebhya: prane bhyo nyan bahun devan sabhuyo sramyad bhuyo tapyat, bhuyaa atma nam samatapat sa etam trivrtam saptatantumekavim satimsamstam yajnamapasyat/ tadapyetadr cuktam / agniryajnm trivrtam saptatantumiti / adhapyesa prakridita: sloka: pratyabhivadati sapta sutya: sapta ca pakayajna iti, see also, satapatha Brahmana 11. 2.4 1-6.

<sup>146</sup> G.U Thite, *Sacrifice in the Brahmana – texts*, Poona, 1975, P.15.

performs the sacrifice. The prescribed rites are used in the sacrifice, like 'ceremonial baths', 'rigid taboos' are observed, 'fasting' and 'continence' are practiced, hymns and mantras are sung during the performance.<sup>147</sup>

### 1.1.8 Yajna and Faith

The importance of faith ( Sraddha) both in the sacrifice and in the priest who offers the sacrifice is very much stressed. The man who has real faith realizes and experiences in his own life that sacrifice 'produces' its results without the 'intervention of gods.' The sacrificer at the time of the sacrifice gives himself at the hands of the priest. The priest could by 'manipulation deprive him of his senses, of his life and of his wealth' etc.<sup>148</sup> The word 'sraddha' is composed of 'srat' and the verbal root 'dha' which means 'to put', 'to lay.' Srat is related to the Indian tradition to 'satya' which means truth and here it means truth and 'exactitude.' Srat means the "fundamental trust that is based on nothing other than the very nature of our entire being."<sup>149</sup>The dishonesty and disbelief can make the sacrifice ineffective. This attitude brings about no sacrifice.<sup>150</sup> The sacrifice is not performed in a mechanical manner. 'Sacrifice is valueless without a spirit of trust, or without faith.' "Faith cannot be dissociated from precision, or fidelity to the rules."<sup>151</sup> The trust is also demanded in the sacrifice itself and in the priests. "What makes the sacrifice endure forever is faith and then the sacrifice is never lost."<sup>152</sup> Faith is the essential element in the sacrifice which makes the offerings, gifts and prayers efficacious. Faith also means truth. The truth here means "the correct correspondence and right relationship among actions, words, meanings, and life. The external precision of the acts is only a symbol for the perfect correctness demanded from the sacrificer for he

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<sup>147</sup> Benjamin Walker, Hindu world, PP.317-318.

<sup>148</sup>Keith, The religion and philisophy of the Veda and upanishads, Vol. 2 Motilal Benarsidass, Varanasi, 1976, P. 463.

<sup>149</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.398.

<sup>150</sup>Taittiriya Samhita, 11. 2 9. 7; Taittiriya- Brahmana, 11. 2. 7. 3. The men on the other hand subsist on what is bestowed on them from heaven.

<sup>151</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.397.

<sup>152</sup> Kausitaki Brahmana, V11, 4.



does not perform the sacrifice through his own private capacity."<sup>153</sup> More than the exactness what is essential is the 'spirit' with which the ritual is performed. It is the Yajnavalkya who in the Upanishad of the later date expresses that "the sacrifice depends on the offerings and the offerings depend on faith."<sup>154</sup> There is a close relationship between 'truth', the 'exactitude' and sacrifice. He who has laid the sacrificial fires should not speak 'untruth'. "Truth alone is worship."<sup>155</sup> Sraddha is a form of 'consecration'.<sup>156</sup> Faith is important for the efficacy of the sacrifice. "When one sacrifices with faith, the sacrifice has all its value and effect."<sup>157</sup> According to the Brahmanas the sacrifice without the 'sraddha is sterile'.<sup>158</sup>

### 1.1.9 Yajna and Rita

These two terms are closely related to each other. "Rta has its root 'ar' which is closely related to at least two Indo- European parent forms 'ar' and 'er'."<sup>159</sup> In the first case rta would mean 'what is fitting, 'well arranged', 'established norm', 'order'.<sup>160</sup> In these meanings rta would appear to have no 'flexible and moving nature'. It may be noted that order, and arrangement need not be taken here as unchangeable and immutable. Coming to the second case 'er'- 'rta' will mean "what sets in motion, is moving, action."<sup>161</sup> Here the 'movement' and 'action' do not mean 'chaotic nor disorderly.' The movability does not mean 'disorder.' Thus 'rta' means 'orderly and harmonious movement' or arrangement, 'rhythmic action', work. Hence rta can be connected to truth, order, water dawn, and rite. Benveniste describes rta as follows: "Rta is the order which rules; also the keeping in order of the universe. Nothing that concerns man and the world escapes the realm of

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<sup>153</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.399.

<sup>154</sup> Brahadaranyaka Upanisad , 111, 9, 21.

<sup>155</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 11, 2, 2.

<sup>156</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, X11. 8. 2. 4.

<sup>157</sup> Kausitaki Brahmana, V11. 4. The sacrifice is never lost when offered in faith.

<sup>158</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 1. 3. 1 26.

<sup>159</sup>J.Pokorney, Indogermanisches etymolisches wörterbuch, Munchen, 1959, P.55.

<sup>160</sup>J. Pokorney, Indogermanisches etymolisches Wörterbuch, P.46. (translated )

<sup>161</sup>J.Pokorney, Indogermanisches etymolisches Wörterbuch, P.47.

order.”<sup>162</sup> The word rta has a rich meaning. It is a ‘rich symbol and a real principle of order and activity.’<sup>163</sup>

### 1.1.9.1 Rita

Rta was at the core of the universe which controls the force of the universe. It is responsible for the ‘order and stability in the universe’, in the ‘rhythm of the planets’, in the cycle of the seasons and in all different aspects of the life of the cosmos, including the social and the moral life man. ‘It is the norm and the ‘pulse which controls the normal existence’. Even the gods had to be faithful to this norm of rta.<sup>164</sup>Rta is the real ‘principle of activity and order’. It is the very energy of the sacrifice. The whole order of the universe springs from and is maintained and preserve by the dynamism of rta. Rita is translated as ‘cosmic order.’ It is a sacrificial order. The cosmic order is maintained by sacrificial order, that is ‘rta is upheld by rta.’<sup>165</sup> It is through rta that Varuna governs and guides the universe.<sup>166</sup>Rta is the foundation of all the beings, the original and universal factor.<sup>167</sup> From rta comes the first born which is the word.<sup>168</sup> This first is the ‘prajapati himself’<sup>169</sup>or Agni.<sup>170</sup> ‘Agni is closely related to rta’.<sup>171</sup>Rta as the principle of order is capable of growth, development and of expansion.<sup>172</sup> By sacrifice Gods and men collaborate each other for the maintenance and for the very existence of the universe. The sacrifice is not performed in accordance with the ones personal likes and dislikes. It has ‘internal structure and ‘mode of operation’which is the rta. Rita is that which controls the sacrifice. Without this rta the Vedic sacrifice would be ‘manipulated and shaped’ by both men and gods.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>162</sup>E.Benveniste, Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-europeennes, P.100.

<sup>163</sup> Raymondo Panikkar (ed), Vedic experience, P.350.

<sup>164</sup> Jeaneane Fowler, Hinduism, beliefs, practices and Scriptures, P.105.

<sup>165</sup> Rig-Veda , 1, 23, 5, v, 68, 4.

<sup>166</sup> Rig-Veda, V, 63, 1.

<sup>167</sup> Rig-Veda , 1, 164, 8.

<sup>168</sup>Rig-Veda, 1, 164, 37.

<sup>169</sup>Atharva Veda Samhita, 1V, 35, 1.

<sup>170</sup> Rig-Veda, X, 5, 7.

<sup>171</sup> Rig-Veda, V, 12, 1-3.

<sup>172</sup>Rig-Veda, 1, 23, 5.

<sup>173</sup> Raimundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.351.

The order of the universe is not the result of the already performed action. The order comes about by the 'self-co-operation of the universe itself'. "To perform a sacrifice is to live and to make one's own survival and that of the whole universe. It is the act by which the universe continues to exist."<sup>174</sup>

### **1.1.9.2 Karman**

Karman may be considered as the all 'originating dimension of the supreme yajna'. It is the 'creative divine aspect' of the supreme principle which is yajna. "Yajna descends from its supreme abode, passes through the earthly and heavenly realm redeeming everything. The karman has the divine aspect and the human aspect of cooperation by which the original act is being continued and brought to its fulfillment. Man has to make the proper cultic act or the Karman so that the cosmic forces would function well".<sup>175</sup> All kinds of karmas of priest, carpenter, physician, and housewife are considered as ritual operations. Any Karman or action as long as they are productive they have a similarity to sacredness about it and from that comes the idea of sacrifice. Any 'productive act is considered as the cultic act.<sup>176</sup> The Supreme sacrifice is the excellent act. Man has to respond and react positively and constantly to this supreme sacrifice until everything is brought to unity. When man does not make appropriate offerings and sacrifices (karman) the universal order cannot function properly, the sun will fail to rise; rain will not fall and so on. There can be disorder.

### **1.1.10 The Accuracy in the Performance of the Sacrifice**

Every word, every movement and every smallest rite of sacrifice have an extraordinary importance because the result of the sacrifice depends totally on them.<sup>177</sup> In the sacrifice every piece has to tally and agree with one another. The 'slightest discrepancy' in the "performance of even a minute ritualistic detail, for example, in the pouring of the melted butter on the fire, or the proper way of placing

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<sup>174</sup> Raimundo Panikkar (ed), *The Vedic experience*, PP.352-353.

<sup>175</sup> Jaiminiya Brahmana, 1, 7-8.

<sup>176</sup> Louis Malieckal, *Yajna and Eucharist*, Dharmaram publications, Bangalore, 1989, PP.44-45.

<sup>177</sup> Frazer, *The Golden bough*, Vol. 1 Macmillan and Co. Ltd, London, 1960, P.89.

the utensils used in the sacrifice, was sufficient to spoil the sacrifice, though it must have been performed with the greatest earnestness".<sup>178</sup> If the sacrifice is performed carefully and meticulously observing the minute details of the rituals, it is able to bring about by itself the expected and desired effect without depending on the grace of the gods.<sup>179</sup> The creation of the cosmos was also considered to be the result of the sacrifice of the Supreme Being. The Purusa Sukata of the Rig-Veda has explained how various things came to have existence and being when the gods performed the sacrifice with 'purusa as victim.'<sup>180</sup> The ancient seers of Hinduism had created sacrifices and they continue to bring into existence new form of sacrifices.<sup>181</sup> Jamadagni offered sacrifice which came to be known as Jamadagnya.<sup>182</sup> The agnihotra is said to have originated from "a contract between Agni and man."<sup>183</sup> The sacrifice grew persistently throughout the centuries. "If the priest omits a syllable in the liturgy he is making a hole in the sacrifice."<sup>184</sup> This indicates the strict correspondence among word, action and results. The sacrifice has to be performed free from errors. The prayers, chants, and verses have to be pronounced without mistakes and correctly and distinctly. Man's sacrifice will also have words which "are for man his sole instrument and indeed the inner soul-force of the sacrificial action without which no sacrifice could take place."<sup>185</sup> Man needs to be intensely conscious of the sacrifice and 'its meaning in order' that it be a true sacrifice.<sup>186</sup> In prayer lies the hidden spiritual energy which gives the sacrifice its efficacy and

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<sup>178</sup>S.N.Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy, Vol. 1, P.21. See also Saral Jhigran, Aspects of Hindu morality, Motilal Banarsidas, Delhi, 1984. Here it is said that when the sacrifices are performed correctly, they effect the desired effects, P.47. The slightest error in the ritualistic details can bring disastrous effects.

<sup>179</sup> H. Aguilar, The sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, PP. 18-51. See also, Saral Jhingran, Aspects of Hindu morality, Motilal Banarsidass publishers, Delhi, 1984.

<sup>180</sup> Rig- Veda, X. 90, 6. 'Purusa' means man, the cosmic man. It is the self which pervades the entire universe.

<sup>181</sup> G.U. Thite, Sacrifice in the Brahmana- text, P.14.

<sup>182</sup> Jaiminiya Brahmana, 284.

<sup>183</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 11. 3. 3. 1. 2.

<sup>184</sup> Aitareya Brahmana, 111, 11 (X1, 11).

<sup>185</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P. 97.

<sup>186</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.406.

power. As the Satapatha Brahmana says "Speech leads sacrifice to the gods."<sup>187</sup> The sacrifice and the word are inseparable in the sacrificial rituals. "The word accompanies the ritual action as a spiritual agent and directs the action to its goal".<sup>188</sup> The ritual word was a 'sacred word'. Every ritual act was effective only if the appropriate 'Vedic text was spoken by persons authorized' to do so in an 'unchanged formulation', in the 'proper intonation' with the proper meter. "One could lose his son or break his arm if the meter was wrong."<sup>189</sup> To perform the sacrifice devoid of mistakes was the main concern. Miller puts it "the whole sacrificial rite was conceived as bringing together of gods and men so as to enact dramatically the cosmic order."<sup>190</sup>

The Hindu literature reports that the yajnas which last for long time and months are very expensive. As a result this will make the rich persons poor.<sup>191</sup> The sacrifice became an exclusive work of the sacrificial specialists who are the Brahmin priests. The significance of the Brahminic priesthood increased as the sacrifice became a complicated matter and something exclusive. Even for the minor Vedic sacrifices needed four or five Brahmin priests and for the major sacrifices needed hundreds of priests.<sup>192</sup> The "purusamedha" sacrifice which was the human sacrifice was the most 'noble and efficacious sacrifice.'<sup>193</sup> This sacrifice made the sacrificer equal to the Prajapati, the creator. The animal sacrifices were also common. The greatest was the 'asvamedha', the horse sacrifice, to be performed by kings as part of their 'assuming universal power'.<sup>194</sup> The efficacy of the sacrifice does not depend on

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<sup>187</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 1. 4. 4. 2.

<sup>188</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.172.

<sup>189</sup> Taittiriya Samhita, 2.5.2.1., Satapatha Brahmana, 1.6. 3.10.

<sup>190</sup> Jeanine Miller, The vision of cosmic order in the Vedas, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1985, P.203. Miller said it was a direct contact with God, P.215. Lefever also wrote man's contact with the mysterious power is regarded as contact with gods. See H. Lefever, The Vedic idea of sin, London Missionary press, Nagercoil, 1935, P.63.

<sup>191</sup> D.D. Kosambi, An Introduction to the study of Indian history, popular book depot, Bombay, 1956, PP.94 ff.

<sup>192</sup> Klaus K. Klostermaier, A survey of Hinduism, P.158.

<sup>193</sup> A. Weber, Über das Menschenopfer bei den Indern der Vedischen Zeit, in Indischen Streifen, Berlin, 1886, vol. 1, PP.54-89, has a collection of all the Vedic evidences, concerning human sacrifice. See Aitareya Brahmana, V11, 13- 18; 11, 8; Satapatha Brahmana, 1, 2, 3, 6; V1, 2,, 2, 3, 6; V1, 2, 2, 18.

<sup>194</sup> Klaus K. Klostermaier, A survey of Hinduism, P.158.

anything or anyone other than the sacrifice itself. The sacrifice like magic, when performed properly and accurately produces an automatic effect.<sup>195</sup> “The most important issue with reference to the sacrifice is knowledge- knowledge of the proper ritual formulae (mantra) and of the correct procedure for performing the sacrificial acts.”<sup>196</sup>

### 1.1.11 The Role of Priest

The Vedic sacrifices became very ‘complex and extensive as the time went by. The role and work of the priests became very important especially when the sacrifice became bigger and extensive. The priests had a specialized function to play.<sup>197</sup> The stress on the priestly involvement in the sacrifice gave rise to Brahmanism. Because of all these there was a need for the sacrifice to be performed with great accuracy and perfection. There were also priests who were ‘hotr’ who recited the hymns of the Rig-Veda, the ‘udgatr’ who were the ‘chanters’, particularly specialized in chanting from Samaveda, the ‘adhavarya’, the officiating priests, who looked after the ritual aspect of the sacrifice. The Brahmin priests were also responsible for overseeing the ‘whole ritual’. They had to see that everything was correctly ‘performed and carried’ out for a good result of propitiating the gods. The Brahmin priests became powerful and indispensable in order to correct the ritual performance.<sup>198</sup> The priests are the instruments in the realization of the sacrifice.<sup>199</sup> The knowledge on the part of the priests explains their ‘importance and superiority’ over the faithful. Hence it is also a practice that before the “performance of any important ritual, priests must take an oath not to harm one another”<sup>200</sup> either ‘intentionally’<sup>201</sup> or by simple error.<sup>202</sup> The gifts are also presented to the priests who perform the sacrifice. These gifts are called ‘daksina’ which may consist of clothing, gold, horses. The priest who performs the

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<sup>195</sup> Keith, Religion and philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads, P.454.

<sup>196</sup> Patric Olivelle, The asrama system, Oxford university press, New York, 1993, P.31.

<sup>197</sup> Saral Jhingran, Aspects of Hindu morality, P.47.

<sup>198</sup> Jeaneane Fowler, Hinduism, beliefs, practices and Scriptures, PP.104-105.

<sup>199</sup> Raimundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.359.

<sup>200</sup> Aitareya Brahmana, 1, 24, (1V, 7).

<sup>201</sup> Aitareya Brahmana, 11, 33, 111, 3.

<sup>202</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 1, 6, 3, 10 .

sacrifice perfectly is considered as trustworthy and model for the imitation.<sup>203</sup> The officiating priests in the worship are 'hotr, adhvaryu, udgata, and Brahma.'<sup>204</sup> "Ritualistic and moral purity was regarded as a necessary pre-requisite of the performance of the Vedic sacrifices."<sup>205</sup> There is no efficacy of the sacrificial rituals without the intervention of the divine priests, the gods. The efficacy of the sacrifice is not simply 'ex opere- operato.'<sup>206</sup>

#### **1.1.11.1 Hotr<sup>207</sup>**

He is the one who recites the 'mantras'(riks).He is the one who summons the gods by means of his riks. By uttering the mantras, which manifest the 'divine presence', he is able to bring to 'proximity' the presence of the gods. He is not just a human priest but regarded as a 'divine priest.' The Brahmin books consider the 'divine being himself to be the real priest'. He who realizes the function and work of the priest ( purohita) is really of the god's.

#### **1.1.11.2 Adhvaryu Priest<sup>208</sup>**

Adhavara means 'journey'. He is the one who is responsible for the performance of the yajna by means of the yajus. He is in charge of the 'physical detail of the sacrifice'. He too is God, the 'matarishvan-vayu' who as the breath of the world makes all activities possible. The Adhavyu, carries out in the inner sacrifice all the actions which are favourable to the activity of gods. He makes a the journey, which is called 'adhvara journey' a journey of sacrifice.

#### **1.1.11.3 Udgata Priest <sup>209</sup>**

The Udgata priest makes gods happy by chanting the 'saman mantras', which are from the Sama Veda samhita. His role is to sing the hymns in praise of

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<sup>203</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, X1, 2, 7, 20.

<sup>204</sup>T.V.Kapali Sastry, Unveiling the light in the Vedas, P.31.

<sup>205</sup>Saral Jhingran, Aspects of Hindu morality, P.45.

<sup>206</sup> H. Aguilar, The sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, P. 100.

<sup>207</sup>T. V. Kapali Sastry, Unveiling the light in the Vedas, PP.31-32.

<sup>208</sup> T.V. Kapali Sastry, Unveiling the light in the Vedas, P.32

<sup>209</sup>T. V. Kaplai Sastry, Unveiling the light in the Vedas, PP.32-33, See also Maurice Phillips, Fundamental teaching of Vedas, B.P.S publications, New Delhi, 2004.

gods and by his melodious singing he pleases the gods. He averts many dangers and harms.

#### **1.1.11.4 Brahma Priest<sup>210</sup>**

He is the eyewitness of the entire sacrificial ceremony. He gives the permission to begin the ritual. He is the 'guardian of the sacrificial ceremony'. He observes the ceremony silently with great attention, against 'every sin of omission or commission', of deficiency or 'excess of mantras or action'. The Brahman was the general controller of the sacrificial performance. He had to watch carefully all the classes of priests and had to correct any mistake they committed. He was supposed to know all the ceremony and the hymns used by the other priests.<sup>211</sup> He is like the master of ceremony.

#### **1.2 The Sacrifices in Rig-Veda<sup>212</sup>**

The Vedic people worshipped the deities through offerings of hymns and oblations. The prayers and other homages were also indispensable part of the sacrifices. The Vedic sacrifices normally aimed at the future benefits and usefulness to be granted to the worshippers by the gods. The worshipper had to depend on the god's generosity because he realized and experienced that he was helpless without gods. These priests were part of the public worship. But they had no particular role in the home worship. The altar was installed at home and the Rig-Veda entrusts to the householder the responsibility to perform sacrifices especially the sacrifice of fire.<sup>213</sup>

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<sup>210</sup>T.V. Kapali Sastry, Unveiling the light in the Vedas, P.33.

<sup>211</sup>Maurice Phillips, Fundamental teaching of Vedas, PP.180-181.

<sup>212</sup> 'rc' means praise, verse, and the 'veda' means knowledge. Veda is an ancient Indian sacred collection of Vedic Sanskrit hymns. It is counted among four Canonical sacred texts of Hinduism known as the Vedas. The Rig-veda contains several mythological and poetical accounts of the origin of the world, and hymns praising the gods. They are ancient prayers for life and prosperity. The Rig-Veda is a collection of the songs in ten separate books numbering 1028 songs. The knowledge of the early religious rites and sacrifices comes from these songs, see, Kurian T. Kadankavil, The quest of the real, Bangalore, 1975, PP.58 -60.

<sup>213</sup>Kurian T. Kadankavil, the quest of the real, PP.58-61.



In the family the husband and the wife took the role of priests for the sacrifices.<sup>214</sup> sacrifice of Agni and soma were important to bring about benefits from the gods.<sup>215</sup> According to the Rig-Veda the sacrifice is the 'naval' which is the centre of the universe.<sup>216</sup> The Rig- Veda says "The sacrifice is our father, our Manu."<sup>217</sup>

### 1.2.1 Sacrifice in Brahmanas<sup>218</sup>

In Brahmana literature gods were 'replaced by sacrifices'. In Brahmanas the priest took the place of the householder in order to officiate the ceremony in sacrifice. For Brahmanas the key to experience 'reality was sacrifice'. The 'superiority of mind or the knowledge' over sacrifice is acknowledged in Brahmanas. Sacrifices were considered as the means to the liberating knowledge.<sup>219</sup> The Brahmanas lay a great stress on the sacrifices which are able to maintain the order and harmony in the universe and become a source of strength to the gods.<sup>220</sup> According to Satpata Brahman there was only "mind that existed in the beginning of time."<sup>221</sup> The 'mind is the sacrifice'. The mind is the foundation of the body. Sometimes the mind is also considered to be 'Prajapati'.<sup>222</sup> The thoughts of the mind are considered to be 'superior' to sacrifices because the sacrifices are first offered to the mind.<sup>223</sup> Many of the sacrifices in Brahmanas are named after the 'month or day' in which they are performed. Some sacrifices are 'periodical'. The 'dasara' or the new moon sacrifices, the 'pindapitriyajna' or an offering for the ancestors is undertaken on the afternoon

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<sup>214</sup> Rig-Veda, V111 31, 5-9.

<sup>215</sup> Kurian T. Kadankavil, The quest of the real, P.58-61.

<sup>216</sup> Rig-Veda, 1. 164. 35; see also satapatha Brahmana, X111. 5. 5 21.

<sup>217</sup> Rig-Veda, X. 100. 5 "yajno manuh pramatirnah pita."

<sup>218</sup> The Brahmanas are the commentaries on the four Vedas detailing the proper performance of the rituals. Of course the 'Vedas' means knowledge. They are the large body of texts originating in ancient India. They are the oldest Scriptures of Hinduism. The Vedas are supposed to be originated from above and not human made. A brief mention will be made about Vedas and its origin and the kinds of Vedas in the introduction. This will help the readers to have some ideas about the Vedas. Brahmanas are the body of literature that enunciates precise rules and regulations for ritual worship, certain more details about Yajnas, including minute details and instructions on the rubrics of their performance, see V. Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire a critique; in: Journal of Dharma, Vol 26, Bangalore, 2001, P.28.

<sup>219</sup> Kurian T. Kadankavil, the quest of the real, P.62.

<sup>220</sup> Benjamin Walker, Hindu world, P.317.

<sup>221</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, X, 5, 3, 2. Satapatha Brahmana is one of the prose texts describing the Vedic rituals.

<sup>222</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, V111, 5, 2, 3, 5, 4, 3, 9.

<sup>223</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, X, 2, 3, 6.

of the new moon day every month. Then there is a 'sunasiriya' which is the offer for 'field and the plough' performed at the end of twelve months. The 'sodayajna' which is one of the most important sacrifices, is divided into three classes: the 'ekahas' which is a sacrifice that lasts for one day, the 'ahinas', this sacrifice lasts from two to twelve days, and the 'satras' lasts more than twelve days. The 'Mahabharata agnihotra' is the most important among the Vedic sacrifices. This sacrifice is an offering of fire in the morning and in the evening.<sup>224</sup> The sacrifice during the Brahmanas was way of obtaining the 'desired ends' without the help of the gods. "In Brahmanas the gods were relegated to a lower place and the sacrifice has obtained a superior position. Sacrifice has a mystical potency".<sup>225</sup> In Brahmanas the sacrifices were believed to have a 'compelling power'. Some authors tried to find the essence of the sacrifice in the belief that "a thing ardently wished for may be made to come to pass in reality by performing or reproducing that thing in effigy."<sup>226</sup> During the time of Brahmanas the sacrifice became a 'cure for sin'. It was said to heal the 'impurities and impure acts'. Through sacrifice man is able to redeem himself from destruction and death. He liberates himself from the clutches of mortal body and sin by his sacrifice.<sup>227</sup>

### 1.2.2 Upanishads<sup>228</sup>

The sacrifice plays a great role in Upanishads. The Upanishads recommend different kinds of sacrifices for the 'attainment of one's desire'.<sup>229</sup> "According to Upanishads the person who wills to attain heaven must offer 'agnihotra' sacrifice".<sup>230</sup> All the sacrifices are to be performed at the 'appointed time'.<sup>231</sup> Chandaka

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<sup>224</sup> Kurian T. Kadankavil, Quest of the real, PP.64- 65.

<sup>225</sup> Jose Thachil, The Vedic and Christian concept of sacrifice, P.23.

<sup>226</sup> Zenaide A. Ragozin, Vedic India, oriental book sellers, Delhi, 1961, PP.388-389.

<sup>227</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.441.

<sup>228</sup> The Sanskrit word 'Upanishads' are philosophical texts, which are early sources of Hindu religion. These texts are authorless and are 'sruti'. Sruti is what is heard. The Upanishads are passed down in oral tradition. The Sanskrit word 'upanishad' derives from 'upa' (nearby), 'ni' means at the proper place or down. And 'sad' means to sit. Thus 'sit down near.' This means sitting near a teacher to receive an instruction See, Macdonel Arthur Anthony, A practical Sanskrit dictionary with transliteration, accentuation and etymological analysis throughout, Motilal Benarsidas, ISBN, 2004.

<sup>229</sup> Kausitaki Upanishads, 2, 4.

<sup>230</sup> Maitrayani Upanishads, 6, 35.

Upanishad declares that even the agnihotra is useless without having 'metaphysical knowledge' in general. One needs to know what the sacrifice is all about.<sup>232</sup>

When one offers the agnihotra with full knowledge of it, it can destroy all the 'evil deeds'.<sup>233</sup> "In Chandogya Upanishads a person's entire life is considered as soma-sacrifice".<sup>234</sup> In Brahadarany Upanishads 'sexual intercourse' is regarded as a sacrifice.<sup>235</sup> According to Chandogya Upanishad 'hunger', 'thirst' 'austerity' and 'almsgiving' and 'uprightness' are also said to be sacrificial acts.<sup>236</sup> "The study of a sacred Scripture is also considered to be a sacrifice".<sup>237</sup> The Upanishad did not have a 'uniformed idea of sacrifice'.<sup>238</sup> According to the Upanishads man is said to offer a 'continuous sacrifice' by his 'thoughts', 'speech', and 'behaviour'. "Man himself is the sacrifice; speech is the fuel, breath the smoke, the the tongue the flame, the eyes the coals, and so on."<sup>239</sup> The Upanishads tell us that sacrifice is "useless in itself; it always prepares the way for the highest enlightenment".<sup>240</sup>

### 1.2.2.1 Sacrifice in Mundakop Upanishad

The Mundakopanishad insists on the performance of the 'agnihotra sacrifice'. It is one of the sacrifices prescribed by the Vedas to be performed by all daily. Mundaka agrees with the teaching that through the sacrifices the "offerer is made worthy to share the goods of the Brahma – world".<sup>241</sup>

## 1.3 The Fire (अग्नि)

Fire which is one of the cosmic elements 'is personified' as one of the important Vedic gods in the conception and the execution of the Vedic rituals. It is

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<sup>231</sup> Mundaka Upanishads, i, 2, 3.

<sup>232</sup> Chandogya Upanishad, V, 24, 1-2.

<sup>233</sup> Chandogya Upanishad, V, 24, 2-3. Knowledge is the foundation of all other sacrifices too.

<sup>234</sup> Chandogya Upanishad, 111, 16, 1, 3, 5. A person is a sacrifice. His twenty four years are the morning soma libation. Soma is a ritual drink of importance among the early Indo- Iranians and Vedic and Persian cultures.

<sup>235</sup> Brahadarany Upanishad, V1, 4, 1-4 .

<sup>236</sup> Chandogya Upanishad, 3, 17, 1-4.

<sup>237</sup> Chadogya Upanishad, V111, 5, 1.

<sup>238</sup> Kurian T. Kadankavil, The quest of the real,P.69.

<sup>239</sup> Benjamin Walker, Hindu world, P.317.

<sup>240</sup> Svetasvatara Upanishad, 11. 6-7.

<sup>241</sup> Mundaka Upanishad , 1, 2, 5.

said that no sacrifice can be effectively perfected without the 'presence and participation of fire.'<sup>242</sup> "To the Vedic mind Agni or the consecrated fire in ritual is not merely one of the five elements which humans use for light, energy, warmth, for cooking, and into which they offer oblations. It is the deity presiding over the elemental fire."<sup>243</sup> Fire is considered a God, a God most intimately and closely 'connected with the sacrificial action'. The purpose of the sacrifice is to bring about a close relationship and intimacy between the divine and the human. The sacrifice must lead to a close 'unity between the mortal and the immortal'. The fire plays the role of intermediary between the human and the divine. Hence the fire is the 'havyavah', one who carries the 'havis' the 'sacrificial offerings'. The fire (Agni) is also 'identified with the Brahman', the supreme God who is the source of all things. This is because the fire is the basic source of 'light and energy'.<sup>244</sup> Hence fire occupies an important position in the sacrificial rite, because it is the "instrument by which sacrifice is accomplished."<sup>245</sup> 'Psychologically' fire, (Agni) is the 'divine will in man' which brings harmony, order and development in human beings.<sup>246</sup> The personal offerings were presented to the personal deity through the fire.<sup>247</sup>

The Agni is the 'central deity' in the Vedic sacrificial ritual. He is the intermediary between the ritualist or the sacrifice and the remaining deities. "Agni was central to a sacrificial ritual because it was fire that transformed the sacrificial offering into a form accessible to the gods. And it was this offering to the gods which brought about the reciprocal divine bestowal of the very things important to the people in their daily existence."<sup>248</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> V. Sujatha, The Philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire: a critique; in: Journal of dharma, vol 26, P.28.

<sup>243</sup> V. Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire: a critique; in: Journal of dharma, vol 26, P.29.

<sup>244</sup> V. Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire: a critique; in: Journal of Dharma, vol 26, PP.29-30.

<sup>245</sup> Rig-Veda, 1. 1. 1, 1. 145. 3.

<sup>246</sup> T.V Kapali Sastry, Unveiling the light in the Veda, PP.21-22.

<sup>247</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, Peter Lang, American university studies, New York, 1995, PP. 8-11.

<sup>248</sup> Jeaneane Fowler, Hinduism, beliefs, practices and Scriptures, P. 98.

Fire has the ability to burn everything and transform them into forms of energy. According to V. Sujatha “This burning of fire can be interpreted as a process of transference of what is gross to subtler and higher realms of the reality.”<sup>249</sup> The fire has the function of reaching the ‘human offerings to the divine’. During this process the ‘lower self’ of man is refined and cleansed. The fire, through the process of burning, is able to channel the lower instincts of ‘worldly attachments towards the higher region of immortality.’ The ritual heat in the ritual sacrifice is regarded as the ‘divine source.’ “An imbalance in the ritual is supposed to occur whenever heat fails to attain its required intensity, or produces difficulties when the heat is excessive.”<sup>250</sup> The fire is lit in the morning, and at the ‘wedding the couples walk around the fire’, the fire is important at the time of death, when the body is being cremated. The fire takes away the ‘impurities by burning them away’. “Fire takes gifts and brings them with smoke to the sun; from there, rain falls, which make vegetables food, grow, which nourishes creatures.”<sup>251</sup> The fire was also means of purification from the beginning which guarded against evil spirits.<sup>252</sup>

“The fire (Agni) is the ‘mediator par excellence’, the sacrificial fire who transforms all material earthly and human gifts into ‘spiritual and divine realities’, so that they may reach their ‘endless destination’. Oblations of milk, ghee are made in him who receives them and so we read ‘O Agni sacrifice thine own body” (agne yajasva tanvam tava svam)<sup>253</sup>In this fire rite there is already ‘offering and reaching out’ in several senses: man offers or pours ghee into the fire; the fire reaches out ‘extending itself (tanvam vrdhana) and rises in growing flames’.<sup>254</sup> And with that man longs for or offers himself for the ‘beyond and for the transcendent.’ Here we can find the original meaning of offering and extending. A passage in the Satpatha

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<sup>249</sup> V. Sujatha, The Philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire: a critique; in: Journal of Dharma, vol 26, P.30.

<sup>250</sup> V. Sujatha, The Philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire : a critique; in: Journal of Dharma,vol 26, P. 30.

<sup>251</sup> Axel Michaels, Hinduism past and present, P.246.

<sup>252</sup> Christopher Key Chapple (ed), Hinduism and ecology, Harvard university press, America, 2000, PP.42-43.

<sup>253</sup> Rig-Veda, V1, 11, 2; see also 1, 142, 11.

<sup>254</sup> Agnijihvah thus epithet of God's V111, 102, 10.

Brahmana, in its search for the etymology of the term yajna is of paramount importance:

“Now concerning why soma is called sacrifice; when slay him and when they stretch him out they cause him to be born going on: whence comes yan-ja and yajna, they explain is the same as yajna.”<sup>255</sup> Hence in the Vedic experience yajna comes to mean ‘offering’, ‘reaching out with necessary movement’, and means also ‘destruction’, ‘disintegration’, in a way death on the one hand. This death involves transformation leading to a new form of existence, re-integrated existence, in a way new birth. The karman is as ‘generative and creative’ part of yajna<sup>256</sup> and “rta is also part of yajna since it involves movement, setting in motion everything and holding them together at the same time in accordance with their intrinsic truth- nature”.<sup>257</sup> The primordial meaning of yajna is ‘offering with the implication of ‘stretching’, ‘reaching out and extending.’ In an Agni centred cult there is the nature of ‘extending, stretching and reaching out’. This is due to the very nature of the fire (Agni) and the nature of the ghee, and milk. In all these are revealed to us the experiences of ‘moving and being moved’, of ‘destroying and being destroyed’ and ‘transforming and being transformed’, ‘creating and being born anew’ on the other hand.<sup>258</sup> The fire burns bright with lots of flame. This flame rises very high. Hence man has a ‘burning desire to reach out to God who dwells beyond.’

The light is not an ‘abstract reality’. The light is sun and fire. “Light is Agni, and Agni is light. The one who is light, he calls light... Agni offers itself in sacrifice to the rising sun and the setting sun offers itself in sacrifice to Agni in the evening. Night sacrifices itself to the day and day sacrifices itself to the night.”<sup>259</sup> The Agni played an important role in the sacrifice with ‘regard to purification’.<sup>260</sup> As the sacred

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<sup>255</sup> Atha yasmad yaj no nama ghnanti va enam eta dyad abhi sunvanti tad yadenam tanvate tad enam janayanti satd yamano ayate say an jayate tasmad yanjo yanjo ha vai namaitad yad yajna iti (Satapatha Brahmana, 111, 9, 4, 23.

<sup>256</sup>Rig-Veda, X, 88, 9.

<sup>257</sup>Rig-Veda, 1. 6. 1.

<sup>258</sup> Louis Malieckal, Yajna and Eucharist, P.32.

<sup>259</sup> Kausitaki Brahmana, 11, 8.

<sup>260</sup> Jan Gonda, Die Religionen Indiens, vol 1, Stuttgart, 1960, P.71.

flame, Agni carried the sacrificial materials to the gods and was known as the 'high priest' of the sacrifice who made the 'sacrifice acceptable to the gods. "As the messenger of the gods Agni not only took the sacrificial offerings to the heavenly realm but also brought the gods to sacrificial altar of humans."<sup>261</sup> Agni had access to the 'highest place' in heaven and was known to be 'nearest God to humans' from whom all looked for protection. The gods consumed the sacrificial offerings through the mouth of Agni. Hence "both men and gods were dependant on Agni in the sacrifice. Agni had the ability to move and mediate between the two worlds. Agni is the light which burns the evil. He burns the evils of the sacrifice. Agni is able to forgive all the sins of the one sacrificing"<sup>262</sup> and all the sacrifices were performed in him.<sup>263</sup> According to Rig-Veda "Agni made the sacrifice perfect".<sup>264</sup>

### 1.3.1 Tapas

The word 'tapas' is derived from the root 'tap' which means 'to be consumed by heat', to suffer. This word also has the meaning of 'austerity.' This tapas or austerity produces extreme heat in the body of the person who aspires and longs for spirituality. This effect of the heat of the austerity is felt by the person psychologically. It penetrates deep into the person and transforms him from within. The person is able to attain spiritual power through his 'ascetical practices and tapas'.<sup>265</sup>

### 1.4 Karma and Yajna

Karma which means action has a relationship to yajna. Panikkar has made a statement that the term karman occurs almost 'forty times' in the Rig-Veda. The term karman means works, deeds, and especially sacred actions. Karman is "directly connected to the central idea of sacrifice or yajna".<sup>266</sup> Ernout-Meillet in the Latin

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<sup>261</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.82.

<sup>262</sup>Rig-Veda, 111.7.10; 1V. 10. 7.

<sup>263</sup> Sathapatha Brahmana, 1V. 5. 1. 13.

<sup>264</sup> Rig-Veda, V1. 10. 1; V11. 17. 3, 4.

<sup>265</sup> V.Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire : a critique; in: Journal of Dharma, vol 26, P.32.

<sup>266</sup> Raymundo panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.539.

dictionary notes that generally a word denoting 'action' is used for sacrifice because "sacrifice is the most excellent act."<sup>267</sup> The word karman which is a noun is derived from the Sanskrit word 'kr.'<sup>268</sup> It has the primary meaning 'to do', 'make', 'perform' and 'accomplish', which is found in Rigveda.<sup>269</sup> It has also the meaning to 'worship', 'sacrifice.'<sup>270</sup> The noun 'karman' has the primary meaning 'act', 'action' 'performance'<sup>271</sup> 'religious act', 'rite' as sacrifice and oblation.<sup>272</sup> Hence the "word Karman means action in general and cultic action in particular".<sup>273</sup> Karman or action in the Rig-Veda context is essentially a 'sacred activity inseparably from cult'. In any case action in itself is something holy by which one indirectly makes offerings.<sup>274</sup> And the inaction (akrtam) or what is not done may be thought of as unholy. "The perfect man is the one who has done what there is to do" (krtakrtya / krtakartavya).<sup>275</sup>

## 1.5 Ritual cooking

The importance of ritual cooking shows the 'significance of heat in yajna'. Normally the sacrificial foods are cooked and the "raw food is not considered as a proper and worthy offering to the gods."<sup>276</sup> The poets of the 'atharva Veda' notice the danger of using the uncooked food for the sacrifice. They believe that such 'raw foods are used in the sacrifice only by black magician' and not by orthodox faithful. There is a special sacred fire by which the sacrificial offerings are cooked. The 'Ahavaniya fire' is used to receive the ordinary sacrificial offerings, 'Daksina fire' is meant for the offerings for the ancestors. The 'dead body of Hindu person is cremated' in this fire. The 'garhapatya fire' is set aside only for the ritual cooking of

<sup>267</sup> S. Facio, Dictionaire etymologique la langue Latine.

<sup>268</sup> W.D. Whitney, The roots verb-forms and primary derivatives of the Sanskrit language, P.21.

<sup>269</sup> W.D. Whitney, The roots verb-forms and primary derivatives of the Sanskrit language, P.21.

<sup>270</sup> William M. Monier, A Sanskrit- English dictionary, Oxford, 1889, P.21.

<sup>271</sup> William M. Monier, A Sanskrit-English dictionary, P.21.

<sup>272</sup> William M. Monier, A Sanskrit- English dictionary, P.21.

<sup>273</sup> Louis Malieckal, Yajna and Eucharist, P.38.

<sup>274</sup> Taittiriya Samhita, V1, 1, 4, 5.

<sup>275</sup> A.K. Coomaraswamy, Atmayajna : self-sacrifice; in: Harvard Journal of Asiatic studies, 6, 1942, P.383.

<sup>276</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 1. 1. 1. 9.



the offerings. Most of the items are cooked items. <sup>277</sup>“The act of cooking transforms and changes the ‘sacrificial offerings into its divine status’. The act of cooking is able to provide the sacrificial offerings the required energy so that it gets the power to reach the destination.”<sup>278</sup> By cooking the sacrificial offerings can ascend to the higher regions with the help of heat. “Heat is able to transform the offerings and gives the power to them to rise to its goal. The offerings can rise up to the gods, only when they are transformed and endowed with energy.”<sup>279</sup>

## 1.6 Expanded meaning of Sacrifice

In the later Vedic period the scope of sacrifice was widened to include the ‘feeding of Brahmins and the recitation of Scripture’. In the medieval times the concept and meaning of sacrifice was changed. It meant giving of food generously to ‘outcasts and those inflicted with sicknesses’ and to dogs, cows and insects; and also to the ‘honoring and feeding of guests’ belonging to the low and high casts. Hence the concept of sacrifice was not just confined to the ‘ritualistic actions’ but also meant to have social concern and welfare. One’s obligation and responsibility is not just to the gods and ancestors alone but is extended to all the fellow human beings, especially to the needy, the sufferings and to the animals. Sacrifice consisted of one’s solidarity with and concern for all the living beings of the whole universe.<sup>280</sup> In the modern times also the concept of sacrifice is interpreted in broader terms to include many things. Vinoba Bhave began a movement of donating land to the landless and he called it a sacrifice (Bhudanyajna.)<sup>281</sup> In later Hinduism the worship of God became more important than the external ritualistic sacrifices. In the early Vedic period it was the external sacrifice that was very important.<sup>282</sup> The great Vedic

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<sup>277</sup> V. Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire: a critique; in: Journal of dharma, vol 26, PP.29-31.

<sup>278</sup> Atharva Veda, V1. 17. 4; v. 31.1.

<sup>279</sup> V. Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire: a critique: in: Journal of dharma, vol 26, P. 31.

<sup>280</sup> P.V. Kane, History of dharmasastra, Bhandarkar Oriental research institute , Poona,1968, PP.696-756.

<sup>281</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves(ed), P.68.

<sup>282</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, Outline of Hinduism,P.50.

sacrifices are not celebrated any more today as before. Perhaps it is due to the great expenses that involved in the sacrifices. These sacrifices are not practicable today. These Vedic sacrifices have been replaced by various other spiritual celebrations of puja at home and in the temples.<sup>283</sup>

In later Hinduism the worship of God in the shape and form of idols replaces the Vedic sacrifice. The external ceremony became unimportant and the 'mental worship' or worship by the heart (manasa puja) became very significant and popular. The ritual and the external worship is required only in the initial basic stages of spiritual life but when one progresses in spiritual life the need for 'dependence on external worship diminishes'.<sup>284</sup> "The Hindu worship is the general term used to express the 'rites, sacrifices, sacraments and other religious practices' that are found in the life of a Hindu."<sup>285</sup> Hindu worship is also called a 'way of action which consists of moral and ritual actions' which is an essential preparation for entering into the higher paths of liberation.<sup>286</sup>

### **1.6.1 The Puja**<sup>287</sup>

The great Vedic sacrifices are not much celebrated. They have been substituted by the 'puja' at home and in the temples'.<sup>288</sup> "In a sense every form and kind of worship by a Hindu, whether it is a daily ritual, temple worship or private meditation, is seen as a sacrifice and considered as a valid 'substitute' for Vedic Yajna."<sup>289</sup> The tradition of the Vedic sacrifice continues to exist even today, in different forms like 'earnest prayer', 'temple rituals', 'pujas', 'japas', 'festivals', 'repetition of mantras' and 'devotional singing'.<sup>290</sup> "The offering of materials and the

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<sup>283</sup> R. Antoine and C. Bulcke, Religious Hinduism, a presentation and appraisal, St. Publications, Allahabad, 1964, P.152.

<sup>284</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, Myth and ritual in Hinduism in the journal of Madras university, Madras, 1950, P. 7.

<sup>285</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.157.

<sup>286</sup> The higher ways to liberation are : the way of knowledge and the way of love of God.

<sup>287</sup> Puja means honour, respect, homage, worship. See for detailed study, Harendra Kumar de Chaudhari, God in Indian religion, Prabartak printing, Calcutta, 1969.

<sup>288</sup> R. Antoine and C. Bulcke, Religious Hinduism, a presentation and appraisal, P.152.

<sup>289</sup> Bede Griffiths, India and the Eucharist, P. 24.

<sup>290</sup> V.Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire: A critique; in: Journal of Dharma, vol 26, P.34.

repetition of the liturgical prayers form the basis of the modern puja , retaining the pattern of the ancient sacrifice.”<sup>291</sup>

The word ‘puja’ is derived from the dravidian word ‘pu-cey’ which means ‘pushpakarma’. Another Dravidian word from which puja comes is ‘pusu’ which means ‘to smear.’<sup>292</sup> It is difficult to understand the modern Hindu rites and sacraments without having the knowledge of the Vedic times.<sup>293</sup> The puja is an ‘essential form’ of sacrifice.<sup>294</sup> The daily or regular worship of one or several deities by invocations, offering of gifts, is called puja. The verb puja is used to mean ‘worship.’<sup>295</sup> The food offerings in puja are always vegetarian and sacrifice of animals was common in Vedic times.<sup>296</sup> The Vedic ritual is a ‘priestly ritual’ but the puja can also be performed by the lay people at home. Through puja an ordinary devout person seeks communication with the gods. He offers gifts and offerings to gods in order to obtain certain benefits for his own life. Not only the gods who are the object of the ritual and puja but also the teachers, children, animals,(cows) plants(Tulsi bush, the peepal trees), earth, can become the object of puja. A puja can be performed on a ritually purified place for anyone. One who is officiating the puja must be ‘externally and internally purified’. The external purification primarily consists of bath, mouth-washing, renewal of the forehead- mark and the internal purification comprises of the ‘trusting attitude’ (sraddha), ‘immersion in meditation.’<sup>297</sup> The worshiper forgets himself and becomes the goddess himself. “She who is ma (mother) is me. There is no difference between ‘ma’ and me.”<sup>298</sup> Puja is the most common form of sacrifice which is recommended by Krishna in the Gita.

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<sup>291</sup> Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya, Religious practices of the Hindus; in: The religion of the Hindus, Kenneth W. Morgan (ed), The Ronald Prasad, New York, 1953, PP.154-155.

<sup>292</sup> S.R. Goyal, Fundamentals of Pauranika Hinduism, Kasumanjali Book, India, 2009, P.122.

<sup>293</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.158.

<sup>294</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves(ed), P. 64.

<sup>295</sup> Paul Thieme, Indische Wörter und Sitten. 1. Puja, Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft 93, 1939, PP.121-122.

<sup>296</sup> Axel Michaels, Hinduism past and present, P.241.

<sup>297</sup> Axel Michaels, Hinduism past and present, P.243.

<sup>298</sup> James Preston, Cult of the Goddess: Social and religious change in a Hindu Temple, Vikas publishing house, Delhi, 1980, P.53.

“Whoever offers to me with surrendering love (bhakti) a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water, that love offering of the pure of heart, I accept.”<sup>299</sup> When the offering is made with ‘purity of heart and love’, it is acceptable to God. Puja is a ritual worship of an image or a form of a deity or the ritual worship of a ‘sacred or a powerful person, animal or object.’ Our concern here is with a puja which is offered to a deity. There are major and minor deities in Hinduism. According to the traditional Hindus, the major deities grant salvation. But the minor ‘deities cannot grant salvation’. A Hindu can offer puja both to the ‘Supreme Being and to the minor deities.’<sup>300</sup> In Hinduism the images are worshipped either in the house or in the temple. The deity is treated as a ‘guest especially at home and in the temple he is treated as a king.’<sup>301</sup>

In the Hindu worship there is an individual experience. The communal and congregational worships are not very much emphasised in the Hindu worship. Even during a special occasion of major festivals, when the crowd is enormous, the individual aspect of worship is more stressed. Each individual devotee has to follow the prescriptions of the rite and participate in the rite.<sup>302</sup> A Hindu does on his own the worship. The main reason is that it is necessary to have a right and proper attitude and disposition of mind while worshipping and the ‘salvation is experienced and found by each person separately.’ Worship for a Hindu in the temple is not something obligatory.<sup>303</sup>

### **1.6.1.1 The Purpose of the Puja**

The purpose of this puja can be both spiritual and material. The spiritual advantages are ‘salvation’, ‘forgiveness of sins’ which are committed in the past and in the present, and the pleasing of the deities, peace, happiness and health. The puja

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<sup>299</sup>Bhagavad-Gita, 1X, 26.

<sup>300</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gosalves (ed), P.69. The Vaishnavite for whom God Vishnu is a Supreme God, worships God Siva and offers food to him. The Vasishnavite regard Siva as minor God.

<sup>301</sup> Nikhilananda, Hinduism, its meaning for the liberation of the spirit, P.169.

<sup>302</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.158. The individual person has to build up a relationship with his God by having a right mental attitude of the heart. There is no congregation which helps him in the worship of the deity. It is his personal need.

<sup>303</sup> Eric J. Sharpe, Thinking about Hinduism, Lutterworth educational, 1971, P.38.

can be of three kinds: 'daily', 'occasional', and 'optional.' The ordinary puja consists of the ritual offerings like flowers and sandalwood paste. The standard and elaborate form of the puja consists of 16 items like offering a 'seat to the deity', 'washing its feet', 'giving several baths'. There is also dressing the deity, with garments, ornaments and perfumes, offering it flowers, incense, food and the waving of lamps. These various rites signify that the deity is a guest in one's home or in the temple. There is also a mental or symbolic puja performed without external rituals.<sup>304</sup> In the temple the puja is generally performed by a professionally trained priest. The aim of puja is to give satisfaction to the Supreme Being as sacrifice has done in the past.<sup>305</sup>

The people offer vegetarian and the non-vegetarian food. It is believed that the food that is offered to the deity is 'partly consumed by the deity and blessed by him.' The remaining part of the food is consumed by the worshippers at the close of the puja. The food which is blessed by the deity and eaten by the believers is called 'prasada.' This prasada is something holy for the Hindus. By eating the prasada the devotees are spiritually united with deity and communicate with deity.<sup>306</sup> All that is offered to the deity is made holy, and the worshippers use them.

The average Hindu family has its murti before which daily worship is offered formally several times of the day. The materials used for the worship, are different according to the places. The puja in its elaborate form consists of 64 individual ceremonies. The family performs daily only part of the ceremonies. These are 'avahan' which is the invitation of the 'ishtadevata.' 'Asana' which is the offering a seat to the deity; 'padya' which means offering water to wash the feet; 'arghya' which is to offer water for washing the hands; 'acamaniya', offering water to rinse

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<sup>304</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.70.

<sup>305</sup> Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya, Religious practices; in: The religion of the Hindus, Kenneth W. Morgan (ed), P. 154.

<sup>306</sup> This prasada is something which can be eaten and holy for the Hindus. It can be also like the communion for the Catholics. In the temple after the puja one is able to get prasada. See, Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, France Gonsalves (ed), Vidyajyoti, Delhi, 2000, P.71.

the mouth; 'snaniya' water for a bath; 'vastra' leaves for clothing the deity; 'yajnopavita' offering a sacred thread; 'candana', sandalwood paste; 'puspa' flowers; 'dhupa' incense; 'dipa' a lighted lamp; 'naivedya' offering of cooked food; 'tambula' a betel nut; 'daksina' some money; each individual gesture is accompanied by appropriate 'mantras.'<sup>307</sup> Many ancient sastras give explicit orders to distribute food to different deities, to outcastes, to lepers, and cripples, to crows, and insects. Eating is considered to be a sacrifice to the gods who dwell in the body.<sup>308</sup> Puja can also mean just offering a coin to a deity and receiving a blessing from the deity in the form of a mark (tilak) of sandalwood paste (candana) or red turmeric powder(Kunkum) on the forehead. Puja is performed in the separate room in the house. But in the temple the puja is very elaborate with mantras being chanted by the priest (pujari). The icon is bathed and dressed and a variety of foods are offered to the deity. Many people are present at the Puja to have a 'darsana' and to receive the prasada or the food blessed by the deity.<sup>309</sup> Christopher J. Fuller thinks that "prasada is not a return gift. Instead through contact with the deity, the food is only transmuted; the deity does not eat it."<sup>310</sup> Offering different food items like cooked rice, fruit, ghee, and sugar and betel leaf are offered to the deity. The offering of food is an important way of honouring the deity. The believers offer various gifts to the deity and they eat what they themselves have offered to the deity. Hence an intimate relationship is created between gods and the believers.<sup>311</sup> Lawrence A. Babb has seen that "puja is an identificatory process: by taking the prasada or excretions of the God

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<sup>307</sup> Klaus K. Klostermaier, A survey of Hinduism, PP.155-156. See also for further explanation, T.M.P.Mahadevan, Outline of Hinduism, chetana Bombay, 1956, PP.47 ff.

<sup>308</sup> Klaus K. Klostermaier, A survey of Hinduism, P.156.

<sup>309</sup> Gavin Flood, An Introduction to Hinduism, PP.208- 211. The worshipper gives offerings to the priest, bows before the image, goes around the temple with his right side turned towards the deity, and at the end the worshipper receives from the priest a part of the offering which has been presented to the deity. This is exactly called the 'prasada.' See for detailed study, R. Antoine and C. Bulcke, Religious Hinduism, a presentation and appraisal, St. Paul Publications, India, 1964, PP.153-154.

<sup>310</sup> Christoph Fuller, The Camphor Flame: popular Hinduism and society in India, Princeton N.J, Princeton university press, 1992, P.78. According to him it is a sign of higher rank to reject food especially cooked rice. So, if the gods take food they basically behave contrary to the fundamentals of the social hierarchy. The relationship between God and believer reflects the relationship between man and wife. Hence 'prasada' which is the food received from the deity is the expression of a relationship, see, P.244.

<sup>311</sup> Axel Michaels, Hinduism past and present, P.244.

into himself, the believer has an equal share of the highest substance and overcomes all worldly caste and kinship limits. The result is the closest possible intimacy tending toward identity and any analysis not taking this into account is incomplete.”<sup>312</sup> In Indonesia the people carry bundles of food on the head to offer to the deity. The food is left in the temple which is collected later. The deity is believed to take the essence of the food for himself and the rest is given back to the worshippers as what is known as the prasada. This is a sign of grace from the deity to the worshipper.<sup>313</sup>“Because the difference between the God and the believer is destroyed in puja everyone can receive prasada and hence puja has become something popular.”<sup>314</sup> Some Hindus perform puja for the sake of ‘spiritual salvation’. Some seek after ‘wisdom and liberation’, being freed from the material world of sufferings. Their only attention is the Lord ‘Siva or Vishnu’ according to the tradition. A devotee belonging to either ‘siva or Vaishnava’ tradition performs private pujas to his chosen deity (ishtadevata).<sup>315</sup> The puja is accepted as a sacrifice for the householder to worship God in the house in order to ‘attain peace and prosperity’.

### **1.6.1.2 Puja at Home**

The home is considered as the most appropriate place for puja. Visiting temple is not an obligation for the Hindus. There is a lot of freedom one experiences at home for the puja. There is a shrine set up at home for the sake of puja. The main shrine is installed in the kitchens for the reason of purity and tidiness. According to the Hindu understanding the kitchen is kept away from all things that are impure and unclean.<sup>316</sup> ‘Purity, love and devotion’ are very important characteristics of puja in temple and at home. This devotion is externally expressed in singing, dancing and offering to the deity. Puja is an attention and care extended to the deities. By means

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<sup>312</sup>Lawrence A. Babb, *The physiology of redemption, history of religions*, Columbia university press, New York, 1982, P.307.

<sup>313</sup>Jeaneane Fowler, *Hinduism, beliefs, practices, and Scriptures*, P.44.

<sup>314</sup> Axel Michaels, *Hinduism past and present*, P.245.

<sup>315</sup> Gavin Flood, *An Introduction to Hinduism*, P.215.

<sup>316</sup> Jeaneane Fowler, *Hinduism, beliefs, practices and Scriptures*, P. 46.

of attention and care of the deity the worshippers are able to 'transcend his or her own ego' and thus attain atman within.<sup>317</sup> The puja room at home contains images of Hindu gods and goddesses. The centre of Hindu religious life is found not in the temple but in ones' own house. All the sacraments are celebrated at home. The individual is the one takes keen interest for the religious activity for the performance of Puja. Hence we can say that it is the individual who has to create a conducive atmosphere to experience salvation.<sup>318</sup> "In Hinduism the God is called upon as a guest. One greets him, entertains him, gives him gifts, and praises him. Here man appears as a giver and the God as the receiver."<sup>319</sup>

A standard way of showing respect and reverence to someone in Indian context is by means of bowing (Pranam) and the more respect is the lower the bow. One prostrates before the deity or a royal person. The word 'namaskar' which is a Sanskrit word and 'namaste' is a Hindi word which means 'I bow to you' and the bow is indicative of the 'recognition and acknowledgement' of the 'divine atman' in the other person. In the puja the deep bow is done to the deity and this reveals a special 'relationship and connection between the worshipper and the deity.' The famous teachers (gurus) and the elders in the family are honoured by touching their feet' touching their feet which indicates that the feet of the gurus are pure and holier than the head.'<sup>320</sup>"The images of Vishnu and of his 'incarnations' and the images of Siva are the popular idols who are worshipped both in the temple and in the households. In the home a Hindu treats God as a guest and in the temples he honours him with flowers and fruits."<sup>321</sup>

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<sup>317</sup> Jeaneane Fowler, *Hinduism, beliefs, practices and Scriptures*, PP.48-49.

<sup>318</sup> Heinrich Von Stietencron, *Religious practice: rite, myth, and meditation*; in: *Christianity and the world religions*, Hans Küng, New York, 1986, PP.244-245.

<sup>319</sup> Heinrich von Stietencron, *Religious practice: rite, myth, and meditation*; in: *Christianity and the world religions*, Hans Küng, PP.244-245.

<sup>320</sup> Jeaneane Fowler, *Hinduism, beliefs, practices, and Scriptures*, P.44.

<sup>321</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, *Outline of Hinduism*, P.47.



### 1.6.1.3 Temple Worship

A Hindu temple is a 'sanctuary of a God' or goddess and not a place of public worship and celebrations. The liturgical services and the sacraments are not administered for the people in the temple atmosphere. The priest alone has to officially perform the ceremonies without the participation of the laities.<sup>322</sup> In temples the puja consists of a rite of giving bath to the deity. The deity is also adorned and decorated with various things like gold, jewels, and perfumes etc. The Hindu priests treat the gods as a 'living person.' This is very clear from the rituals they perform in the temple. In the morning the gods are awakened with music and the lamps are waved in front of him. The God is bathed and is dressed with colourful cloths for the audience with the pilgrims. The private worship in the temple consists of offering prayers. The worshiper gives his offerings to the priest, bows or prostrates before the image and goes around the temple. The worshiper receives some of the offerings which are presented to the deity-prasada.<sup>323</sup> Puja remains a matter between an individual and the deity. Each worshiper worships the deity by himself or in the name of another. This is the same even if there are so many worshipers present for the puja. According to Axel Michaels the "reason for this individualization of all religious service is the ancient Indian sacrifice in which the identification of the individual with the sacrifice was so ritually consistent that it was completely separated from the community and ultimately became replaceable."<sup>324</sup> The image in the temple enables the worshippers to have steadiness and concentration in his worship. The flowers are used before the image as symbols of love and reverence towards the deity. A mantra is also repeated several times. In the case of a 'vasinava' the prayer is 'om namo bhagavate Vasudevaya' (om salutation to the worshipful Lord Vasudeva). The worshipper is engaged in praising and in silent meditation. He feels the divine presence in his personal life.<sup>325</sup> The

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<sup>322</sup>R. Antoine and C. Bulcke, Religious Hinduism, a presentation and appraisal, P.153.

<sup>323</sup> R. Antoine and C. Bulcke, Religious Hinduism, a presentation and appraisal, PP.152-154.

<sup>324</sup> Axel Michaels, Hinduism past and present, P.245.

<sup>325</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, PP.189-190.

temple is a 'dwelling place' of a God or goddess to which the individual pays respect. For a Hind God is everywhere. But according to the Hindu belief the 'Supreme Being' can reveal itself in different places in different names and forms. A person can choose his deity in a particular place or temple. For Vinoba Bhave the "worship of an image is an art of embracing the whole universe in a little object."<sup>326</sup>

#### **1.6.1.3.1 Darsan**

The word 'darsan' is an 'audience with the deity' or having a sight of the view of the object which is the deity. The consequence of this audience is the grace and blessings being imparted on the worshipper by the deity. The audience is requested by the worshipper by ringing a bell at the temple. The bell 'summons or invites the deity.' The worshipper sits on the floor being cross- legged.<sup>327</sup> There is also something called 'arti' which is the 'worship of light.' Sometimes it indicates a worship or puja. In this ceremony, symbols of five elements of life are used which represent 'fire, air, earth, ether and water.' A flat tray with five lights is called an arti, which is waved before the image of a deity. This arti tray is being taken around to all those worshippers present and they hold their hands over the flame and pass it on the forehead. This symbolizes the 'receiving of God's blessings, grace and power.'<sup>328</sup>"The mutual sight of the believer and God is considered the central part of the Hindu religious service."<sup>329</sup>

'Arati' is derived from 'rati' which means 'delight' 'joy' and 'devotion.' Arati means 'waving of light' before an image of God or a person whom one wants to honour , respect and welcome. Arati is offered by Hindus in the temple, firstly to the image then to the less important ones at home. The couples can offer this arati to the family gods(kuladeva). Arati is also offered to the newly 'wedded couples, to

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<sup>326</sup>Eric.J. Sharpe, Thinking about Hinduism, PP.42-44. A Hindu worship is always personal and it is not congregational , see, R.N.Dandekar, Insights into Hinduism, Ajanta publications, Delhi, 1979, P.5.

<sup>327</sup>Jeaneane Fowler, Hinduism, beliefs, practices, and Scriptures, P.45.

<sup>328</sup>Jeaneane Fowler, Hinduism, beliefs, practices, and Scriptures, P.48. The arati is the lamp waving ceremony before the image, see, R. Antoine and C. Bulcke, Religious Hinduism, a presentation and appraisal, St. Paul publication, India, 1964, P.154. This lamp waving ceremony can be seen in temples. This has been adopted by the Catholic Church in India.

<sup>329</sup> Axel Michaels, Hinduism past and present, P.230.

corpses' in order to show respect and honour.<sup>330</sup> In some Christian ashrams the arati is integrated into morning, and evening community prayers. The arati is waved before the Blessed Sacrament, before the images of the saints and before the persons to express that the Spirit of God dwells in them. Then the arati is carried around and each one passes his hands over it and receives it into his own heart. This indicates that he is meant to be a light of the world as Christ.

#### **1.6.1.3.2 Mantra in the Worship<sup>331</sup>**

The worship consists of external form like gestures, body postures, and objects like images, altar, fire, water, flowers, food, and incense. The internal form is the 'intention, prayer, meditation and concentration of the mind'. Both these forms are important for the rite. The internal form of worship is very often expressed by a sacred word 'mantra.' "The Mantra is a mystic sacred word or formula which has been revealed to men by ancient seers and contained in the sacred Scriptures. Mantra is embodiment in sound of a particular God or goddess or the Supreme Being itself. When a worshipper repeats the mantra with great concentration of the mind, he tries to identify himself with the object of worship and the power of God comes to his help."<sup>332</sup> The sacred word or mantra has effective power when it is repeated. "The creation of the world depends on the 'utterance of the sacred sound' and its maintenance on the repetition of the sacred sound just as the cosmic order and the proper functioning of nature itself depends on the power of sacrifice performed with proper mantras."<sup>333</sup> The worshipper has to have faith in the power of the sacred mantra. 'Om' is the sacred syllable which is the 'imperishable', the past,

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<sup>330</sup>Vandana Mata, Gurus ashram and Christians, ISPCK, Delhi, 2004, P.49.

<sup>331</sup> See, Kenneth W. Morgan (ed), The Religion of the Hindus, the Ronald press company, New York, 1953,

Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, universita Gregoriana, Roma, 1982. Hindu worship consists of the silent recitation of mantras which are repeated for long hours. Sometimes simple repeating of the name of gods such as 'Ram , Ram' or Krishna, Krisna.

<sup>332</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.193. Mantra is a sacred word. A worshipper can repeat this sound for a long time concentrating on the God. He experiences peace, tranquillity and silence within himself by repeating mantra. It is a spiritual sound produced by the worshipper.

<sup>333</sup> Maria Susai Dhamony, Classical Hinduism, P.193. See also Kenneth W. Morgan (ed), The Religion of the Hindus, the Ronald press, New York, 1953, P.169.

present and the future. OM is identified with Brahman.<sup>334</sup> According to Professor Jan Gonda a 'mantra' may be defined as "words believed to be of superhuman origin, received, fashioned and spoken by the inspired seers, poets and reciters in order to evoke divine power and especially conceived as means of creating, conveying, concentrating and realizing intentional and efficient thought, and of coming into touch or identifying oneself with the essence of divinity which is present in the mantra."<sup>335</sup> A mantra consists of a syllable as in the case of 'OM' or may be verse from the Vedic texts consisting of more syllables. It may be a just 'a divine name like 'Rama' or 'Krishna'. Their recitation and repetition enables us to attain the desired end. Mantras are not prayers.<sup>336</sup>

The highest mantra in Hindu religion is OM. It represents the 'ineffable and unutterable ultimate'. "More than anything it expresses the ineffability and depth of the divine mystery. When there is a call to higher way of life, all prayers, rites and practices of devotion are given up and the sacred 'OM' is being whispered."<sup>337</sup> OM is a sacred sound and the repetition of the word brings the presence of God to the person or it is a 'way to live God.'<sup>338</sup> "OM and the eternal Word (Sphota) are inseparable."<sup>339</sup>

The 'Gayatri mantra' is the most important of all the mantras which is repeated many times each day. "We meditate on the excellent glory of the God, Savitri; may he stimulate our thoughts"<sup>340</sup> 'Om namo Narayana' (om salutation to Narayana , that is , Lord Vishnu). This is one of the mantras to Lord Vishnu.<sup>341</sup> The Orthodox Brahmans recite this prayer in the morning, noon, and evening so that he

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<sup>334</sup> Mundukya Upanishad, 1. 1f.

<sup>335</sup>Jan Gonda, The Indian Mantra in selected studies, Vol. 1V, Leiden, 1975, P.259. It was believed that God Vishnu or Siva have communicated the mantras to the ancient seers by the supernatural way of inspiration. They have received the sacred truth. P. 220.

<sup>336</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, PP. 216-217.

<sup>337</sup> Abhishiktananda, Prayer, ISPC, Delhi, 1979, PP.70-75.

<sup>338</sup>Cherian Puthenpura, Yoga sprituality, a Christian pastoral understanding, Camillian publications, Bangalore, 1997, P.140.

<sup>339</sup> Ananyananda Vivekananda, III, 57.

<sup>340</sup> Rig- Veda, III. 62. 10. This Gayatri mantra is the most important mantra for taking away the sins. Only a Brahmin has the right to recite it. He must prepare himself by prayers and meditation.

<sup>341</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony , Classical Hinduism, P.219.

'obtains inspiration and graces from the sun God'. The power of the sacred word in connection to the sacrifice is very much stressed in Hinduism. "The sacred word is inseparable from the sacrifice and worship. The word which is either prose or verse is a constant companion of ritual action, a kind of spiritual agent directing it to its goal. Speech leads the sacrifice to the gods."<sup>342</sup>

The sacred Word can be repeated in two ways : 'audible repetition', and 'inaudible repetition' with the movements of lips, and purely mental repetition. The spiritual efficacy increases as one grows from spoken mantras to mental one. "The purpose of the mantra is to transform the worshipper gradually into the likeness of the divine and to make him participate of the nature of the God and obtain his power."<sup>343</sup> The mantras have the 'creative, sustaining power and the supernatural powers' which were revealed at the origin of the universe. The reciter has to believe in the mantras that they may be effective.<sup>344</sup> The worshipper has to recite the mantras more often so that he would be able feel the presence of God and would attain the salvation. Hence we can say the "mantras are aspects of eternal truth revealed to seers in the form of sound and hence they are invested with extraordinary powers not so much by having the ordinary sense but by their sound vibrations."<sup>345</sup> The 'eternal Brahman' lives in the form of the sound- Brahman (sabda\_brahman) is the "sum and substance of all mantras."<sup>346</sup>

#### 1.6.1.3.2.1 Japa

When mantra is repeated in a whispering low tone it is called 'japa.' This japa was part of the Vedic tradition. By itself it leads us to 'peace and tranquillity' and peace which is the result of abiding in Brahman.<sup>347</sup> "The repetition over and over

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<sup>342</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 1. 4. 4. 2. Vak devebhyo yajnam vahati.

<sup>343</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.194. When one goes to the Hindu temple, he is able to experience people repeating the sacred mantra either loudly or silently. This is a time of God experience for the one who is repeating the sacred word. One becomes united with the Divine.

<sup>344</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P. 219.

<sup>345</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P. 220.

<sup>346</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P. 220.

<sup>347</sup> V.M. Bedekar, The Place of japa in the Moksadharma pavan and the yoga-Sutra in Annals of the Bhandarkar oriental research institute, Vol XL1V, 1963, PP.63- 74.

again of mantra or one of the names of God is called japa.”<sup>348</sup> When the ‘Japaka’ or the reciter repeats the mantra like OM, he must not be distracted by the external world. He must concentrate himself fully on the intended goal. The highest goal of japa is the ‘self-realization’ which a person is able to attain by liberating himself from the desires of this material world. The mere repetition of God’s name is able to bring comfort and protection to the recite. The beads are helpful in concentration when mantras are recited. The study and the recitation of the sacred Vedic text are indispensable part of an individual Hindu in order to obtain the concentration of the mind on the divine objects and confer on the reciter a mystical and supernatural power. For example, the Gayatri mantra , when it is recited repeatedly it is able to bring forgiveness of sins.<sup>349</sup>

#### **1.6.1.3.2.2 Kirtana and Bhajana**

Kirtana is ‘said to be an open, repeated and loud recitation of the name and qualities of a person’. Bhajan is a religious song sung to the praise of the Lord. Both ‘kirtana and bhajana’ are forms of worship which bring the mystical experience of the love of God in the life of a person. The kirtanas are of two kinds: the ‘nama-kirtana’ which consists of ‘uttering the holy name of God’ and singing his glory, or in expressing repentance for the sins committed. The second is the ‘Lila-kirtana’ consists of songs which explain the deeds of a particular deity. During the Kirtana the participants often bring out their feelings, devotions and emotions by moving or swinging their whole body and by clapping their hands. They sing and dance and sometimes sing loudly ‘Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna.’<sup>350</sup>

#### **1.6.1.3.2.3 Purity in Worship**

The place of worship has to be free from dirt and has to be very much pure. The ritualists have insisted on the five items of purity: ‘purity of the body’, ‘purity of the image’, ‘purity of the things offered’, ‘accuracy of mantras’ and purity of the

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<sup>348</sup> Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya, Religious practices of the Hindus; in: the Religion of the Hindus; Kenneth .W. Morgan (ed), P.171.

<sup>349</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, PP.220-221.

<sup>350</sup> Maria Susai Dhvamony, Classical Hinduism, PP.229-233.

mind.'The Body is purified by bathing and cleansing of hands and fingers.The image has to be placed in a proper manner in a right and tidy place. The purity of the image is preserved by pouring milk, butter, curds and cow urine. It is made of proper wood and proper materials. The purity of mantra is preserved by properly reciting without any mistake in a correct attitude of mind and heart. The yogic exercise enables a person to keep up the purity of the mind and heart.<sup>351</sup> It is the priest who pronounces the formulas of purification. The priest before he begins to praise, praises the 'saman chant'. The priest murmurs these words. "From the unreal lead me to the real, from darkness lead me to the light, from death lead me to immortality."<sup>352</sup>

'Asato Maa Sad Gamaya  
Tamaso Ma Jyotir Gamaya  
Mrityor Ma Amritm Gamaya  
Aum Shanti Shanti Shanti '

ॐशान्तिःशान्तिःशान्तिः॥

#### 1.6.1.3.2.4 Faith and Worship

The most important requirement of the religious man of the Vedic time was the faith. It is the basic faith that makes a man believe in the existence of God and in the need of sacrifice. Ritual faith is to trust that God will one day fulfil the desires of the worshipper. In Taittiriya Brahmana "sraddha or faith is said to be the goddess and mother of kama."<sup>353</sup> Faith is the means of obtaining all desired things and no action takes place without faith. In the Taittiriya Brahmana it is said that "through faith a God obtains his divine character, that the divine faith is support of the world, that she has the fulfilment of desire (kama) for her calf and yields immortality as her milk; she is the first- born of the religious ceremonies, and the sustainer of the whole world; she is the supreme mistress of the world, is brought to bestow immortality on

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<sup>351</sup> Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya, Religious practices of the Hindus; in: the Religion of the Hindus; Kenneth W. Morgan (ed), PP.173-174.

<sup>352</sup>Brahadaranyaka Upanishad , 1 . 3. 28.

<sup>353</sup> Taittiriya Brahmana, 2. 8. 8. 6-8. Kama is desire.

her worshipper.”<sup>354</sup> In the ritualist context of Brahmanas faith makes the sacrifice effective and efficacious in bringing about the desired results. The validity of the ritual rite itself totally depended on the faith. Faith is said to be the ‘religious core of every action and rite.’ Faith is a conviction that what is desired would happen. Hence faith is related to truth. Any religious act without faith lacks reality and truth: “Whatever offering is made, whatever alms is given, whatever austerity is practised, or work done, without faith, is called ‘unreal’ (asat).”<sup>355</sup> A Hindu believes that God is in the sun, in moon and in all the things. This is because all these things are manifestations of the divine God.<sup>356</sup> Idol- worship is not something peculiar to Hinduism. “It is the expression of the exuberance of religious sentiment at the particular stage of its development all the world over.”<sup>357</sup> When a Hindu worships a stone or metal he does not look at it as a mere stone. But he sees in it an ‘emblem of God.’ The idol is symbolic. To see God present everywhere and to practise and experience constantly the presence of God one needs the idol as a help.<sup>358</sup> ‘Worship is considered as positive and powerful reaction of human beings to the experience of sacred and transcendental power.’ It is a giving of oneself especially by devotion and service to the transcendental reality on which he feels himself dependent. “Sacrifice and prayer which are man’s personal attempts to communicate and connect with the transcendental reality in word or in thought are the fundamental expressions of worship.”<sup>359</sup>

#### 1.6.1.3.2.5 Festivals

There are many prominent festivals which are celebrated by the Hindu community. They are meant to serve as occasions to contemplate God in a profound and intensive way. As a result the people are able to look into their interior hearts

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<sup>354</sup> Taittiriya Brahmana, 19. 77. Here the faith is stressed as the important element for the ritual.

<sup>355</sup> Aitareya Brahmana, 17. 28.

<sup>356</sup> Hervey De Witt Griswold, Insights into modern Hinduism, Henry Holt and company, New York, 1934, PP.20- 21.

<sup>357</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, Outline of Hinduism, P.45.

<sup>358</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, Outline of Hinduism, PP. 45-46.

<sup>359</sup> The New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 16, art. On ‘sacrifice’, Chicago, 1980, PP. 128-130.



and hence to be detached from the worldly life and pleasures. Each festival 'commemorates the glory' of God and enables the good to survive. On the days of festivals many enrich themselves spiritually by their 'severe fast and vigil,' by reading the sacred texts and by concentrate on the thoughts of God. Siva-Ratri is a holy night which is an important time to worship Lord Siva. On the festivals the people prepare themselves spiritually by creating an atmosphere of silence and prayer which helps their soul. It is great moment when the Hindus renew their spiritual intimacy and contact with their God.<sup>360</sup>

### **1.6.1.3.2.6 The Prayer**

In Hindu religions prayer is not considered as the expressions of religious piety and devotion in comparison with the ritual and sacrifices.<sup>361</sup> For Freidrich Heiler a prayer is a 'living in intimate and close communion with God' and an adoration is the 'solemn contemplation' of the holy God as the highest good and the devotion is caused by the contemplation.<sup>362</sup> The Satapatha Brahmana says; "the speech conveys the sacrifice to the gods."<sup>363</sup> There were also devotional hymns composed by many saints and poets which are sung and accompanied by musical instruments.<sup>364</sup> The supreme prayer is the 'gayatri' which is as follows:

**"Tat Savitur varenyam**

**Bhargo devasya dhimahi ,**

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<sup>360</sup> T.M.P. Mahadevan, Outline of Hinduism, PP.48-50. There are 18 obligatory feasts in the year. There is the feast which is called 'ugadi' which falls on the new moon in the month of March. In the month of February the followers of Siva celebrate 'Siva-ratri' which is the night of Siva. This feast lasts for three days. In the month of October there is a big feast called 'Maha-navami' which is known as 'dasara'. This feast is dedicated to the memory of ancestors. Each family offers sacrifice for the dead members of their family. The feast lasts for nine days. At the end of November or in the beginning of December 'Deepavali' or feast of light is celebrated. The feast lasts for several days. The Hindus decorate their houses and illuminate their houses and places with various coloured lights. There is a special feast called 'Naga-panchami' which is in honour of snakes, especially of the most poisonous ones like cobra which is called 'naga' by the Hindus. The people visit the holes where snakes of this sort are generally concealed. See for the detailed study Abbeja Dubois, Hindu manners, customs and ceremonies, Rupa company, 1906, PP.641-643.

<sup>361</sup> Freidrich Heiler, Prayer, a study in the history and psychology of religions, Oxford university press, London, 1932, PP.206-242.

<sup>362</sup> Freidrich Heiler, Prayer, a study in the history and psychology of religions, PP.358-362.

<sup>363</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 1. 4. 4. 2.

<sup>364</sup> Axel Michaels, Hinduism past and present, P.228.

**Dhiyo yo nah pracodayat''.**<sup>365</sup>

We meditate on the excellent light of the God savitar: may it stimulate our thoughts. A Brahmin recites these prayers three times a day and he obtains spiritual power as he recites them. By the recitation of these prayers the believer is spiritually strengthened and inspired. Every ritual act is accompanied by a sort of 'sacred formula', a 'sacred text' which can be considered a prayer.<sup>366</sup> The formula is called 'yujus' which means a 'sacrificial prayer.' This term is applied to particular mantras spoken in a particular manner at the sacrifice. They were of two kinds: 'ric' and 'saman'. Ric is a sacred verse which is used to praise and glorify the deity and saman are verses which were sung. The rite and the prayers accompany the ritual act.<sup>367</sup> It is in prayer that the hidden energy lies, which gives efficacy to the sacrifice. These prayers are aimed at establishing a strong communion with the divine. The prayers were also offered for the daily 'necessities of life and for the removal of sins.' The prayers and praises were the spontaneous expressions of the buried feelings of the human hearts, for the dependence on God. Man feels that there is a person who is more superior and more powerful than himself. Hence he is aware of his sinfulness before God.<sup>368</sup> According to Aurobindo "prayer is a legitimate approach to God for those who seek the divine and also for the fulfillment of the desires of their hearts. The Vedic religion is basically sacrificial and is expressed in a succession of oblations and prayers."<sup>369</sup>

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<sup>365</sup>Rig-Veda, 3.62. 10. This is Gayatri mantra which the Hindus repeat as many as possible. The Gayatri is both prayer and mantra which is used for illumination and for inspiration. The mystical meaning of the Gayatri is explained in the Brahadaranyaka Upanishad 5.14.

<sup>366</sup> Harendra Kumar de Chaudhari, God in Indian religion, P.24.

<sup>367</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.214.

<sup>368</sup> Maurice Phillips, Fundamental teachings of Vedas, P.162.

<sup>369</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P. 214.

## 1.7 The Five Daily Sacrifices<sup>370</sup>

One of the most human and universal conceptions of sacrifice is the so called 'pancamahayajna', the five great sacrifices. Here the idea of sacrifice embraces all 'aspects of life' and man's relationship to all beings, from plants and animals up to Brahman. Man is naturally related to all beings by means of sacrifice.<sup>371</sup> These great sacrifices are to be offered daily. They are: the sacrifice to Rishi or Vedas, the sacrifice to Devas, the sacrifice to Pitris, the sacrifice to men and the sacrifice to Bhutas. The sacrifice to Vedas is an 'assiduous study and teaching of Vedas.' Everyday man must commit himself to the study of sacred books in order to attain knowledge which enables man to understand himself, his positions and duties. After having attained this knowledge one is expected to share his knowledge of Vedas with those living in ignorance and error. The inner meaning of this sacrifice is that all study should be a sacrifice in order to teach others and to bring people out from ignorance. The sacrifice to the pitris is the 'Tarpan' or offering of water to the old generations of our own family. The outer sacrifice to men is the hospitality. The inner meaning of this sacrifice is the duty of 'serving and helping humanity,' of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless and comforting the sad. The outer sacrifice to Bhutas, to creatures is sharing a little portion of food before one begins to eat. The inner meaning is the duty of caring for those who are under us in the world. It is a practice of kindness and compassion towards the lower beings. These five sacrifices teach man to be attentive to the needy and suffering of

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<sup>370</sup> The Hindu Scriptures lay down five important sacrifices for all the householders. These are the sacrifices to gods, to forefathers, to rishis, to men, to the lower animal world. By these sacrifices the Hinduism want to stress the interdependence of the entire existence. See for detailed study, Satyavrata Patel, Hinduism, Religion and way of life, Associated publishing house, Delhi, 1931, P.65. See, Kenneth W. Morgan (ed), The Religion of the Hindus, the Ronald press, New York, 1953. The five daily sacrifices are performed daily by an orthodox Hindu. See also for further information, Bede Griffiths, India and the Eucharist, Richard de smet, Lumen Institute, 1964, PP.24-25. In Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 1. 4. 6 the five daily sacrifices (Mahayajna) are interpreted as a sacrifice to the atman. R. De Smet and Joseph Neuner (eds), Religious Hinduism, St. Paul's publications, Mumbai, 1997, PP.202-203. These five sacrifices are also mentioned in Satapatha Brahmana, XI, 5, 6, 1-3.

<sup>371</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.392.

our world around him. They teach an individual that he is not alone in this world.<sup>372</sup> Man is connected and related to all human beings by means of sacrifice. Sacrifice is not only a means to be connected to Gods alone but to men also. Water offered to a guest has the symbolic value and depth as the ritual. "The study of the Scriptures is the highest liturgical act, the sacrifice to Brahman. It is the student's intellect which is the substance of the sacrifice."<sup>373</sup> The Taittiriya Aranyaka is said to be the source of Pancamahayajnas.<sup>374</sup> Describing the nature of Mahayajna Taittiriya Aranyaka says that "dwayajna' is fulfilled when one makes an offering in the fire, when one offers svadha to the fathers even if it is mere water that becomes pitryajna, when a man offers a ball of food to the elements it becomes bhutayajna, when he gives food to Brahmanas, that becomes manusyayajna. When one studies the sacred literature it becomes a 'brhmayajna."<sup>375</sup> The pancamahayajnas are different from the srauta sacrifices on two grounds: In mahayajnas the principle agent is the householder himself; he does not need the service and help of a priest, whereas in srauta sacrifices the priests have a prominent position and role and the householder remains passive. In Mahayajna the motive of the sacrifice is the profound desire to fulfill ones duties towards the creator and towards his fellow creatures while in srauta sacrifices the motivation of the action is the individual and personal desire to attain heaven or some benefits like health or prosperity.<sup>376</sup>

The srauta sacrifices are beyond the reach of the ordinary men. But the pancamahayajnas could be performed by any ordinary person who has a desire to do it. The 'feelings of devotion, gratitude, reverence, loving memory and tolerance' are the motivations that inspired the Vedic Aryans to stress the importance of these

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<sup>372</sup>Sanatana Dharma part 1, Basic Hindu religious ideas, central Hindu college, Banaras, 1916, PP.95-98.

<sup>373</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P. 392.

<sup>374</sup>Asvalayana- Grhya- Sutra, 111. 1. 2.

<sup>375</sup> Taittiriya Aranyaka, 11. 10 quoted by P.V.Kane, History of dharma sastra, Vol. 11, part 1, P.696.

<sup>376</sup> P.V. Kane, History of dharmasastra, revised enlarged edition, bhandarkar oriental research institute, Poona 4, 1968, P.697. The Srauta sacrifices are conservative ritualistic practices in the Vedic Hindu traditions.

five sacrifices.<sup>377</sup> Through these five sacrifices man manifests his gratefulness to all the beings, to the creator and to all the elements. Man has to recognize a dependence on others.<sup>378</sup>

“Day by day a man offers sustenance to creatures; that is the sacrifice to beings. Day by day a man gives hospitality to guests, including a glass of water; that is the sacrifice to men. Day by day a man makes funerary offerings, including a glass of water; that is the sacrifice to the ancestors. Day by day a man makes offerings to the gods, including wood for burning; that is the sacrifice to the gods.”<sup>379</sup>

### 1.7.1 Brahmajajna

The Satapatha Brahmana goes on to say that by the daily study of the Vedic lessons one is able to attain the imperishable world which is superior than all other. The place and mode of the performance of this sacrifice is described in Taittiriya Aranyaka.<sup>380</sup> The principle matter in Brahmajajna is the ‘recitation of the Vedas.’<sup>381</sup> The ‘daily reading and meditation on the Vedas and Sacred Scripture is the Brahma or Veda yajna.’<sup>382</sup> The study of the Scriptures is the highest liturgical act, the sacrifice to Brahman.<sup>383</sup>

### 1.7.2 Devayajna

According to some authorities Devayajna consisted in offering into fire such things as food or at least fuel stick with ‘Svaha’ uttered after the name of the deities in the dative case.<sup>384</sup> Manu also looks at homa as Devayajna.<sup>385</sup> It is the fire sacrifice to gods.<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>377</sup> Manu Smriti, 11. 28.

<sup>378</sup> Bede Griffiths, India and the Eucharist, P.25.

<sup>379</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XI, 5, 6, 1-3.

<sup>380</sup> Taittiriya Aranyaka, ii. 11.

<sup>381</sup> Taittiriya Aranyaka, ii, 12.

<sup>382</sup> Bede Griffiths, India and the Eucharist, P. 24.

<sup>383</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.392.

<sup>384</sup> Apastamba –dharma –Sutra, 1. 4. 13. 1; baudhayana- dharma- Sutra, ii. 6. 4.

<sup>385</sup> Manusmriti, 111. 70. Homa means making oblation to devas by casting clarified butter into fire accompanied by prayers. Manu is the legendary first man who ruled the world. Manu means the first man.

<sup>386</sup> Bede Griffiths, India and the Eucharist, PP. 24-25.

### 1.7.3 Bhutayajna

It is the distribution of food to the animals.<sup>387</sup> Bali is to be offered not into the fire but on the ground, which is to be wiped first with the hands and sprinkled with water and then the bali is to be put down and water is poured on it thereafter.

### 1.7.4 Manusya Yajna<sup>388</sup>

In Indian situation and culture hospitality is considered as a virtue. Manusyayajna is interpreted by Manu as honouring and respecting guests.<sup>389</sup> Hospitality extended to the fellow human beings is treated as a sacrifice. Agni is the fire and is the 'guest of the householder' and whatever is thrown in to the fire is considered to be a food to the guests. In order to practice the hospitality the Hindus create situations to invite guests to a major meal. A guest has to be made happy and comfortable by the householder. It is believed that a guest who is disappointed and turned away is able to unload all his sins upon the householder and take from him his merit (punya). When a 'samnyasi' appears as a guest, according to Hindu theory, he is able to bring many blessings into the house and the members of the house become lucky and blessed. At the arrival of the samnyasi the host experiences many merits. The host expresses his gratitude to the samnyasi. India has a long lived tradition of hospitality to the guests. In order to obtain graces and merits the wealthy people have constructed houses for the pilgrims at the pilgrim centres. These houses offer free accommodation to the guests of any religion.<sup>390</sup> The Veda says "food is life and therefore one should give food, eating is the supreme sacrifice according to Upanishads."<sup>391</sup> Several Hindu rulers forbade the slaughter of the animals. The animal sacrifices were substituted by flower pujas and meat dishes were replaced by

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<sup>387</sup> Bede Griffiths, *India and the Eucharist*, P.25.

<sup>388</sup> Manusya Yajna is a sacrifice to the humanity. This is what is understood by the above explanations. The word manusya means people. Manusya means people in many languages. The word is used in Malayalam which is the language of Kerala. According to all Grhyasutras and Dharma texts these five sacrifices form the central duties of a householder, Bhagavad-Gita 2. 9. 6; Bharadvaja- Grhya- Sutra 3. 15.

<sup>389</sup> Manusmrti, 111. 70.

<sup>390</sup> Klaus K. Klostermair, *A Survey of Hinduism*, PP.155-156.

<sup>391</sup> Taittiriya Upanisad, ii, 2, 1.

vegetarian food. There are many Hindus who are vegetarians today for religious reasons.<sup>392</sup> Hence Manusyayajna consists in honouring the guests.<sup>393</sup> The Aitareya Brahmana says that a “guest should not be refused to be served in the evening.”<sup>394</sup> According to Satapatha Brahmana it would be unbecoming for a person to eat food before the guests have eaten.<sup>395</sup> “The honour is paid to the guests by going to meet him, by offering him water to wash his feet, by giving him seat, by lighting a lamp before him, by giving him food, lodging, by personal attendance on him, by accompanying him some distance, when he departs.”<sup>396</sup> The guests are like gods for some Hindus. The Anusasana of Mahabharata says: “the host should give his eyes, mind and agreeable speech to the guest; he should personally attend on him and should accompany him when the guest departs. This sacrifice demands these five fees.”<sup>397</sup>

Man as human being is considered as sacrifice because it is man who takes the initiative to offer the sacrifice and it is through him that sacrifice is offered. The sacrifice involves both the reality of ‘immolation’ and ‘new life.’ This is so with man. Man returns to the experience of re-birth through sacrifice. Through the offering he communicates with the world of the gods and through the sacrifice man is able to abandon his mortal body and is able to receive an immortal body. The individual man has to sacrifice in order to sustain the world.<sup>398</sup>

### 1.7.5 Pitryajna

It is the offering of water to older generations of our family and to our ancestors. The inner meaning is the greater recognition and acknowledgement of the great debt we owe to the past. One needs to be grateful to our past generations for handing over to us the mother earth with its resources.<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>392</sup> Klaus K. Klostermair, A Survey of Hinduism, P.157.

<sup>393</sup> Manusmriti, iii. 70. These are laws of man the first legendary man of the Hinduism.

<sup>394</sup> Aitareya Brahmana, XXV. 5.

<sup>395</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, ii. 1. 4. 2.

<sup>396</sup> Dharma –Sutra of Gautama, V. 29- 34, Manusmriti, iii, 99. 107 and 1V. 29.

<sup>397</sup> Anusasana, Vii. 6.

<sup>398</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, PP.388-391.

<sup>399</sup> Sanatana Dharma, part 1 , Basic Hindu religious ideas, PP. 96-97.

## 1.8.The Hindu Sacraments<sup>400</sup>

The term 'samskara' and 'sacrament' have a common etymology. They derive from the prefix 'sam' together with verbal root 'kri'. Kri means to make, to produce and 'sam' denotes the idea of completion, fulfillment. "Samskara signifies an action by which something is brought to a special degree of excellence."<sup>401</sup> Samskara are the Brahmanic rites, which meant to purify and 'consecrate the life of the Hindu.' "The samskaras raise the inner man to the level of the divine and qualify the outer man for taking part in the religious life of the Hindu community."<sup>402</sup> The samskara effect holiness in an individual both internal and external. The samskaras are consecratory rites which sanctify and purify the life of the Hindu at its different stages. There are fifty two samskaras. But only ten of them are considered important and necessary for the life of a Hindu. For a Hindu samskaras or sacraments are the "visible sign of an inward spiritual grace."<sup>403</sup> For a Hindu the samskaras are a living spiritual experience which is able to transform the believers internally and not just an external celebration. Through the samskaras the life of a Hindu itself is made a sacrament. By celebrating these rites the Hindus believed that they are liberated from the physical bondage and avoid the experience of death.<sup>404</sup> The first and the most important element of the samskaras was Agni which was always kindled at the beginning of every samskaras. Agni was called 'household' in Rig-Veda. It was considered to be the 'protector' against illness, demons and other hostile spirits. In all the samskaras the fire was given such a prominent position because the samskaras have the aim to dispel the evil influences on the people. The Hindus regarded Agni as the 'director of the rites and the guardian of morality.'<sup>405</sup> "A Hindu

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<sup>400</sup> See, Bede Griffiths, *India and the Eucharist*, Richard de smet, Lumen institute, 1964, Raj Pali, Pandey, *Hindu samskaras*, Motilal Benarsidas, Indological publishers, 1981, Cavin Flood, *An introduction to Hinduism*, Cambridge university, 2004, PP.205-206.

<sup>401</sup> Bede Griffiths, *India and the Eucharist*, P.20.

<sup>402</sup> Bede Griffiths, *India and the Eucharist*, P.20.

<sup>403</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, *Hindu samskaras*, P.34.

<sup>404</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, *Hindu samskaras*, PP.34-35.

<sup>405</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, *Hindu samskaras*, PP.36-38.



looked beyond the external celebrations and felt within himself something invisible which sanctified his whole personality."<sup>406</sup>

The samskaras are able to bring purification in the levels of body , mind and intellect so that a person can become a full-fledged individual in the community.<sup>407</sup> The ancient Hindus traditionally believed that the evil influence could affect the life of an individual and could hinder the spiritual growth of an individual. Hence one had to depend on the samskaras which directed and guided his life. Water was also used in every samskaras in order to remove physical impurities and to remove the evil influences. The samskaras were also conducted for the material benefits like long life, prosperity and wealth. They are also occasions to express one's joys and sorrows. The samskaras were also celebrated on the auspicious occasions of birth, marriage etc. Another purpose of the samskaras was the 'attainment of heaven and even 'moksha or liberation.' Hence the samskaras became the means and instrument in the attainment of heaven.<sup>408</sup>

### **1.8.1 Symbolism of the Samskaras**

Symbolism played a very important role in the Hindu samskaras. The material element was used to communicate spiritual meanings. 'Stone was a symbol of fixity' and one who stood on it was supposed to be blessed with firmness in his or her character. The bride in the marriage (vivaha) and the student in the 'upanayana' were required to step on a stone which indicated steadfastness in their devotion and faithfulness to the husband and teacher. Rice was considered a symbol of 'fertility and prosperity.' Anointment was a symbol of love and affection. Eating together was a symbol of union.<sup>409</sup>

#### **1.8.1.1 Sprinkling of Water**

There is a belief in all the religions that water was something that assisted the growth. According to the Hindu belief the water was supposed to possess the power

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<sup>406</sup> Raj Bali Pandey , Hindu samskaras, P.34.

<sup>407</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu samskaras, P.16.

<sup>408</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu samskaras, PP.25-32.

<sup>409</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu samskaras, PP. 42-43.

of eliminating the evil influences and the guilt of sins.<sup>410</sup> It was also believed that through bathing one could be physically, spiritually and morally cleansed of the impurities. This ceremonial purification was very much stressed in Hinduism.<sup>411</sup>

### 1.81.2 The Pre-natal Samskaras

It is the sacrament of conception which sanctifies the procreation. This sacrifice is performed by the husband upon the wife. The child is the beneficiary of this sacrifice. It consists of nine oblations to Agni and different 'mantras' and ritual prayers are recited. The man before he unites to his wife recites "I do with thee the work that is sacred to Prajapati (creator of life). May an embryo enter thy womb; may a child be born without any defect, with all limbs, not blind, not lame, not attacked by the demons ( pisachas)."<sup>412</sup>

### 1.8.1.3 The Marriage

Hindu marriage is not a social institution but a religious, and it is a sacrament. Besides the couple there is a 'superhuman, spiritual and divine element' present in marriage. The permanent relationship between husband and wife depends very much on the divine element. They are responsible not only to each other but to God. Marriage is considered a new bond. There is a ceremony called 'Samanjnana' or anointment. The father of the bride anoints the pair. This anointment is symbolical of 'sneha' which is love that should exist in the union of the pair. Then there is the ceremony of the 'panigrahana' or the grasping of the bride's hand. The bridegroom holds the right hand of the bride and says "I seize thy hand for sake of happiness that thou may live to old age with me thy husband. Bhaga, Aryama, Savitr, gods have given thee to me that we may rule over the household."<sup>413</sup> The next ceremony is the ' Hridayasparsa' or 'touching the heart of the

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<sup>410</sup> Rig- Veda, Vii. 47, 49; X. 9. 30.

<sup>411</sup> It is the first of the 16 sacraments in Hinduism. See, Pandey R.B. (1962, reprint 2003), The Hindu Sacraments (Samskāra); in: The Cultural Heritage of India, S. Radhakrishnan (ed), Vol.II, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, P.392.

<sup>412</sup> Bede Griffiths, India and the Eucharist, PP.21-22.

<sup>413</sup> The Atharvaveda, XIV. i. 49. The Gobhila Grhya -Sutra, 11. 2. 16.

bride.<sup>414</sup> The husband touches the heart of the bride and says “into my will I take thy heart; thy mind shall dwell in my mind; in my word thou shall rejoice with all thy heart: may prajapati join thee to me.”<sup>415</sup> This indicates that marriage is not only a physical union of two persons but also is a union of two ‘hearts.’ The last ceremony is the ‘Sthalipaka’ or the ‘common dinner.’<sup>416</sup> The husband makes the wife to eat the cooked food saying “I add breath to my breath, bones to thy bones, flesh to thy flesh, skin to thy skin.”<sup>417</sup>

In Hinduism the marriage is also looked at as the sacrifice. The seriousness of life begins with the marriage. They abandon their old family in order to form a new family. They begin a new life of responsibility and cares. The word ‘vivaha’ is the word for marriage which means to ‘lift, to support, to sustain.’ So according to Hinduism vivaha involves a great understanding and mutual sacrifice. The marriage gets its full meaning and perfection only when the couples are able to sacrifice and commit themselves, their time and their life for the other in willingness to serve another.<sup>418</sup>

The Marriage samskara consists of two parts: the giving away of the bride to the bridegroom by her father or guardian and the ceremony of marriage itself. Secondly the bridegroom, supporting the folded hands of the bride with his left hand, seizes her right thumb with his right hand and recites the prescribed mantras which are prayers for matrimonial harmony, and happiness. Then the couple goes around the ritual fire, while the husband recites the mantras and the wife drops the fried grains into the fire. This fire-oblation is called ‘laja –homa’.<sup>419</sup> There is also a ceremony in which the couple takes seven steps around the fire. This action is something symbolic as Agni or fire will lead the couple in their married life and it

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<sup>414</sup>The paraskara Grhya Sutra, 1. 8. 8.

<sup>415</sup>The paraskara Grhya –Sutra, 1. 8. 8.

<sup>416</sup>The paraskara Grhya –Sutra, 1. 11. 5.

<sup>417</sup>The paraskara Grhya- Sutra, 1.11.. 5.

<sup>418</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu samskaras, P.233. The gods subsist on what is offered up from this world. See Taittiriya Samhita, III . 2. 9. 7.

<sup>419</sup>Bede Griffiths, India and the Eucharist, PP.23-24.

is the fire that will brighten their life together. Then bride's foot is put on the stone as a symbol of 'constancy'<sup>420</sup> faithfulness and permanency in their married life.

#### **1.8.1.3.1 Marriage is Permanent**

It is not just a temporary contract. But it is something stable and stronger which lasts until death. This truth has been symbolized by a ceremony in Hindu marriage in the 'Asmarohana' or mounting the stone.<sup>421</sup> In this ceremony the husband makes the wife to trample on stone, repeating the verse "tread on this stone; like a stone be firm."<sup>422</sup> Stone is the symbol of firmness and strength. Standing on the stone would indicate that the firmness and strength has to be manifested by the wife in her total fidelity to her husband. The couple should not allow themselves to be separated from each other. Their life and commitment to each other has to be as strong and firm as the stone.

#### **1.8.1.3.2 Marriage is not a License**

It is not a license for sexual indulgence. At the end of the marriage ceremony an 'observance of continence for three nights' is undertaken by the couple.<sup>423</sup> For a period of three nights they shall not have sexual union, they shall sleep on the ground.<sup>424</sup> The married life has to be based on perfect self-restraint. Procreation like sacrifice is a religious duty that presupposes marriage. The wife is 'one half of the husband.'<sup>425</sup> "As long as one does not obtain a wife, therefore, for so long one is not reborn"<sup>426</sup> and remains incomplete. "As soon as he obtains a wife, however, he is

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<sup>420</sup> Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya, Religious practices of the Hindus; in: Kenneth.W. Morgan (ed), The Religion of the Hindus, P.182.

<sup>421</sup> The Samklyayana Grhya -Sutra, 1. 8. 19.

<sup>422</sup> The Samklyayana Grhya -Sutra, 1. 8. 19.

<sup>423</sup>The paraskara Grhya -Sutra, 1. 8. 21.

<sup>424</sup>The paraskara Grhya- Sutra, 1. 8. 21.

<sup>425</sup> Taittiriya - Samhita, VI.1. 8. 5.

<sup>426</sup> The author plays on the double meaning of 'parajayate' : to be born and to beget : Without a wife one cannot beget a son and thereby make oneself reborn in the son.

reborn and becomes complete."<sup>427</sup> Human procreation is a type of activity of creation and it is likened to a sacrifice. The sexual act is called a 'fire sacrifice.'<sup>428</sup>

### 1.8.1.3.3 Marriage as Sacrifice

Marriage is not a solution to certain problems. "Marriage acquires its true meaning and reaches its perfection and maturity only when the conjugal relationship is based on the 'realization that marriage is a willing commitment and sacrifice' for the good of the partner, family, the society and the world."<sup>429</sup> The Rig-Veda declares that the husband and wife should co-operate and work together in worshipping gods.<sup>430</sup> The Taittiriya Brahmana echoes the theme "may the wife unite with her husband by means of good deeds; they become yoked like oxen to the sacrifice."<sup>431</sup> The husband and wife are united to each other by the performance of the good deeds and become a sacrifice. The Satapatha Brahmana says "The intimate and unbreakable union between husband and wife in the sacrifice is like that between truth and faith, and between mind and speech: wherever the husband is there also is the wife."<sup>432</sup> The wife has an indispensable role to play in ritual activities. She is also important because she is the mother of her husband's son. The marriage hymn of the Rig-Veda invokes the blessings of ten sons on the bride.<sup>433</sup>

### 1.8.1.4 The Funeral Rites

The Funeral is the last samskara which can also be called the last sacrifice (antyeshti). Death pollutes the entire family and the family members can be haunted by it.<sup>434</sup> According to Parry 'cremation is akin to sacrifice.'<sup>435</sup> The Upanisads

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<sup>427</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, V.2. 1. 10; 8. 7. 2. 3. When a man finds a wife, he considers himself to be more complete, Aitareya Aranyaka, 1. 2. 5.

<sup>428</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XI. 6. 2. 10. The Brahadaranyaka Upanishad speaks of the various parts of a woman with elements of sacrifice: "Her vulva is a sacrificial altar.... Brahadaranyaka Upanishad, 6. 4. 3. Woman is the fire in which the man offers the semen; the result of this sacrifice is the birth of a child, Brahadaranyaka Upanishad, 6.2. 9-13; Chandogya Upanishad, 5.5-9; Jaiminiya Brahmana, 1. 18.

<sup>429</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu Samskaras, P. 233.

<sup>430</sup>Rig-Veda, 1. 72. 5; 5. 3. 2; 5. 28.3.

<sup>431</sup> Taittiriya Brahmana, 3. 7. 5 .11 , See also Kathaka – Samhita, 5. 4.

<sup>432</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XI. 8. 2. 6.

<sup>433</sup> Rig-Veda, X. 85. 45; 1. 91. 20; 1. 92. 12. 3. 1. 23. A sonless wife is said to have ill luck, Satapatha Brahmana V.3. 2. 2.

<sup>434</sup> Gavin Flood, An introduction to Hinduism, PP.206-207.

<sup>435</sup> Parry, Death in Benaras, Cambridge university press, 1994, PP.151-190.

introduce the idea of “death as the supreme purification as the ultimate human sacrifice.”<sup>436</sup> The cremation as a sacrifice enables the remove the pollution of the death and is able to bring the family together. The dead person is cremated on the day of death. On the day of the death the whole family is polluted until the final rite (sraddha) is carried out. The sraddha rites are offering to the deceased the rice balls (pinda) which construct a body for him in the next world, the world of the ghosts.<sup>437</sup> There is a belief that after the death the different elements which constitute the person go to different places. For example the belief in Kerala is that a person has two powers (sakti) which are separated at death: the soul goes to heaven (Swarga, liberation) and the other power which is the body, remains on the earth as a ‘ghost’ or (preta).<sup>438</sup>

The hymns and the mantras which are chanted during the funeral rite lay more stress on the ‘sacrificial transformation of the body than the elimination of it.’ “At the first kindling of the fire the priest begs the fire not to destroy the corpse, but to burn it gently and evenly on all sides.”<sup>439</sup> In this heating of the fire the departed soul is transformed into a ‘sacred and worthy offering pleasing to God.’ In the second stage ‘jataveda’, the second fire is called up on to perform the work of giving energy and carries the body to a new dwelling place in heaven.<sup>440</sup> Here the Agni, the fire transports the offerings from one place to the other. It is the Agni that gives the necessary power to the offerings to rise to the destination which is heaven or the Supreme Being.<sup>441</sup> “The cremation of the body is considered as the offering into the ‘sacred fire’ which leads the corpse to heaven as a sacrificial gift.”<sup>442</sup> The cremation of a body in the sacrificial fire regarded as a new birth.<sup>443</sup> The Satapatha

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<sup>436</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.409.

<sup>437</sup> Gavin Flood, An introduction to Hinduism, P.207.

<sup>438</sup> Gavin Flood, An introduction to Hinduism, PP. 207-208.

<sup>439</sup> Rig-Veda, X. 16, 7.

<sup>440</sup> Rig-Veda, X. 16, 9.

<sup>441</sup> Rig-Veda, X. 16, 7.

<sup>442</sup> Raj Bali Pandey, Hindu samskaras, P.253.

<sup>443</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 2.3.3. 5.; 12. 5. 1. 13.

Brahmana refers to the three births of a man: “the first from his parents, the second from the sacrifice, and the third from the cremation fire.”<sup>444</sup>

### 1.9 The Soma Sacrifice<sup>445</sup>

This is one of the major Vedic sacrifices. All the one hundred and fourteen hymns are dedicated to Soma.<sup>446</sup> The importance of the soma sacrifice derives from the fact that its sacrifice is an act in which the divine and human both participate. Soma is a drink of the soma plant which makes the human beings feel that they are more than just conscious animals. It has an ‘intoxicating effect.’ The origin of the soma plant is in the mountains on Mount Mujavat.<sup>447</sup> The soma plant is identified with a ‘brown or reddish bush which is some three feet high. The action of soma has stimulating and inspiring effect. Its true origin is in heaven, he is the child of heaven,<sup>448</sup> ‘milk of heaven.’<sup>449</sup> As the most important plant it is called as the Lord of the plants. It is called the ‘vehicle of immortality.’<sup>450</sup> This immortality is obtained by drinking the juice of soma. It has the power and capacity to make God and human beings immortal. Immortality has to be merited by our own effort and hard work. Soma possesses healing properties and powers. “The blind man sees, the cripple walk.”<sup>451</sup> Soma as a liquid is considered to be the ‘drop of life’, a drink that imparts life both temporal and eternal. The soma sacrifice elevates the worshiper to a higher plane of human consciousness and enhances the daily living. In this soma sacrifice both divine and men are involved and man is divinized. Through the drinking of the soma drink one is able to attain immortality, joy, purification, and protection from evil influences. Soma is a sacred drink which enables person the proper to have a proper spirit to perform the sacrifice with dignity and to face the

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<sup>444</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 11. 2. 1. 1.

<sup>445</sup> The soma is a drink produced from a creeper. The preparation and offering of this drink are an important Vedic ritual. See, Satapatha Brahmana, 3. 9. 4. 23.

<sup>446</sup> Rig-Veda, 1, 91; V111, 48. Soma is a juice from a plant. See, Satapatha Brahmana 1. 6. 3. 23.

<sup>447</sup> Rig-Veda, X.34. 1.

<sup>448</sup> Rig-Veda, 1X. 33. 5.

<sup>449</sup> Rig-Veda, 1X. 51. 2.

<sup>450</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 1X. 5. 1.8.

<sup>451</sup> Rig-Veda, V111.79. 2.

life with confidence and hope.<sup>452</sup> Man has the deepest desire to become immortal and divinized. Man becomes 'immortal only if he is divinized.' "We have drunk the soma and become immortal, we have attained the light, and we have found the gods."<sup>453</sup> According to the Brahmanas the gods were not immortal and they had to struggle to attain immortality. "Sacrifice is the way to immortality because sacrifice is the one original and originating act."<sup>454</sup> Sacrifice is the means to attain to the height of freedom which is equal to the attainment of immortality.<sup>455</sup> The Vedic conception of immortality is same as freedom from death.<sup>456</sup> Soma had a purifying power that enabled gods and men to have the union with each other.<sup>457</sup>

### 1.10 Asvamedha

The horse sacrifice is the king of the rites<sup>458</sup> and it is the rite of kings.<sup>459</sup> It is a royal sacrifice by a victorious king. "It is the most solemn and impressive cultic celebrations of the Vedas and at the same time it is one of the most secular and political."<sup>460</sup> The priestly function is very important in this sacrifice as in other sacrifices. The sacrifice lasts only for three days but the preparations for the sacrifice lasts for long months. At the moment of the sacrifice the royal court is assembled with the entire population. At the beginning the soma juice is offered and after many ritual acts the 'horse is immolated with solemnity.' Many other animals are also sacrificed along with. It is often known as the great, 'mahakratu', the great manifestation of power and force, which 'blots 'out all sins, fulfills all wishes' and answers prayers for a son.'<sup>461</sup> This sacrifice was the chief of all the animal sacrifices.

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<sup>452</sup> Raimundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, PP.366-367.

<sup>453</sup> Rig- Veda, VIII. 48, 3.

<sup>454</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P. 380.

<sup>455</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P. 381.

<sup>456</sup> The true and complete family reflects that a man's immortality is found in his son. A son survives after his father's death. The father in his son survives his own death. The father is born again in his son. Hence it is the family that gives and guarantees human immortality; see, Patrick Olivelle, The asrama system, Oxford university press, New York, 1993, PP.37-40.

<sup>457</sup> Rig-Veda, IX. 83.1a; VII. 13. 3.

<sup>458</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XIII. 2, 2, 1.

<sup>459</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XIII. 1, 6, 3.

<sup>460</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.376.

<sup>461</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, PP.376-377.



In later times its importance was very much exaggerated.<sup>462</sup> Once the horse has been sacrificed, the procedure demands the sacrifice of a number of cows. This is followed by the distribution of gifts to the priests.<sup>463</sup> This sacrifice is able to identify the sacrificer with the Prajapati. The Rig- Veda has two hymns dedicated to the sacrifice of the horse.<sup>464</sup> The chapters of the Satapatha Brahmana in which the asvamedha is minutely described.<sup>465</sup> This sacrifice is a royal and popular festival performed with the intention of attaining prosperity and power for the Kingdom and for the subjects.

### **1.11 The Sacrifice of the Mind**

The sacrifice is now 'interiorized.' In the modern Hinduism external works and rituals are not very significant and they can disappear. Man becomes the center of the sacrifice. But what is significant is that "the real sacrifice happens within himself, for without his inner participation and faith in the external act would be devoid both of sense and reality. The real sacrifice is that which takes place within man."<sup>466</sup> The mental sacrifice is not something that is reflected or just imagined. But it is performed by the mind itself. It is the mind itself which is 'immolated.' "What are cast into the fire is not something material things or the thought of them but thinking itself and all that is contained in the cave of the heart."<sup>467</sup> The mind and heart are very often mentioned in a close relation with each other.<sup>468</sup> Hence the sacrifice of the mind is the offering of mind itself in the fire of Brahman.

"When the mind of a seeker after truth has become extinguished in its own source, he is no longer deluded by the sense objects, which are deceptive and are subservient to Karman. The mind is this fleeting world; therefore it should be purified with great effort. One becomes like that which is in one's mind- this is the everlasting secret. The mind alone is man's cause of bondage or release: it leads to

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<sup>462</sup> Maurice Phillips, Fundamental teachings of Vedas, PP.166-167.

<sup>463</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XIII, 1-5. And Taittiriya Brahmana III, 8-9.

<sup>464</sup>Rig-Veda, I, 162.

<sup>465</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XIII, 6.

<sup>466</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P. 417.

<sup>467</sup> Chandogya Upanishad, III, 12. 7-9. See also Taittiriya Upanishad, I, 6, 1; 11, 1.

<sup>468</sup> Rig- Veda, I, 61, 2; 1, 171, 2.

bondage when attached to the sense objects, and to release when freed from them."<sup>469</sup>

### 1.12 The New and Full Moon Sacrifice (Darsapurnamasa)

This sacrifice of the new and the full moon sacrifices are important because they act as the model and example for the 'isti' sacrifices (offering for a special ends). These sacrifices last for a day. In the case of the new moon sacrifices there is an extra day dedicated for the preliminary preparation like bringing fire, milking, pounding and husking of rice, the cooking of the cakes and the 'preparation of the altar.' At the end of these formalities the real sacrifice begins with the recitation of the 'fifteen samidheni' verses which are associated with 'kindling of the wood. Then there are the two libations of the butter in order to burn the fire. One libation is after description of the ancestors of the sacrifice. There is also a choosing of the 'hotri.' Then there are the for-offerings of butter and the gods, who are invited, are honored. Then comes the principal offerings of butter and cakes to Agni and soma which are at new moon accompanied by verses containing the word 'vrdh' (grow) and at the full moon by verses referring to the slaying of 'vritta.' Then the officiants taste the offerings. Once the invocation to the sacrificial food is made, the participants touch the sacrifice. Then the cakes are distributed to each and thus each has a part in 'ida'.<sup>470</sup>

### 1.13 Sacrifice in Bhagavad-Gita<sup>471</sup>

As a reaction to the extreme ritualism of the early Vedism, the later Vedism moved from the external ritualism and gave more stress on the 'knowledge of the interior self.' Later Vedism considered all actions including the ritual activities as a 'great obstacle in obtaining this inner knowledge of the self' or ultimate being. Hence

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<sup>469</sup> Maitri Upanishad , VI, 34.

<sup>470</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, PP.161.

<sup>471</sup> Bhagavad- Gita is a Hindu Scripture. Gita belongs to 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> cent.B.C. It is a part of the great epic Mahabharatha. Gita is the best known source of Bhakti marga (the path of loving devotion) which is an eminent spiritual path allowed by so many eminent sannyasis. Its central theme is supreme devotional love to personal God. For Hindus Gita is the Gospel of the religion of love. See, Emmanuel Vattakuzhy, Indian Christian sanyasa and swamy Abhishiktananda, theological publications, India, 1981, P.29.

the external path of action (karma-marga) was substituted by the way of knowledge (Jnana-marga). Hence we can say sacrifice was internalized. It was offered to the immanent divine self. One had to die to his actions and self in order to become 'identical with the absolute transcendent.'<sup>472</sup>

The sacrifices were obligatory according to Bhagavad-Gita. But they had to be performed without expecting selfishly the results of the actions for oneself.<sup>473</sup> "It also accepted the 'interiorization' of the sacrifice by 'mystically' extending the concept of sacrifice to include the control of the senses, penance, the study of the Scripture and the knowledge."<sup>474</sup> But it discouraged the renunciation of action and retirement to the forest.<sup>475</sup> And it always recommended being very active in the world doing the work without having any attachment to it.<sup>476</sup> "Gita also spoke of the 'road of loving devotion (bhakti- marga). Surrendering oneself to God as one's only refuge"<sup>477</sup> one should offer all actions, both sacrificial and the non sacrificial, as an act of devotion<sup>478</sup> "to a loving God."<sup>479</sup> Bhagavad-Gita insists that sacrifice must be performed for various reasons. Firstly the universe itself is based on the sacrifice and therefore the absence of sacrifice can affect the universe. A perfect action is that which is devoid of any attachment, which is without desire, and which seeks no fruit.<sup>480</sup> According to the Bhagavad- Gita the Vedic sacrifices are performed on a commercial and utilitarian basis', by which both gods and men are sustained. "The gods being prospered by sacrifices shall grant you the enjoyment you desire. By the mutual

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<sup>472</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.66. We can say that the Bhagavad -Gita is the 'song of the Lord' which is a Sanskrit poem composed in seven hundred numbered stanzas, divided into eighteen chapters in the form of a dialogue between the Lord Krishna, and Arjuna, a heroic warrior, who is himself the son of another God by a mortal woman, see,Gavin Flood and Charles Martin, The Bhagavad-Gita, W. W. Norton and company, New York, 2012.

<sup>473</sup>Bhagavad-Gita, 2.47, 18. 6.

<sup>474</sup> Bhagavad-Gita, 4. 26- 30.

<sup>475</sup>Bhagavad-Gita, 3.4, 3.8.

<sup>476</sup> Bhagavad-Gita, 3. 26.

<sup>477</sup> Bhagavad-Gita,18. 66.

<sup>478</sup>Bhagavad-Gita, 9.27.

<sup>479</sup>Bhagavad-Gita, 18. 65.

<sup>480</sup> Bhagavad -Gita, 18. 23.

support shall you obtain the highest good.”<sup>481</sup> Hence sacrifice was a reciprocal need in Vedic times. Gita’s teaching is “Sacrifice which is prescribed by ordinance and offered up by men without desire for its fruits, who concentrate their minds on this alone: in sacrifice lies duty: such sacrifice is of goodness.”<sup>482</sup> Sacrifice or actions have to be performed without having any selfish desire, or not having a desire for the fruits. Every sacrifice has to be done as an expression of devotion and faithful commitment to Lord Krishna.<sup>483</sup>The offering must be the expression of pure love, loyalty service and dedication to the Lord. “Whatever work you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice or give, whatever be your austere practice, do all, O Arjuna, as an offering to me.”<sup>484</sup>

According to Aurobindo to “surrender means to consecrate everything in oneself to the divine, to offer all one is and has, not to insist on one’s ideas, desires, habits.”<sup>485</sup> To offer everything to the divine, to live for the other and not for the oneself, is the perfect surrender. Self- surrender in works prepares one the way for the deepening of the realization of the Divine. One needs to offer his works as a sacrifice to the Divine. By offering his works in total self-surrendering, ‘he participates in the universal sacrifice.’ Offering of one’s works as a pure sacrifice to the Divine makes him sacred and sanctified. According to him the ‘object and the final effect of the sacrifice is the closeness and union with the Divine in inner self.’<sup>486</sup> In the Bhagavad –Gita the yajna is interpreted as an “act of completely surrendering oneself to Brahman.”<sup>487</sup>

The value of the gifts offered is not very important. What is important is the ‘devotion to God’ that looks at the heart and considers heart. Krishna says to Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita : “Whosoever offers to me with devotion (bhakti) a leaf, a

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<sup>481</sup> Bhagavad-Gita, 3. 11.

<sup>482</sup> Bhagavad- Gita, 17. 11.

<sup>483</sup> Bhagavad- Gita, 9. 27.

<sup>484</sup>Bhagavad-Gita, 9. 27.

<sup>485</sup> George Nedumplakunnel, Realization of God according to Sri Aurobindo, a study of a Neo-Hindu vision on the divinization of man, PP.115-116.

<sup>486</sup> George Nedumplakunnel, Realization of God according to sri Aurobindo, a study of a Neo-Hindu vision on the divinization of man, PP.116-121.

<sup>487</sup>Bhagavad-Gita, 4. 24.

fruit, a flower, a cup of water—that offering of love, of the pure heart, I accept.”<sup>488</sup> This devotion to God can be expressed in different ways by repetition of the name of God, or by offering an incense stick. The Bhagavad- Gita says that the “Prajapati created beings with yajna in the beginning and asked them to grow and multiply by having recourse to yajna. This yajna was to fulfil their desires.”<sup>489</sup> Therefore the sacrifice is not only the central act of religious worship. Its importance is deeper. Bhagavad- Gita taught that “action should be performed as sacrifices, even acts of the mind as intellectual sacrifices.”<sup>490</sup>

### 1.14 Identification with Prajapati

In the Brahmana text and the Brahmanic ritualism Prajapati is given a prominent place. Therefore a particular rite is elevated by showing the connection it has with Prajapati. The twelve day rite (dvadasaha) is said to be the sacrifice of Prajapati. Similarly the morning liturgy is called the ‘litany of Prajapati.’<sup>491</sup> The reason for elevating a particular rite to a sacrifice is to have many effects for the sacrifice. For example: through the main effect of the sacrifice ‘vajapeya’ is to obtain food, and many other effects like ‘Prajapati,<sup>492</sup> obtainment of heaven,<sup>493</sup> ‘obtainment of supremacy’<sup>494</sup> are mentioned. By means of ‘Vajapeya’ one is able to attain everything.<sup>495</sup> The ‘agnihotra’ has the ability and potency to liberate the sacrifice from evils<sup>496</sup> and from death.<sup>497</sup> It is also considered as a means to reach heaven.<sup>498</sup>

### 1.15 Expiatory Rites

The expiatory rites provide to remedy the mistakes, inattention regarding the ‘ordinances of the ritual’ that might happen while performing the sacrifice. The rites

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<sup>488</sup>Bhagavad-Gita, 9.26 f.

<sup>489</sup> Bhagavad- Gita, 3. 10. Sahayajnah prajah srstva, purovaca prajapatih, anena prasavisyadhvam, esa vo stvistakamadhuk.

<sup>490</sup> Bhagavad- Gita, 3. 9; 1V.23; 1V. 33.

<sup>491</sup> Aitareya – Brahmana, 11. 17.

<sup>492</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, V.1. 18; V 1. 2. 7.

<sup>493</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, V. 2. 1. 12.

<sup>494</sup> Taittiriya- Brahmana, 1. 3. 2. 1. 3.

<sup>495</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, V. 1. 1. 8.

<sup>496</sup>SatapathaBrahmana, 11. 3. 1. 6.

<sup>497</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 11. 3. 3.9.

<sup>498</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, X111. 7. 1. 2.

are addressed to Varuna. The expiatory sacrifices which have as their principal object the obtaining of grace, addressed to Varuna, who is the guardian of moral law and the punisher of crime. The Rig-Vedic concept of sin and its removal is connected with God Varuna. Agni is also said to eliminate sins. "Lead us, Agni, by a good way to wealth, thou God, knowing all the ways. Remove from us the sin that leads us astray. We will bring thee the best adoration."<sup>499</sup> The Vedic seers speak of the 'anger and rage of God' which is caused by the sins of the human beings. Every God grants forgiveness of sins when he is addressed with prayers and sacrifices. The sacrifice becomes a suitable means of pleasing God and calming God of his anger. Sin in the Vedic 'sense consists of the ritual mistakes and errors regarding the performance of the sacrifice.' The Vedic texts know also of the 'sin by the gods' and these sins can pollute men.<sup>500</sup> In the Rig-Veda the idea of sin is as offence against the gods especially against Varuna. But in the Atharva Veda the idea of sin is an outward pollution.<sup>501</sup>

### **1.16 The Rites for the Forefathers**

The religious ceremony at home includes the ceremonial rites for the forefathers. This rite for the deceased ancestors is called 'sraddha.' This is performed by all Hindus. It is an offering to the dead father, mother, grandfather, grandmother and so on. This offering consists of offering seat to the fathers, offering of cloth, cooked rice balls covered with honey, and cereals and seasonal fruits. Prayers are offered for their welfare and naturally for their departed souls. It is considered a 'social and religious responsibility' to perform rites for the forefathers. It is believed that the sins of the forefathers negatively affect the future generations. Hence the performance of this rite brings forgiveness of sins. The rite also brings liberation of

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<sup>499</sup>Rig-Veda, 1.189.1.

<sup>500</sup>Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, PP.168-169.

<sup>501</sup> Sten Rodhe, Deliver us from evil, Lund, 1946, PP.135ff.

the dead. There is a special grace and merit attached when this rite is performed in Gaya, Allahabad and Kurukshetra.<sup>502</sup>

### 1.17 Agnihotra (Fire –God oblation)

“The commonest and simplest of the Vedic sacrifices is the daily morning and evening oblation of milk to the three fires, a simple offering of milk, sometimes together with the vegetable substances, to Agni carried out by the Adhvaryu priest”<sup>503</sup> and the lay celebrant. It is the most important duty of a man to offer this sacrifice in the morning and in the evening throughout his life. In the morning it takes place just before or after the rising of the sun and in the evening after the sunset or the after appearance of the first star. Then a cow is brought and milked by an Aryan. Then vessel which contains the milk is heated on the fire altar(Garhapatya). Some spoonful milk is taken and poured into the fire. At the end the sacrificer drinks the milk and offers ‘four water libations’ to the gods, the fathers, the seven seers and Agni on the earth, or to the other gods. Together with the Agnihotra, ‘Agniyupasthana’ or the veneration of Agni can also be performed at night service. The important idea contained in the fire worship is that the oblations thrown into the fire, reach the sun which sends rain and as a result there comes corn and the substance of all beings.<sup>504</sup> The sacred text assert: “The Libations poured on the sacrificial fire rise up to the sun. From the sun springs rain. From the rain springs food. From food are born living creatures.”<sup>505</sup>All the things are seated around Agnihotra as the children around their mother.<sup>506</sup> “According to Jaiminiya Brahmana the agnihotra is what the gods produced when they contracted the thousand- year sacrifice of Prajapati.”<sup>507</sup> Hence the agnihotra is performed morning and evening

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<sup>502</sup> Sivaprasad Bhattacharyya, Religious practices of the Hindus; in: The Religion of the Hindus, Kenneth W. Morgan (ed), PP.180-181.

<sup>503</sup> The adhvaryu priest is the chief of the officiants at the actual sacrifice, the essential part of whose function is to act, to move about, to look after the fires; he is in charge of the ways and means of doing the ritual.

<sup>504</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, PP.159-160.

<sup>505</sup> Manusmriti, III. 76.

<sup>506</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, III. 4. 2. 26.

<sup>507</sup> Jaiminiya Brahmana, 1. 3-4.

without exception. The obligation to maintain the sacred fires and to offer the agnihotra in one's entire life is mentioned in Brahmins. All other sacrifices can be left out but not the agnihotra.<sup>508</sup> The agnihotra is the ultimate foundation of everything.<sup>509</sup> The Satapatha Brahmana says "If the priest does not perform the agnihotra in the morning, that day the sun would not rise."<sup>510</sup> The householder performs this sacrifice every day morning and evening, reciting the prayers.<sup>511</sup> The agnihotra sacrifice has no end and limit, but all other sacrifices come to an end.<sup>512</sup> "Agni extends the sacrifice to heaven, his forms are scattered everywhere."<sup>513</sup>

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<sup>508</sup> Chandogya Upanishad, V, 24, 5.

<sup>509</sup> Mahanarayana Upanishad, 527.

<sup>510</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XI, 3, 1, 5.

<sup>511</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, PP.360-361.

<sup>512</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XI, 3, 1, 13.

<sup>513</sup> Rig-Veda, X, 100, 6.



## CHAPTER 2

### A GENERAL STUDY OF THE SACRAMENTS

#### 2.1 Concept and Definition

The Christian sacraments are ritual actions. The Greek word 'mysterion' and the Latin word 'sacramentum' contributed very much to the implications of the word sacrament. The Greek theology refers to a sacrament as *mysterion*.<sup>514</sup> *Mysterion* is originally meant as something 'secret' something "hidden, something not manifest."<sup>515</sup> This sense of the word can be found both in the 'Old Testament and New Testament.' In the book of Daniel 'mysterion' 'refers to the "plan of God for the end times and some obscure revelation of this plan"<sup>516</sup> (Daniel. 2. 18-19, 27-30, 44-47). In Paul *mysterion* belongs to God's plan to save and redeem all men in Christ, a plan that is planned and determined by God from the inception of time and kept secret, but now it has been revealed through the Spirit and through prophet, through the apostles (1 Corinthians. 2. 7-10, Romans 16. 25-26; Colossians. 1.26-27). The *mysterion* is made known to the mature and spiritual persons ( 1 Corinthians 3. 1, 1 Corinthians 2.6). This is because only the spirit filled persons are able to accept the knowledge which the Spirit bestows. Paul never uses *mysterion* to designate those rituals that are called sacraments.<sup>517</sup> The sacrament is a "visible sign, a perceptible symbol' of something invisible and sacred."<sup>518</sup> The invisible or sacred reality refers to the grace which is God's free and gratuitous gift of love to men and women. "A sacrament is an event or a reality or a rite, perceptible to the senses, that was

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<sup>514</sup> M. Jugie, *Theologiae Dogmaticae Greco-Russorum Expositio de sacramentis*, :latouzey, Paris,1930, PP.8-32.

<sup>515</sup> For detailed information on the meanings of *mysterion*, see, Gunther Bornkamm , *Mysterion* ; in: *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, G.Kittel, Stuttgart, vol 1V, 1942, PP. 820-823. ( translated )

<sup>516</sup> Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, Paulist press, New York, 1996, P.29. The word 'mysterion' is also used to mean 'to close one's mouth or one's lips.' In front of the holiness of the divine and the presence of the divine the participants closed their lips. Plato used the word *mysterion* in his writings and in family life *mysterion* came to mean a secret, see, Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, Paulist press, New York, 1988, P.22.

<sup>517</sup> Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, P.30.

<sup>518</sup> Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, Paulist press, New York, 1988, P.7.

instituted by Christ in order to signify the saving grace merited by him, to contain them, and to communicate them to human beings through human beings whenever a sacrament is performed by both its minister and its recipient."<sup>519</sup> This visible reality is necessary for a sacrament as sign of Christ. This visible rite is an 'authentic sign of grace' and a 'sign of Christ.' These sacraments as 'signs of faith' are efficacious signs of the redemption when they are understood in a spirit of faith. At the 'Council of Trent' the Church clarified that the sacraments are not instituted solely for the strengthening of the faith as the reformers said. They are also meant for the 'sanctification of men.'<sup>520</sup> 'The sacraments are not things but spiritual actions which are not 'mechanical machines' which produce grace but sacred ritual actions in which the Church 'proclaims and celebrates' in representation the redeeming and saving presence and saving action of God and Christ.'<sup>521</sup> According to Matthias Joseph Scheeben the "sacraments are true vehicles of the power flowing into the members from Christ."<sup>522</sup>

"A sacrament is a gesture of Christ, a place where he begins again to exist and to act for all those who are gathered around him in faith. A sacrament is a means by which Christ is made to live among us today as he lived in Palestine."<sup>523</sup> Christ dwells with us and is present in the sacraments. According to Karl Rahner "A sacrament is thought to be a single act by which God reaches into space and time to confer grace under signs instituted by Christ."<sup>524</sup> The sacraments are very 'personal acts of Christ' and it is Christ who 'baptizes, absolves and offers sacrifice.' In the Eucharist Christ is present in a most miraculous way possible because his presence is personal, real by the power of transubstantiation, where as in other sacraments he is

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<sup>519</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo, Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), the Catholic university of American press, Washington,D.C,1995, P. 13.

<sup>520</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), PP.13-15.

<sup>521</sup> Michael G. Lawler, Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology, P.45.

<sup>522</sup> Matthias Joseph Scheeben, The Mystery of Christianity, Cyril Vollert (tran), St. Louis: B. Herder, 1946, PP. 570-571.

<sup>523</sup> Louis Evely, The Church and the sacraments, dimension Books, New Jersey, 1971, P.22.

<sup>524</sup> Karl Rahner, The making of modern theology "nineteenth and twentieth texts", Geoffrey B. Kelly (ed), T&T Clark, Edinburgh, 1993, P.283.

present by the virtue of 'his redemptive act which is sacramentally embodied.'<sup>525</sup> The profane world lives in relationship to God. The grace and presence of God sanctify the people and make them pleasing to God. The grace of God is also imparted to the people through the sacraments. The sacraments are efficacious signs of this grace of God. "Jesus' presence is made visible and real in the sacraments in which the grace of God becomes historically manifest and God becomes approachable."<sup>526</sup> They are acts of Christ because Christ himself acts through the minister and the church and the minister through his intention, performs what the church expects.<sup>527</sup> The sacraments cause divine life within us.<sup>528</sup> They are effective signs of grace of God, which have been entrusted to the Church by which divine life is dispensed to us. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the 'required dispositions.'<sup>529</sup>

### **2.1.1 The Sacraments as Symbols**

We can speak of the reality that is not material by using 'symbols and representations.' The symbols enable us to comprehend the meaning and implications of the world of the spirit. The sacramental realities are comprised of material realities like bread and wine or water. These material realities have different meaning and implications other than what we associate with them normally. They become symbols and signs of the 'unseen' and they enable us to relate to the spiritual world of the divine. In his teaching Jesus himself used signs to expound his saving activities. He used the symbols from the creation to make known

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<sup>525</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, a Sheed and Ward classic, Kansas city, 1960, P.60.

<sup>526</sup> Karl Rahner, *The making of modern theology "nineteenth and twentieth texts"* Geoffrey B. Kelly (ed), P.289.

<sup>527</sup> Aime Georges Martimort, *The signs of the new Covenant*, the liturgical press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1963, P.38. Christ acts through his minister. That is why the sin of the minister does not affect the sacramental grace and the value of the sacraments.

<sup>528</sup> Raymond Moloney, *The Eucharist*, Geoffrey Chapman, a Cassell imprint, Villiers house, London, 1995, P.178. The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace instituted by Christ by which divine life is dispensed and granted to the people. The sacraments make grace present, see, Liam Kelly, *Sacraments revisited*, "what do they mean today", Pulist press, New York, 1998, P.2.

<sup>529</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1131. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, Theological publications in India, Bangalore, 2003.

and explain the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Ever since the Pentecost it is through the sacramental signs of his Church that the Holy Spirit continues the work of 'sanctification' in the Church. The sacraments signify and make present and available the salvation which was brought by Christ.<sup>530</sup> "The material goods are signs of higher, spiritual realities; the visible world is a sign of the eternal universe."<sup>531</sup> The rituals enable us to experience the divine touch of God in our lives and the symbols point out something beyond our limited world, something sacred.<sup>532</sup> "In the history of Christian tradition the sacraments have been seen as the sacred signs and symbols through which God enters the history of this world and communicates himself to us."<sup>533</sup>

Through this communication salvation is freely given to those who have faith. The sacramental 'principle of Christianity' is a method and way in which God reveals himself to people. God has a desire to communicate himself with the people and to enter into an intimate relationship with them. The creation is the 'medium through which God reveals himself to the world.' God chooses the creation in order to express himself and so the creation becomes sacred.<sup>534</sup> "Ever since the creation of the world his eternal power and divine nature, invisible though they are, have been understood and seen through the things he has made" (Romans. 1.20). The sacraments have greater meaning and values when they are looked at as the symbols which bring us into contact with many mysterious and divine realities. The waters of baptism are symbols of washing and cleansing and the mystery of a new life. The bread and wine are symbols of God's care, nourishment, love and sacrifice for us. Hence the symbolic actions in the Church are manifestations of great 'spiritual

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<sup>530</sup>Errol D` Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, theological Publications in India, Bangalore, 2005, PP.8-10. The sacraments are symbols of sacred things, see, Kenan B. Osborne, Sacramental theology, a general introduction, Paulist press, New York, 1988, P.107.

<sup>531</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda M. Maloney (tran), liturgical press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1987, P.49.

<sup>532</sup>Sandra Degidio, Sacraments alive, their history, celebration and significance, twenty-third publications, mystic, London, 1991, PP.6-8.

<sup>533</sup>Errol D` Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, P.10. The God of the history speaks to the people of all ages and manifests himself through the sacraments.

<sup>534</sup> Errol D`Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, PP.13-14. Through the incarnation Jesus became part of the world and the world and the entire creation became sacred.

realities.’ The sacramental symbols are powerful actions which ‘require faith to work.’ They are no magical and mechanical actions. In the sacraments the present, past dimensions are remembered.<sup>535</sup> The past dimension of the sacraments consists of the spiritual values Jesus himself lived, the values of forgiveness and self-sacrifice. The present dimension of the sacraments is to be conscious of God’s wonderful action in our lives.<sup>536</sup>

### 2.1.2 Sacrament as Sacred Sign

Thomas Aquinas says “we speak of sacraments insofar as they indicate a relationship of sign. And in this sense a sacrament belongs in the category of sign.”<sup>537</sup> According to Augustine material reality can signify something more than itself and beyond itself. According to him “a sign is a thing that apart from its appearance to the senses causes something more to come to mind.”<sup>538</sup> The sign which is a thing, is capable of presenting itself to the senses and conveys to the mind the knowledge of the grace.<sup>539</sup> “Signs which pertain to divine things are called sacraments.”<sup>540</sup> For Thomas Aquinas the sacrament is a sign of the passion of Christ, a sign of the presence of grace and a sign that points to the future glory to come.<sup>541</sup> ‘Baptism and Eucharist are sacred signs for the divine reality of grace and as symbols.’ They consist of two structures such as the material element which is accompanied by the sacred word.<sup>542</sup> The sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist are sacraments because Isidore of Siviglia says “under the veil of corporeal things there is a divine virtue that secretly performs the salutary effect proper to each sacrament.

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<sup>535</sup> Sandra Degidio, Sacraments alive, their history, celebration and significance, PP.12-14.

<sup>536</sup> Sandra Degidio, Sacraments alive, their history, celebration and significance, PP. 12-14.

<sup>537</sup> ST, iii, 79,7 ad 2.

<sup>538</sup> De doctr. Christ. iii 9, 13; PL 34, 70. De doctrina Christiana. CSEL 80. : Tempisky, Vienna 1963.

Teaching Christianity. WSA I/11, Edmund Hill (tran), New city press, New York, 1996.

<sup>539</sup> Joseph M. Powers, Eucharistic theology, Burns and Oates, Herder and Herder, London, 1968, P.79.

<sup>540</sup> Nimis longum est convenienter disputare de varietate signorum, quae cum ad res divinas pertinent, sacramenta appellantur, Epistola 138. 7; CSEL 44, 131; PL 33, 527.

<sup>541</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), P.16.

<sup>542</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, An introduction to sacramental theology, William Thomas (tran), Paulist press, New York, 1979, P.23. De doctr. Christ. 9, 13; PL 34, 70. The bread and wine which are the matter of the Eucharist are the sacred signs of the reality of Christ’s presence.

They are fruitful when the Church celebrates them because the Holy Spirit which lives in the Church, produces their effect."<sup>543</sup> The baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist are sacraments, not because they signify a sacred reality but because they are 'efficacious'.<sup>544</sup> "The supernatural efficacy of the sacraments comes from the Holy Spirit, which in a secret and mysterious but real way, acts beneath the veil of material things and signs, while the minister of the Church celebrates the sacramental rites."<sup>545</sup> The spirit is 'present and operative' in the sacraments which are celebrated in the church. This Spirit is the 'author' of the sacramental effect.<sup>546</sup> Not every sacred sign is a sacrament, but only that sign which is a sign of the sacred insofar as it sanctifies man.<sup>547</sup> "A sacrament is a commemorative sign of what is past, namely the passion of Christ, namely, grace; it is prognostic of, that is it announces future glory."<sup>548</sup> The sacraments signify and cause grace in the church.<sup>549</sup> They are signs of Christ's 'redemptive actions' which cause grace instrumentally.<sup>550</sup> St Leo the Great says, "What was visible in Christ has now passed over into the sacraments of the Church."<sup>551</sup>

### 2.1.3 Mysterion

The word 'mysterion' was normally understood by the average person in the modern society as something 'hidden, incomprehensible, strange. The word mystery was seen in ancient times as something which touched the foundation of human existence. The plural form 'mysteria' designated a whole group of secret cults that had developed among the Greeks. These mysteries grew and progressed from the

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<sup>543</sup> Isidore of Siviglia, *Etymologiae*, 1.6,c.19: PL 82 255. Cfr, Carpin, At; In *Battesimo di Isidoro di Siviglia*, Ed.; Domenicane, Bologna, 1985.

<sup>544</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, theological publications, India,Bangalore, 1988, P.92.

<sup>545</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, P.92. There is the role of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the author of the sacramental effect. The fruit of the sacrament does not depend on the merits and demerits of the minister.

<sup>546</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, P.92.

<sup>547</sup> Thomas Aquinas, iii,60, 2, corp. The sacraments are signs of the future glory and Christ's saving action. The signs can sanctify, but only as instruments of God.

<sup>548</sup>Thomas Aquinas, iii, 60, 3 corp.

<sup>549</sup> Thomas Aquinas, iii, 60, 1 corp.

<sup>550</sup> Thomas Aquinas, iii, 60, 1 corp.

<sup>551</sup> St.Leo the Great, *quod Conspicuum erat in Christo transivit in Ecclesiae Sacramenta* , Sermo LXXIV, 2 , PL, 54, col. P.389.

ancient fertility cults.<sup>552</sup> The word sacrament originally comes from the classical and early Church Latin word 'sacramentum' which is tied to the Greek word mysterion. In the ancient Greece, the people called the spiritual power mysterion which they experienced in their life.<sup>553</sup> In the Old Testament the word mystery appears twenty one times and in the later part of the Septuagint this word mystery is used to translate the Aramaic word 'raz' as in the book of Daniel. In apocalyptic literature the raz is a 'technical word' which means the 'secrets of God' regarding God's plan for the salvation of his people as revealed to certain privileged seers.<sup>554</sup>

To have a correct understanding of Christian concept of mystery, it is important to note the Old Testament books like Wisdom, Tobit, Sirach, Maccabees which used the term mysterion in philosophic and in profane sense than cultic (Tobit. 12.7, 11; Judith. 2.2; Sirach. 22.22; 2 Maccabes. 13.21). The books like Daniel and Wisdom have theological content. The basic statement we see in Wisdom is "the wicked knew not the hidden counsels (mysteria) of God" (Wisdom.2.22). This refers to the God of Israel, Yahweh. The Yahweh of Israel is the subject of the mysteries which are completely hidden to the wicked, whereas the mysteries of the one true God are revealed and manifested to all those who search and are open to him and seek after wisdom. It is the 'wisdom that reveals the divine secrets' and is itself a secret which must be revealed. In the book of Daniel there is a completely different motive appears which is the 'eschatological mysterion.' It consists in what is to happen in days to come (Daniel. 2.28) and that is to be revealed by God himself. For it is ultimately God alone who is able to unveil the secrets of the future (Daniel.2.47).<sup>555</sup> In Daniel 2 mystery appears eight times always translating raz in reference to

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<sup>552</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology, William Thomas (tran), PP.7-8.

<sup>553</sup> Ray Robert Noll, A new understanding for a new generation, twenty third publications, Mystic New London, 2002, PP. 8-9. See, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, D.C, 1995, PP.48-49.

<sup>554</sup> A.E. Harvey, "The use of mystery language in the Bible", Journal of theological studies,31, no.2, 1980, P.326.

<sup>555</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology, William Thomas (tran), PP.10-12.

God's 'hidden plan and designs revealed' in a dream or a vision through a series of 'complicated symbols' pointing to a future mystery, namely, the future of the Kingdom.<sup>556</sup> The mystery has an 'eschatological' meaning in so far as it points to 'future events' which are predetermined by God for the establishment of his Kingdom.<sup>557</sup> Its real meaning is reserved to God alonewho reveals his secret intentions to those inspired by the Holy Spirit.<sup>558</sup> The mystery of the future salvation of man is a mystery that only God knows and which only he can unveil in its full importance and meaning (Daniel.2.20, 21-23).

The Synoptics speak of mystery (Mark.4.11) and mysteries of the Kingdom of God (Mathew.13.11, Luke. 8.10).The New Testament texts speak of mysterion to show 'eschatological meanings'. Mark combines mysterion with the concept of Jesus' eschatological proclamation of Kingdom (Mark. 4.11). In the Gospels Jesus speaks of the mysteries of the Kingdome of heaven which have been given to the disciples, but are in parables and stories for others (Mathew.13.11; Mark.4.11; Luke .8.10). Jesus understood the reign of God in an "apocalyptic sense- as suddenly coming from God, as the reality of grace which brings salvation, as open only to those who have faith."<sup>559</sup> For Paul the reality of grace is identified with the 'person of Jesus' that for him mysterion is 'essentially the Christ-event itself.' Paul wishes to know and proclaim no other wisdom than the 'wisdom of the 'Crucified.' "In him is comprehended the mystery of God" (1 Corinthians.2. 1f). The crucifixion of Jesus on the cross reveals itself as the holy true wisdom which God planned before the ages for our glory (1 Corinthians. 2. 7). This is the mystery that is unveiled by the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians. 2.10-15) and is to be proclaimed by the apostles as 'administrators of the mysteries of God' (1 Corinthians. 4.1; Ephesians.3.2f;

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<sup>556</sup>Raymond Brown, "The Pre-Christian semitic concept of mystery," Catholic Biblical quarterly, 20, no 4, 1958, P. 423.

<sup>557</sup> Gunther Bornkamm,"Mystêrion;" in: Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, G. Kittel (ed), Stuttgart, vol 4, 1942, P.821.

<sup>558</sup> Raymond Brown, "The Pre-Christian semitic concept of mystery", the Catholic Biblical quarterly, P.423.

<sup>559</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology, William Thomas (tran), P.13.



Colossians. 1.25f). God alone can initiate into the mystery of salvation (Ephesians. 3.9). Christ is the “real and eternal mystery made visible in history as the image of the invisible God” (Colossians. 1.15) in whom are hidden all the ‘treasures of wisdom and knowledge’ (Colossians. 2.3). “In the person of Christ the mystery of God’s plan for salvation of his people is revealed, accomplished, finding its eschatological fulfillment at the last trumpet” (2.Thessalonians.2.3; 2 Thessalonians. 2.7). The great mystery is the manifestation of the Word in ‘incarnation, Scripture and the Church.’<sup>560</sup> “Scripture is the vessel of mysteries”<sup>561</sup> for it contains the ‘hidden mysteries of God and his plan for salvation.’<sup>562</sup>

In mystery religion the word *mysterion* was also used to indicate the secret cults to which the initiated alone had access.<sup>563</sup> In Revelation the mystery refers to the “secret plan of God announced to his servants prophets to be fulfilled in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seven angels” (Revelation.10.7). The most prominent people in the *mysterion* interpretation were Justin, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian.<sup>564</sup> They used this word *mysterion* in order to describe the ‘secret Hellenistic cults.’ They used the term for biblical events in so far as they saw in them the divine plan of salvation realized. The Old Testament events and the institutions are seen as ‘anticipation of salvation’ which finally appeared in Christ Jesus and in this sense they are called *mysterion*. The term is also used to refer to ‘earthly life of Jesus’ especially his birth and crucifixion. Clement of Alexandria presents Christ as the ‘mystagogue’ who progressively and gradually introduces and initiates into the lesser and greater mysteries of eternal truth.<sup>565</sup> “They found that

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<sup>560</sup>William A. Van Roo, *The Christian sacrament*, Gregoriana Vol. 262, Rome, 1992, P.33.

<sup>561</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar (ed), *Origen: spirit and fire, : A thematic anthology of his writings*, Robert J. Daly (tran), Catholic university of America press, Washington D.C., 1984, P.89.

<sup>562</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar (ed), *Origen: spirit and fire: A thematic anthology of his writings*, Robert J. Daly (tran), P.189.

<sup>563</sup> Denis O’ Callaghan (ed), *Sacraments*, the furrow trust, Gill and Son, Dublin, 1964, P.24.

<sup>564</sup>Tertullian, *De Praescr. Haer.* 40 (Pl 2, 54f). Justin, *Apol.* 125. 27.54. 66; 11 12 (PG 6, 365, 370f. 407-411, 427f.

<sup>565</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata.* IV3, 1; IV 162, 3 (PG 8, 1215, 8, 1371).

Christ who is a living reality was beyond any ritual."<sup>566</sup> Mysterion is the realization and 'revelation of God's plan of salvation.'"This plan has been decided by God from all eternity and was now revealed in Jesus Christ. According to (Ephesians. 3) and (Colossians. 1) the Church is the form in which this divine plan of salvation is to be further realized and manifested. The aim of this mysterion is complete unity of all human beings with God and with another."<sup>567</sup>

### 2.1.3.1 Sacramentum

The word mysterion is translated by the Latin word 'Sacramentum.' Sacramentum comes from the Latin word 'sacrare' which means to make sacred, to make it of a divine right. This could be done only by a public person.<sup>568</sup> This can also indicate "the means with which something is consecrated, the consecratory action itself; the agent or the person who consecrates; and finally, the object made sacred."<sup>569</sup> Therefore the sacramentum can mean the means by which something is consecrated and made holy.<sup>570</sup> Sacrare in Roman pagan religion meant 'the legal transfer of a person or thing to the realm level of the sacrum, or holy, It is a removal of a person or a thing from the secular world in order to place him in a place where special rights and duties are given by gods. Sacramentum also designated the vow that is professed by recruit which is received by a lawful public authority and by which the new recruit was 'incorporated into the sacred army' and he is obliged to conduct himself in accordance with the rules and regulations.<sup>571</sup> This word sacramentum is 'transferred to theological and ecclesial vocabulary' by Tertullian, Cyprian and Augustine. According to their interpretations mysterion has the meaning of God's plan of salvation, incarnation, the Church, the faith and the creed. Tertullian was the first one to use the word sacramentum for both baptism and

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<sup>566</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology, William Thomas (tran), PP.15-17.

<sup>567</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P. 44.

<sup>568</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, The Sacraments of the new alliance, PP.10-11.

<sup>569</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, The Sacraments of the new alliance, PP.10-11.

<sup>570</sup> Thomas Aquinas, in IV Sent., d. Q., q.1, a. 1, qc. 1 resp.

<sup>571</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.44.

Eucharist. He speaks of baptism as a sacrament ‘analogous to the soldier’s oath.’ As the soldier ‘pledges obedience and faithfulness to his authority’ and is thereby consecrated, so in and through baptism a Christian promises allegiance, and faithful commitment to Christ and is thereby consecrated to Christ and to his God.<sup>572</sup> “Tertullian looks on Eucharist as a sacrament as a ‘perceptible sign’ of something, or someone other who sanctifies Christians.”<sup>573</sup> For the Romans the word sacramentum has two meanings: taking of an oath and giving of a monetary guarantee. In both these cases there was an idea of ‘self- obligation’ as an important component of morality.<sup>574</sup> “The Roman had to take an oath for military service and had to dedicate himself to the authority which had a divine character.”<sup>575</sup> According to Tertullian the sacramentum was ‘administered to the Roman recruits’ when they entered the army. This sacramentum was a religious ceremony initiation which marked the beginning of a ‘new way of life’ of commitment and service. So was baptism. It was an oath promised to the emperor, whereas baptism was a promise of fidelity and commitment to Christ.<sup>576</sup> When a Roman was involved in a legal fight, it was needed to appeal to God to determine the guilt or the degree of the guilt. Every persecutor or guilty had to bring some money as a sign of readiness to humble himself in front

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<sup>572</sup> De Spectaculis 24, PL 1, 655-656; De Baptismo 1, PL 1, 1197; De Idolatria 6, PL 1, 668; De Corona 11, PL 2, 91; De Jejuniis 10, PL 2, 966-68; De Praescriptionibus 40, PL 2, 54-55; Adv. Marcionem 1, 14, PL 2, 262, in: Tertullianus, de Idolatria, H. Waszink and J.C.M. Vanwinden, E.J. Brill Leiden, New York, 1987, see also, C. Dodgson, Library of Fathers, 10, Oxford, 1842. (translated)

<sup>573</sup> Adv. Marcionem 4, 34, PL 2, 442, De Pud. 10, PL 2, 1000; De Corona 3, PL 2, 79. See, E. Evans, Tertullian Adversus Marcionem, Oxford, 1972.

<sup>574</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology, William Thomas (tran), P.17.

<sup>575</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology, William Thomas (tran), P.17. See, Jose Saraiva Martins, The Sacraments of the new alliance, theological publication in India, Bangalore, 1988, PP.10-14. See, Denis O’Callaghan (ed), Sacraments, the furrow trust, Gill and Son, Dublin, 1964, PP.24-25. See also, Michael G. Lawler, Symbol and Sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology, Paulist press, New York, 1996, PP.30-31. Here Tertullian speaks of the baptism as something similar to the soldier’s oath. As the soldiers are through the oath consecrated to the chief so too the Christians are consecrated to Christ through baptism.

<sup>576</sup> Joseph Martos, Doors to the sacred, historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church triumph books, Liguori, Missouri, 1991, P.29. Sacramentum was an oath taken by the emperor and baptism was a sort of promise to Christ to remain faithful. In the West Tertullian contributed to the understanding of the word sacramentum by taking the word sacramentum from the language of the military and Latin, see, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, D.C, 1995, PP.12-13.

of the divine judgment. This money was often referred as sacramentum. Hence this pre-Christian use of the word clarifies the reason why Tertullian used this word in reference to baptism and especially to adult baptism. Here the candidate for baptism committed himself by an oath to 'invest all of his energy' for Christ and to the testimony of a life which is filled with love and zeal. Such a sincere and faithful commitment of a candidate was purely and basically based on the faith and trust in Christ. By the virtue of the baptism the candidates commit themselves to the truth of faith.<sup>577</sup> Tertullian speaks of the "sacramental interaction' by which the candidate for baptism says personal yes to the 'statement of faith, the faith through which the baptismal candidate places complete confidence in the revelation of his God and God offers a commitment to the faithful to adopt him as a son and transform him into the likeness of his only begotten son."<sup>578</sup> For Tertullian, sacramentum meant the 'sacred mystery'<sup>579</sup> of the economy of salvation which is prefigured in the Old Testament, and which is fulfilled in Christ.<sup>580</sup>

### 2.1.4 Scriptures

Mysterium and sacramentum are not used in the Scriptures to mean liturgical actions. In the Greek Septuagint the word mysterion appears 'twenty times.' The word means in general something that is mysterious, hidden, secret, ignored by others. Sometimes it means making something hidden.<sup>581</sup> Often it indicates something that is 'occult', secret and hidden in God and unknown to men because of

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<sup>577</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, *An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology*, William Thomas (tran), PP.17-18. The word sacramentum means a soldiers oath of allegiance to his emperor and the Roman Gods, see, Liam Kelly, *Sacraments revisited "what do they mean today,"* Paulist press, New York, 1998, P.1. See, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the Sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), The Catholic university of American press, Washington D.C 1995, P.10. Tertullian applied sacramentum to the promise of baptism in the sense of alliance. It also refers to the money deposited as a security in a temple at the time of entering into contract. See aslo, Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, Paulist press, New York, 1988, P.22.

<sup>578</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, *An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology*, William Thomas (tran), P.18. There is a commitment of a baptized person to Christ and to his teachings. It is a personal yes to Jesus.

<sup>579</sup> Emile de Backer, "Tertullian;" in : *Pour l'histoire du mot "sacramentum"*, J. de Ghellinck, Louvain,1924, PP.59-152.

<sup>580</sup> Emile de Backer, « Tertullian ; in: pour l'histoire du mot « sacramentum », J. de Ghellinck, PP.130-152.

<sup>581</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The Sacraments of the new alliance*, P.12.

his complete transcendence,(Wisdom. 2.22), but which can be revealed to men. Finally it signifies in a specific way the 'salvific plan of God '(Wisdom.2.22). His plan to save man when the fullness of time arrives (Daniel. 2.28, 44-45). The mystery of the future salvation of man is a mystery that only God knows and which only he can unveil and reveal in its full importance and meaning (Daniel. 2.20, 21-23). In the New Testament Greek word *mysterion* is used precisely 'thirty times', both by Synoptic and Paul.<sup>582</sup> The synoptics speak of the mystery (Mark.4.11), of the kingdom of God (Mathew.13.11; Luke 8.10) which is revealed only to disciples (Mathew 13.11; Luke . 8.10). "The revelation of the mystery implies a close relation of intimacy and relationship between he who reveals and those for whom the mystery is unveiled, so that there is created a new type of separation between the beneficiaries of revelation and all others."(Luke. 8.10; Mathew. 13.11).

#### **2.1.4.1 Paul on Sacrament**

Paul uses the term *mysterium- sacramentum* in his epistles (1 Corinthians 2.7-10;1.23). This word *mysterium* is not used in the epistle to mean sacramental rites. Paul never called Christian baptism *mysterium*. Matrimony for Paul is not a rite but a mystery.' It is a model of the union of Christ and the Church. This is a mystery which is hidden and its meaning was revealed to us.<sup>583</sup> According to Paul the mystery means "the hidden plan of God which has been revealed especially in Christ's saving work and which is called the mystery of the Kingdom of God."<sup>584</sup> In Paul's letter *mysterion* means something hidden or secret.<sup>585</sup> This hidden is opposed to revealed or manifested. The divine plan, the divine mystery, was once hidden and kept secret for long ages. Now it has been revealed and realized in the person of

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<sup>582</sup>Jose Saraiva Martins, *The Sacraments of new alliance*, P. 12.

<sup>583</sup>In the Greek original of the New Testament the word *mysterion* in Ephesians.5. 32 presents a reference to matrimony; however, not even here does it mean that which we call sacrament of matrimony, but rather the mystery of love between man and woman which is interpreted as the mystery of faith between Christ and Church. See, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *Piccola Dogmatica Cattolica*, vol. VI., "11 mistero dell Eucaristia", Citadella Editrice, Assisi, 1972, P.42.

<sup>584</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M.Riley (ed), P.10.

<sup>585</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, historical introduction to the sacraments in the Catholic Church*, PP.36-37.

Jesus Christ. This mystery is communicated and revealed by the Spirit to those who possess the Spirit. To the unspiritual people it remains a secret. The word *mysterion* indicates a relationship to human knowledge.<sup>586</sup> For Paul God's wisdom is mystery which is hidden from the worldly but revealed to those who are spiritual (1 Corinthians.2.7-13). The message that he preaches is a mystery which was hidden from previous generations (Colossians. 1.26-27). Basically that message is God's secret and hidden plan of salvation (Ephesians.1.9-10). It is the mystery of Christ which was hidden but now has been made known through the Spirit (Ephesians. 3. 3-6).

#### **2.1.4.2 The Church Fathers**

The word *sacramentum* was first used by Tertullian to designate also the religious rite celebrated by the Church. The word is encountered 134 times in his writings. He calls *sacramentum*; the economy of salvation in the incarnation, the life, death and resurrection of Christ. For Tertullian sacrament is like any other religious truth. He calls a sacrament the rite of baptism or rite of Christian initiation. This rite is compared by him to the military oath.<sup>587</sup> Origen differentiates mystery and mysteries. Mystery is the manifestation of the word in the incarnation in the Church and in the Scripture. Cyprian uses the word sacrament 'sixty four times in military sense.'<sup>588</sup> John Chrysostom uses the term *mysterion* mostly to indicate the 'mystery of worship, baptism and the Eucharist.'<sup>589</sup> The Church Fathers were of the opinion that there is the 'Trinitarian aspect' in the sacraments. They say that it is the Word of Christ that 'transforms and changes the elements' into a source of grace and salvation; at times they say that it is due to the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>590</sup> For

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<sup>586</sup> William A. Van Roo, *The Christian sacrament*, P.31.

<sup>587</sup> Tertullian, *ad Martyr.*,3, 1; PL 1 697; 24,4: PL 1 731; *De idolatr.*, 19,2: PL 1 7671; *De Corona*, 11, 1: PL 2 111; *Adv. Gnosticis Scorpiace*, 4, 5. PL 2 153. See, C.Dodgson,*Library of the Fathers* 10, Oxford, 1842.

<sup>588</sup> On the sacramental doctrine of Cyprian, *Nicontra*, G., *Dottrina di Cipriano sull' efficacia del sacramenti*, in *La Scuola Cattolica* 68, 1940 , PP.496-504.

<sup>589</sup> William A.Van Roo, *The Christian sacrament*, PP.13-18.

<sup>590</sup> *Detrahe verbum et quid est aqua nisi aqua, Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fin sacramentum*, in : *Ioan Evang.*, *Augustine*, tract. 80, 3 : PL 35 1840. The Fathers of the Church believed

Origen the word *mysterion* is “fundamental which means mystery, image, type, form or sign.”<sup>591</sup> The water of baptism is a sign of the ‘death to sin’ and ‘resurrection to a new life’ of the person in Christ. The bread of Eucharist is a sign of our thanksgiving and gratitude to God for everything. Jonah coming out from the whale’s belly is a sign of Christ’s resurrection.<sup>592</sup> For Clement of Alexandria *mysterion* is a “representation of sacred things through perceptible signs.”<sup>593</sup> The revelation achieved through symbols is always ‘in a mirror dimly’ and in part (1 Corinthians. 13. 12). Clement and Origen initiated the way to apply the mystery terminology to “Christian rituals and by the fourth and fifth centuries the use of mystery language was fully established.”<sup>594</sup>

#### 2.1.4.2.1 Augustine

A vast amount of research has been performed on sacramentum in the works and writings of Augustine.<sup>595</sup> “From the side of Christ sleeping on the cross flowed forth the sacraments by which the Church is formed.”<sup>596</sup> According to Augustine sacraments ‘symbolized the presence of the holy’ in the world. Hence he extended the concept of sacrament to many objects apart from the official sacraments of the Church. For Augustine even the ‘ascension is qualified as a sacrament.’<sup>597</sup> With Augustine’s theology there was a turning point in the sacramental understanding. For him “sacramentum is a species of the family of symbols belonging to the divine

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that the Holy Spirit works in the sacraments. The aspect of the Word of God was also important in the working of the sacraments. It is the word that changes the elements in the sacraments.

<sup>591</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, “le *mysterion* de’ Origène, *Recherches de sciences religieuses* 26, 1936, PP.513-562.

<sup>592</sup> Origen, *Comment. In Epistle, Ad Rom*, 4 PG 14, 968 and 1038, *Contra Celsum* 8, PG 14, 1603.

<sup>593</sup> A. Roberts and J. Donaldson (eds), *the Stromata, The Ante- Nicene Fathers*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956, P. 454.

<sup>594</sup> William A. Van Roo, *De sacramentis in Genere*, Gregorian university press, Rome, 1957, (reprint and slight revision), PP.13-17.

<sup>595</sup> Charles Couturier, *Sacramentum et Mysterium dans l’œuvre de saint Augustin* ; in : *Etudes Augustiniennes* , H.Rondet et al (ed), Paris, 1953, PP.163-332, *Sacramentum fidei*, in *Augustinus Magister*, (Congres international , Augustinien, Paris, 1954, vol. II, PP. 891- 896.

<sup>596</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XXII. 17, PL 41. 779 ; ST, III. Q. 64. A. 2 ad 3. in; *Augustine De Civitate Dei*, H. Bettenson (tran), Penguin Books, London, 1972.

<sup>597</sup> Errol D’Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, *Sacraments in general*, P. 52. For Augustine the word sacrament means many things. He extended the word to many things which are holy.

things and which has to do with the realm of the sacred.”<sup>598</sup> For him the word sacramentum refers to the events of the salvation history and the eternal and everlasting love of God.<sup>599</sup> He does not ‘make a clear distinction between sacramentum and mysterion.’<sup>600</sup> They are applied to ‘three classes of realities.’ Firstly they are applied to the ‘rites both in the Old Testament and the in the New Testament’, like Sabbath, sacrifice, feasts, ceremonies, circumcision, and temples. Secondly it is applied to symbols or figures like every person or gestures in which we can find the figure of Christ and the Church. Thirdly it is applied to the ‘mysteries of the Trinity and the incarnation.’<sup>601</sup> Augustin’s major contribution to sacramental theory is “sacrament is a sacred sign.”<sup>602</sup> “A visible sacrifice is the sacrament, that is, a sacred sign, of the invisible sacrifice.”<sup>603</sup> The authentic Augustinian formula is simply ‘sacrum signum’, sacred sign. The sign and what it signifies is related to each other. ‘They are related as ‘what is seen and what is believed, and understood.’

At the time of Augustine there were also ‘Donatists’ who were of the opinion that the people who were baptized by the clerics who were apostates, needed to be re-baptized. Augustine responded to that saying that there was no need of re-baptism as there was something permanence about baptism. There was something unique about the baptism which was not out of the hands of the minister. Augustine mentioned that there were two effects of baptism: one was permanent and the other was temporary which could be lost by sin. The permanent effect was the ‘seal of

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<sup>598</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, X, 5; PL 41, P. 282 : « Sacramentum id est sacrum signum. » And for the entire problem complex refer also C.P. Mayer, “philosophische Voraussetzungen und implikationen in Augustins Lehre von den Sacramenta ; in : Augustiana 22, 1972, PP.53- 79.

<sup>599</sup> Augustine, *De Doctr, Christ.* 1, 4, 8 and 35, 39; PL 34, 20f. For Augustine’s hermeneutic , see, C.P. Mayer, *Die Zeichen in der geistigen Entwicklung und der Theologie Augustins*, 11. Teil: *Die antimanichaische Epoche*, Würzburg, 1974, PP.294-301.

<sup>600</sup> Charles Couturier, *Sacramentum et Mysterium dans l’œuvre de saint Augustin* ; in : *Etudes Augustiniennes*, H.Rondet et al (ed), PP.164-165, 263-274.

<sup>601</sup> Charles Couturier, ‘sacramentum et mysterium dans l’œuvre de saint Augustine ; in : *Etudes Augustiniennes*, H.Rondet et al (ed), PP.50-64.

<sup>602</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 10,5, pl 41, 282; *Contra Faustum* 19, 11, PL 42, 355 ; In *Epist. Joannis ad parthos* 6, 3, 11, PL 35, 2026C.

<sup>603</sup> *Sacrificium ergo visibile invisibilis sacrifice sacramentum, id est sacrum signum est*, *De Civitate Dei*, Bk. X. 5 CSEL 40. 452. 18-19 ; PL 41, P.282.



baptism' and the one which could be lost was the God's grace. The sacramental character was conferred by the sacrament of baptism.<sup>604</sup> "Augustine called the sacrament a visible sign of invisible grace. He called sacramentum as a *sacrum signum*, a sign of a sacred thing."<sup>605</sup> He points out that in the sacrament the 'sign(*signum*) and content'(res) are to be distinguished.<sup>606</sup> The sign manifests something different from its own being. The sign produces the 'sacramental reality' which is the grace proper to every sacrament. The connection between the material element and the form is important. The form and the matter form the sacrament. Matter alone without the word is meaningless. One adds the word to the element and the sacrament is formed.<sup>607</sup> The most dignified sign is the Word of God through which the "invisible reality can be perceived."<sup>608</sup> Couturier regards sacramentum and mysterium as synonyms in general.<sup>609</sup> Paul's 'incarnational theology' of Christ as the eternal Word 'manifested in the flesh' (1 Tim. 3:16), provides the "foundation for Augustine's understanding of the mystery made present in history through visible signs."<sup>610</sup>

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<sup>604</sup> Liam Kelly, *Sacraments revisited*, "What do they mean today", Paulist press, New York, 1998, PP.6-8. The Donatists were members of the schismatic Church, not in communion with the Churches of the Catholic tradition. They were rigorists, holding that the Church must be a Church of saints, not sinners, and that sacraments administered by apostates, were invalid.

<sup>605</sup> Augustine, *Letters*, 138, 1.; In: *the Fathers of the Church vol IV*, the Catholic university of America press, Washington, 1955. For Augustine many things were sacraments, because they were signs of sacred things. The world itself could be a sacrament. The sacraments are signs of the divine realities. See, Jose Saraiva Martins, *The Sacraments of the new alliance*, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 1988, P.18. See, Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, Paulist press, New York, 1988, P.7.

<sup>606</sup> Si enim sacramenta quondam similitudinem earum rerum quarum sacramenta sunt non haberent, sacramenta non essent, Augustine Ep. 98.9 : PL 33 363.

<sup>607</sup> *Detrahe verbum et quid est aqua? Accedit verbum ad elementum, et fin sacramentum*, Augustine, In *Loan Evang.*, tract, 80, 3: PL 35 1840. In the contravercy with the Donatists Augustine brings to light the bond between baptism, Eucharist and the Church, as likewise the effecacy of the sacrament is independently of the moral quality of the minister; nor does Augustine ignore the intimate connection existing between the various Christian sacraments.

<sup>608</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.49. God reveals himself in the Word of God. God reveals himself in the Scripture and in the breaking of the Word of God.

<sup>609</sup> Charles Couturier, "Sacramentum et mysterium dans l'oeuvre de saint Augustin ;" in : *Études Augustiniennes* 28, H. Rondet et al(ed), P.268.

<sup>610</sup> Michael Cameron, "The Christological substructure of Augustines figurative exegesis"; in: *Augustine and the Bible*, P.Bright (ed), University of Notre Dame press, Notre Dame, 1986, PP.82-93.

#### 2.1.4.2.2 Hugo of St. Vittore

He tried to express his own thought on sacraments. He critically evaluated the definition of Augustine and said that his definition was 'imperfect.'<sup>611</sup> Having rejected the definition of Augustine he looked for another definition which has all the aspects and elements.<sup>612</sup> He defined sacrament as "a corporeal or material element presented sensibly on the exterior, which represents by similitude, signifies by institution, and contains by sanctification some spiritual and invisible grace."<sup>613</sup> But this definition of Vittore lacks clarity. According to his definition the sacraments consist only in the material and corporeal elements. Therefore this definition cannot be applied to the sacrament of penance because it has no material element.<sup>614</sup> In fact Hugo calls holy water, the sign of the cross, death and final judgment, sacraments.<sup>615</sup>

#### 2.1.4.2.3 Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas defines sacrament as "a sign of a sacred reality to the extent that it sanctifies human beings."<sup>616</sup> The sacraments are seen as 'extensions' and continuation of Christ's humanity which 'mediates and confers grace to humankind.'<sup>617</sup> Thomas Aquinas gave great importance to the 'humanity of Jesus' and its essential role in the work of redemption. He viewed the sacraments as the sign of the 'incarnate word' and "he was able to bring out a connection between the sacraments and the paschal mystery which is the source of sacraments efficacy."<sup>618</sup> 'The humanity of Jesus was considered as the 'instrumental cause' and his 'divinity the principal cause.'<sup>619</sup> "In the sacramental action God is the principal cause and the

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<sup>611</sup>Hugo of St. Vittore, *De sacramentis christianae fidei tract*, 9, 2: PL 176 317-318, Davidson A.F, Victor Hugo: His Life and Work, university press of the Pacific: paperback edition, 2003, see also Kilgenstein, *Die Gotteslehre des Hugo von St. Victor*, Würzburg, 1897.

<sup>612</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, P.94.

<sup>613</sup> Hugo of St. Vittore, *De sacramentis Christianae fidei*, tract, 9, 2: PL 176 317- 318.

<sup>614</sup>Jose Saraiva Martins, *The Sacraments of the new alliance*, PP. 94-96. The thoughts of Vittore were found to be lacking clarity.

<sup>615</sup> Bernard Leemings, *Principles de theologie sacramentaire* Mame, Paris ,1959, P.771.

<sup>616</sup> ST, iii, q. 60, a. 2.

<sup>617</sup>Errol D' Lima, and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, *Sacraments in general*, P.72.

<sup>618</sup>Errol D' Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, *Sacraments in general*, P.72. There is a connection between the sufferings , death and the resurrection of the Lord and the sacraments efficacy. The power of the sacrament comes from the passion.

<sup>619</sup> Errol D'Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, *Sacraments in general*, P. 72.

human reality like minister, matter, form would be the instrumental influenced by the principal cause.”<sup>620</sup> St. Thomas presents three reasons for the necessity of the sacraments. Firstly man by his nature is composed up of body and spirit. Secondly man has a natural tendency and affinity for material things which have to be satisfied and fulfilled by the spiritual things. Finally man’s activities are oriented towards external realities.<sup>621</sup> For Thomas the sacramental grace has two fold ends: “To remove the gap in the soul created by the past sins and the sacraments are ordained to render the soul perfect in those things which belong to the worship of God according to the rite of the Christian life.”<sup>622</sup> For Thomas the sacraments are atonement for sins and are means for offering worship to God.<sup>623</sup> “Sacrament is a representation of the passion of the Lord.’ It is a ‘res sacra’- a sacred thing given to man so as to enable him to approach God.”<sup>624</sup> The sacramental grace enables man to get divine help and virtues. Sacramental grace is the “flowing of the grace from the pierced side of the Lord. The suffering or the passion of Christ is communicated to the one who is baptized.”<sup>625</sup> For Thomas sacraments are the instrumental causes, anda means of attaining grace through the efficacy of God as the ‘principal cause. Hence, the seven sacramental acts are treated as ‘God’s almighty interventions’ intohuman sphere. God makes use of the rituals as an instrument and means for the communication of his grace.<sup>626</sup>

God does not limit his grace always and everywhere only to the sacraments. According to Thomas God is able to confer salvation apart from sacraments. But the usual and ‘regular’ way of ‘effecting and bringing about’ the salvation is seven sacraments instituted by Christ. The sacramental material is the ‘visible element’ like water in baptism or bread and wine in the Eucharist.<sup>627</sup> The ‘sacramental form’

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<sup>620</sup> Errol D’ Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, P.73.

<sup>621</sup> ST, iii, q 61 , Art. 1.

<sup>622</sup> ST, iii, q 62, Art. 5.

<sup>623</sup> ST, iii, q, 62, Art. 5.

<sup>624</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, The Key to the doctrine of the Eucharist, P.49.

<sup>625</sup> ST, iii, q , 69, Art. 2.

<sup>626</sup> ST, iii, 72, 6 ad 1.

<sup>627</sup> ST, iii 72, 6 ad 1.

comprises of words which are spoken by the one administering the sacraments, explaining the element of action, like priest's words of consecration.<sup>628</sup> The sacraments 'infallibly' bring about grace when they are administered according to the 'will and intentions of the Church' and the proper material is combined with right sacramental form. The grace is effected 'ex opere operato,' by the very fact of the accomplishment of the action itself apart from the 'moral or religious disposition' of the one administering or receiving the sacrament.<sup>629</sup> "For the effectiveness of the sacrament it is sufficient that one administering the sacrament has the intention of doing what the Church wishes to do. The sacrament is not accomplished through the righteousness of the one who gives or receives it; but rather through the power of God"<sup>630</sup> Baptism does not bring about merits and graces because of the goodness of the person being baptized, but because of the 'merits of Christ.' It is efficacious because of the 'passion of Christ.'<sup>631</sup>

Sacraments are also signs of the 'presence of Christ.'<sup>632</sup> These signs 'are being communicated' by God and so he thought that the "effectiveness of the sacraments did not depend on the holiness of the minister but on the rite itself. He said that both the minister and the recipients should have the intention of the Church."<sup>633</sup> Thomas taught that the sacraments are 'cause and sign' simultaneously.<sup>634</sup> "The sign alone or efficacy alone does not constitute a sacrament. For a sacrament to exist there must be an efficacious sign."<sup>635</sup> Thomas also considered the sacraments in connection to the mystery of 'incarnation', 'redemption' and in relation to the general doctrine on Christian worship.<sup>636</sup> He is of the opinion that the sacraments of the Church have been instituted for two ends: "medicinal and worshipping. The sacraments of the

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<sup>628</sup> ST, iii 60, 8, 2.

<sup>629</sup> Thomas Aquinas, Sent. Dist. 1, q 1, a 5; cf ST, iii, 62, 4.

<sup>630</sup> ST, iii 68, 8.

<sup>631</sup> Thomas Aquinas, IV Sent; d. 15, q.1, a. 3, sol.3 ad 2; and d. 6, q. 1, a.3, sol.2.

<sup>632</sup> Liam Kelly, Sacraments revisited "What do they mean today", P.12.

<sup>633</sup> Liam Kelly, Sacraments revisited, "What do they mean today", PP.12-13.

<sup>634</sup> ST, iii, q.62 a.1, ad 1.

<sup>635</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, The Sacraments of the new alliance, P.98.

<sup>636</sup> ST, ii-ii ii. 81-91.

new Law are for healing of sin and divine worship.”<sup>637</sup> They heal the wounds of sin and in the sacraments God is openly worshipped and the sanctification of men is made possible. Thomas personally believed that to receive sacrament is a moment to place oneself in proximate contact with grace and also to perform an exterior act of reverence. According to him the sacred, ‘sanctifying thing’ signified by sacraments is the passion of Christ. Hence the sacraments of the New Law derive their ‘efficacy from the passion of Christ.’ It is the passion of the Lord that causes the grace in the sacraments.<sup>638</sup> Thomas taught that sacraments are ordained to signify our sanctification in which we must consider three things: namely, “the cause of our sanctification which is the passion of Christ; and the form of our sanctification which consists in grace and virtues; and the ultimate end of our sanctification which is eternal life.”<sup>639</sup> Thomas Aquinas sums up the various aspects of sacramental signs. Therefore a sacrament is a sign that commemorates Christ’s passion, reveals what is being accomplished in us through Christ’s passion which is grace and ‘prefigures what the ‘passion pledges’ to us—future glory.’<sup>640</sup>

#### **2.1.4.2.4 Peter Lombardus**

Peter Lombard defines sacrament as “it is a sign of the grace of God and the form of invisible grace in such a way that it is its image and its cause.”<sup>641</sup> According to Peter Lombard there were seven sacraments and he taught that the minister should have the ‘right intention’, the intention of the Church while celebrating the

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<sup>637</sup> ST, iii, q. 63 a. 6 c.

<sup>638</sup> Paul O’Dea, *The Mass and the passion*, Clonmore and Reynolds, Burns and Oates, London, 1965, PP.101-103. See also, Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, theological publication in India, Bangalore, 1988, P.143, the sacraments of the Church possess a special virtue from the passion of Christ.

<sup>639</sup> ST, iii, q. 60, a. 3. The passion of Christ causes sanctification of men. We are connected with the passion of Christ through the sacraments of the New Law. What is effected in us by the passion of the Lord is the grace. See also, Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, Paulist press, New York, 1987, PP.34-35. Here St. Thomas speaks of three different causes of sanctifications: the passion of Christ, grace, and eternal life. He says ultimately there is only one sanctification which is God himself. See also, William A. Van Roo, *The Christian sacrament*, Editrice pontificia universita Gregoriana, Roma, 1992, P.56. According to Thomas sacraments signify cause of sanctification.

<sup>640</sup> ST, iii, q.60,a.3.

<sup>641</sup> D. Van den Eynde, *Les definitions des sacraments pendant la premiere periode de la theologie schlastique (1050- 1240)*, Rome : Antonianum, 1950, PP.40-46, 49-52 ; 103-110.

sacraments. He is the one of the first to insist on the number seven in order to 'distinguish them from the sacramentals.'<sup>642</sup> According to him something is properly called a sacrament because "it is a sign of God's grace and is an image of invisible grace that it bears its likeness and exists as its cause."<sup>643</sup>

### **2.1.5 Reformation and Sacraments**

All the seven sacraments are not accepted by the Reformers as revealed in the Scriptures. The Reformers think that an ordained minister by celebrating the sacraments could decide whether the recipient should receive the grace. According to them this was against the 'gratuitous nature of grace.' The Catholic Church taught that the sacraments were necessary for the salvation. For the Reformers it was 'faith alone' (Sola fides) that saves. The Reformers were of the opinion that the faith is flourished and strengthened through the word of God and that faith has the efficacy and power by itself without being joined to the sacramental action. Martin Luther accepted the 'sacramental character' only in baptism and in the Eucharist. Luther believed in the 'real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.'<sup>644</sup> For John Calvin grace is not produced through sacramental action since the 'visible action is a mere sign of the inner reality.'<sup>645</sup>

Because of the some abuses in the celebration of the sacraments in the Catholic Church which made the reformists adopt different views on sacraments. Some held that sacraments possessed no effect and that they had only 'social and human effects.' The Reformers argued that there were no adequate evidences in the Scriptures about the institution of the sacraments. They approached them as mere

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<sup>642</sup> Errol D'Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, PP.71-72. See, Jose Saraiva Martins, The sacraments of the new alliance, theological publication in India, Bangalore, 1988, P.97. The definition of Peter Lombard was found satisfactory by all the theologians.

<sup>643</sup> Peter Lombard, Sentences, 1V, 1, 2.

<sup>644</sup> Errol D'Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, PP.74-75. The Reformers held that there was no need of sacramental action but only faith by which one can be saved. See, Jose Saraiva Martins, The Sacraments of the new alliance, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 1988, P. 24.

<sup>645</sup> Errol D'Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, P. 76.

'religious ceremonies and celebrations.'<sup>646</sup> They limited the sacraments to mere 'symbols' which have only psychological effects and not concrete effects. They believed that the sacraments do not communicate any actual graces. According to them the effect of the sacraments 'depends on the subjective faith.' They say that one can come to the experience of salvation through faith and that there is no importance for sacraments. Their teaching was completely contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church which taught the 'objectivity of the sacraments.'<sup>647</sup>

According to the reflection and study of Jose Saraiva Martins the Protestants believed that the sacramental character was merely a human discovery of some monks without having any foundation in 'Christian revelation.'<sup>648</sup> The sacraments of the Reformation are entirely governed by the Word of God. Through the announcement of the Word of God the 'living presence of Jesus' is made present and activated in the community and in individual believers. "The sacrament as visible word is part of the word proclaimed. The word and sacrament are identical but they differed only in the manner in which they produce effects."<sup>649</sup> The Reformation of the 16th century has said that the sacraments are only an appendix.<sup>650</sup>

### **2.1.5.1 Luther<sup>651</sup>**

Luther was against the 'efficacy of the sacraments ex opere operato' because he believed that this was brought about through the 'mediation and intervention of the ministers.' He was of the opinion that it is "by faith that one is justified and not

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<sup>646</sup> Liam Kelly, Sacraments revisited "What do they mean today", PP.15-16. The Reformers accepted only two sacraments : baptism and Eucharist. The other sacraments according to them,are only a religious ceremony.

<sup>647</sup> G.C. Berkouwer, Studies in Dogmatics, the sacraments, Hugo Bekker (tran), W.B Eerdmans publishing, 2000, PP.56-66. The Reformers gave importance to faith and according to them sacraments were not necessary.

<sup>648</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, The sacraments of the new alliance, PP.291-292.

<sup>649</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda M. Maloney (tran), P.57.

<sup>650</sup> G.C.Berkouwer, Studies in Dogmatics, sacraments, Hugo Bekker (tran), PP.13-16.

<sup>651</sup> On Luther I have used the secondary literature. David N. Power, Sacraments, the language of God's giving, a Herder and Herder Book, the crossroad publishing company, New York, 1998, PP.222-223; Bernard Leeming, Principles of sacramental theology, the Newman press, Westminster M.D, 1956, PP.14-15; Alexander Ganoczy, An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology,William Thomas (tran), Paulist press, New York, 1979, PP. 28-29; Liam Kelly , Sacraments revisited, "what do they mean today," Paulist press, New York, 1998, PP.16ff; Herbert Vorgrimler,Sacramental theology, Linda A . Maloney (tran), liturgical press, Colledgeville,Minnesota, 1987, P.55.

through priestly ordination.”<sup>652</sup> The sacraments are a sign that God will keep his promise. He believes that if a man has a strong faith he will be saved without the sacraments. If his faith is weak the sacraments can strengthen it.<sup>653</sup> For Luther “it is not the sacrament, but faith of the sacrament that justifies. Whoever does not have faith, places in vain his trust in sacraments; he receives no grace. Only one who receives the Word of God directly in living personal faith, and obeys it, can be sure of being pardoned- with or without intervening sacraments.”<sup>654</sup> The word that is spoken in the sacrament of God’s saving action in Jesus Christ ‘touches and transforms’ the human beings. If the believer has the faith that the Word of Christ as the foundation, then he is able to experience the effect of salvation. With regard to the number of sacraments he believed only in baptism and Eucharist.<sup>655</sup> The Reformers claim to have a ‘personal intimate relationship with God’ without having access to the sacraments. As regards the sacrament of baptism he believed that “salvation came through faith and not through works and this faith could be received by children and adults.”<sup>656</sup>

### 2.1.5.2 John Calvin

Calvin rejected the view of the Catholics. He focuses more on the working of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments.<sup>657</sup> For him sacrament is a “testimony of the divine favor towards us confirmed by an external sign with a corresponding attestation of our faith towards him.”<sup>658</sup> According to him the Lord set up the sacraments in order to increase the faith. He believes that the sacraments function

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<sup>652</sup> David N. Power, *Sacraments, the language of God’s giving*, A Herder and Herder Book, the Crossroad publishing Company, New York, 1998, PP.222-223. Luther stressed the importance of faith.

<sup>653</sup> Bernard Leeming, *Principles of sacramental theology*, the Newman press, Westminster M.D, 1956, PP.14-15.

<sup>654</sup> Alexander Ganoczy, *An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology*, William Thomas (tran), PP.28-29. See also, Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, Doubleday and company, INC, Garden City, New York, 1943.

<sup>655</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P. 55.

<sup>656</sup> Liam Kelly, *Sacraments revisited, “What do they mean today”*, P.16.

<sup>657</sup> Bernard Leeming, *Principles of sacramental theology*, P.16.

<sup>658</sup> Bernard Leeming, *Principles of sacramental theology*, P. 16. The sacraments are only a witness of the divine favor which is expressed in an external sign. This is the idea of Calvin. Calvin speaks of the role of the Spirit as mediator between heavenly Christ and earthly elements. According to him, without the work of the Holy Spirit, the presence of Christ is not possible. See, Alexander Ganoczy, *An introduction to Catholic Sacramental theology*, William Thomas (tran), New York, 1979, P.30.



only when they are 'accompanied by the Spirit.' Without the Spirit being active, the sacraments are not able to produce normal effect, but only some psychological effect.<sup>659</sup> It is extremely important to understand the concept of God and the idea of human beings according to John Calvin if we want to understand his sacramental theology. God cannot be 'limited and bound' by the instrument of grace which he himself set in motion.<sup>660</sup> According to Calvin man is incapable of placing himself in a conducive situation and condition without orienting himself fully to God in whom he lives and moves and have his being. Our miserable condition of life pushes us forcefully to lift our eyes towards God. It is in this miserable condition of humankind along with God's abundant mercy and goodness that Calvin is able to understand the role and significance of sacraments. Therefore Calvin defines sacrament as "external sign by which the Lord seals on our consciences his promises of good-will towards us in order to sustain the weakness of our faith, and we in our turn testify our piety towards him, both before himself, and before angels as well as men."<sup>661</sup> Hence, a sacrament can be understood as an external sign of the grace of God, which represents to us spiritual things. Calvin has the similar idea of Augustine who spoke sacrament as the visible sign of the invisible grace of God.<sup>662</sup> In this connection one can ask: why is sacrament necessary at all to communicate God's grace to the humanity when the Scripture is available to us. Calvin provides an answer saying it is due to our feeble faith. As a result we are in need of some visible and concrete support in order to come to the experience of the mercy and grace of God.<sup>663</sup> Hence the 'littleness and weakness' of our faith is the central point of Calvin's sacramental theology.' According to his sacramental theology there are two

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<sup>659</sup> Bernard Leeming, *Principles of sacramental theology*, PP.17-18. See, Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A.Maloney (tran), liturgical press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1987, P.56, The sacraments become the instruments of grace through the action of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>660</sup> Karl Holl and Johannes Calvin; in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kirchengeschichte*, Bd 111, *Der Westen*, Sonderausg; unveränd, reprograf, Nachdruck der Ausg, Tübingen, 1928, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliches Buchgesellschaft, 1965, PP.254-284.

<sup>661</sup>John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), Grand Rapids-Michigan, William B.Eerdmans publishing company, 1998, vol 4, PP.491-492.

<sup>662</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge, (tran), vol 4, P.492.

<sup>663</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 3, PP.145-147.

kinds of movements. The first movement is on the part of the human beings and the other on the part of God. The human beings walk or journey towards God because they cannot live without his divine help and mercy. God moves towards human beings in order to help them in their need and helplessness because he is compassionate and merciful. Man needs the helping hands of God. For Calvin the sacraments are made a 'medium' by which the grace of God is imparted. One has to have adequate faith to experience the fruit of the sacraments. The sacraments have their 'importance and relevance' only in the light of the sinfulness of man. Before the Lord it is necessary that one confesses his weakness and faults and requests him for the grace and forgiveness in order to receive the merits of the sacraments.<sup>664</sup> Therefore the 'faith of the recipient' of the sacrament is of utmost importance to experience the effect of the sacrament in his life.<sup>665</sup> Calvin is convinced that the 'efficacy of the sacrament' is granted as a gift to those who have real faith. He is of the opinion that our faith grows gradually here on earth and it reaches its 'perfection only in heaven.'<sup>666</sup> "The most important point in the sacramental teaching of Calvin is that man is wretched and sinful. But God wants him or her to approach him in faith. The worshipper has to place his trust not in the sacraments but on God. Hence faith is like a vessel which receives something other than itself."<sup>667</sup> Christ is ascended into heaven and he lives above the earth, that is, in heaven. The people must rise above the earth in thought in order to be united with him in heaven.<sup>668</sup> "For Calvin the sacraments are 'seals of promises.'<sup>669</sup>

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<sup>664</sup> Wim L. Boelens, *Die Arnoldshainer Abendmahlsthesen, Die Suche nach einem Abendmahlkonsens in der evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland, 1947-1957 und eine Würdigung aus katholischer Sicht*, Assen, Van Gorcum and comp, N.V- Dr. H. Prakke and H.M.G. Prakke, 1969, PP.260-265, 289.

<sup>665</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge, (tran), vol 4, P.499.

<sup>666</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, PP.495-496.

<sup>667</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 3, P.43.

<sup>668</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, P. 558.

<sup>669</sup> John Calvin *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, P. 568.

### 2.1.5.3 Zwingli

Zwingli taught that it is not possible for the sacraments to cleanse our hearts which is possible only to God. He believed that the recipient who has faith does not need the sacraments and if he does not possess faith he cannot obtain it from the sacraments.<sup>670</sup> Zwingli rejected the word 'sacramentum' as unbiblical, and represented a clearly symbolic teaching concerning baptism and the Lord's Supper. The ritual acts, function only as symbol. These rituals have nothing to do with the strengthening and awakening of faith."<sup>671</sup>

### 2.1.6 The Trent

The Council of Trent was a powerful response to Protestantism. The decrees issued by the council of Trent vehemently reaffirmed the teachings of the Catholic church and condemned any views that were contrary to the catholic teachings. The Council defined sacrament "as a symbol of a sacred thing and visible form of invisible grace."<sup>672</sup> For the first time in the history of the Church it was defined as dogma that there are seven sacraments: "if anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord; or that there are more or fewer than seven or that anyone of these is not truly and properly a sacrament, anathema sit."<sup>673</sup> The bishops of the council reiterated that the sacraments were necessary for the experience of salvation and that they conferred grace: "if anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary for salvation but that they are superfluous; and that without the sacraments or the desire of them men obtain from God the grace of justification through faith alone, although it is true that not all the sacraments are necessary for each person, anathema sit."<sup>674</sup> The members at the Council of Trent taught that sacraments are needed for salvation and that some of them conferred 'indelible character' on the human soul that these could be

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<sup>670</sup> Bernard Leeming, Principles of sacramental theology, P.16.

<sup>671</sup> Alexandre Ganoczy, An introduction to Catholic sacramental theology, William Thomas (tran), PP.29-30.

<sup>672</sup>DS, 1639.

<sup>673</sup>DS, 1601.

<sup>674</sup> DS, 1604.

administered only once to an individual. The sacraments contained the grace of God which is communicated to the individual through the administration of the sacraments even though the individual have some obstacles in the way of receiving the grace. The grace of the sacraments is given by the mere performance of the rite itself. The grace does not depend on the faith of the individual or on the worthiness of the minister who administers the sacraments. However the minister has to possess the intentions of the church for the sacraments to be effective.<sup>675</sup>

### **2.1.6.1 The Vatican Council II**

Jesus makes God present and available to us in the sacraments and in this way he is a sacrament of God. Through Jesus we 'encounter the mystery of the living God.' Christ is the visible and living presence of God in the world. The humanity of Jesus is a 'visible reality' which points to the divine reality itself.<sup>676</sup> Liam Kelly says that "the traditional seven sacraments can be traced to the Church which is the sacrament of Christ and to Christ himself, the sacrament of God. The sacraments are signs of both the Church and Christ, pointing to the action of Christ in the world, and communicating God's grace to that world."<sup>677</sup> It is taught that the 'concept of community' is emphasized in sacramental theology. The sacraments are celebrated in public rituals and they have certain community significance. The sacraments are not just concerned about the individual's belief but what the community believes is celebrated. The Council also saw that when the sacraments are administered according to the Canon Law they become valid.<sup>678</sup> Every sacramental celebration is the celebration of the entire Church at large and it is never considered a private celebration even if it is celebrated by one person. This is expressed by the Council in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: "Liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the sacrament of

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<sup>675</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, PP.118-119. The intention of the Church is an essential aspect while administering the sacraments. The working of the sacraments is not mechanical or magical.

<sup>676</sup> Liam Kelly, *Sacraments revisited*, "what do they mean today", P.22.

<sup>677</sup> Liam Kelly, *Sacraments revisited* "What do they mean today", P.22.

<sup>678</sup> Liam Kelly, *Sacraments revisited* "What do they mean today", PP.23- 24.

unity..... Therefore liturgical services pertain to the whole body of the Church. They manifest it and have effects upon it. But they also touch individual members of the Church in different ways, depending on their orders, their role in the liturgical services, and their actual participation in them.”<sup>679</sup>

The Church is the sacrament in Christ who is a sacrament himself. “The worshipping and sanctifying function of the sacraments is evidenced by the Second Vatican Council when it says that sacraments are ordered to man’s sanctification and to give worship to God.”<sup>680</sup> There is an intimate relationship between sanctification of man and worship of God. A man is able to sanctify himself by worshipping and praising God. The sacraments sanctify the believers in their worship.<sup>681</sup> According to Vatican Council the sacramental life of the Church is the fruit of the working of the Spirit who brings the believers together to unite them to Christ in the church.<sup>682</sup>“The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify people, to build up the body of Christ and finally, to worship God. Because they are signs they also belong in the realm of instruction. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and express it. That is why they are called sacraments of faith. They do, indeed, confer grace, but in addition, the very act of celebrating them is most effective in making people ready to receive this grace to their profit, to worship God duly, and to practice charity. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that the faithful should easily understand the symbolism of the sacraments and should eagerly frequent those sacraments which were instituted to nourish the Christian life.”<sup>683</sup>

#### **2.1.6.1.1 Christ as Sacrament**

Jesus said “he who sees me, sees the Father”(John. 14.7-14). By this he meant that his humanity which is the visible presence in the world and is the sign and

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<sup>679</sup>Sacrosanctum Concilium, 26.

<sup>680</sup> Sacrosanctum Concilium, 59.

<sup>681</sup>Jose Saraiva Martins, The Sacraments of the new alliance, P.153.

<sup>682</sup>Lumen Gentium, 7.

<sup>683</sup> Sacrosanctum Concilium, 59.

instrument of God's presence in the world.<sup>684</sup>The encountering of the earthly Christ is a sign that one is able to encounter the living God by encountering Christ himself. The love of Jesus is the visible manifestation and expression of the 'redeeming and compassionate love of the living God. God's love is given a concrete human expression in Jesus Christ. The human deeds of Jesus are the 'divine deeds, and divine acts' themselves in human shape. The human acts of Jesus bring about divine power. Hence we can say the activity of Jesus is sacramental. So the sacrament is that God bestows the divine salvation to a man in an externally perceptible form. Jesus himself is the personal 'realization of the redemption.' Hence we can say that Jesus is the sacrament. All that Jesus performs and his activities are the concrete manifestation and revelation of God's own activity for our redemption.<sup>685</sup> Many theologians affirm that Jesus Christ is a 'great sign of the faithful response to God and visible revelation of God.' William A. Van Roo is of the opinion that Christ who is a sign, reveals the Kingdom of God through his works, words and through his presence in the world.<sup>686</sup> Christ is always present in the liturgical celebrations, through the ministers' and in the Eucharistic appearances.<sup>687</sup> "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth" (John. 1.14). The Word became flesh and assumed the human condition except sin. In the Word made flesh and in the humanity of Jesus the eternal loving care and concrete sign of God's presence is demonstrated. Hence God's words of promise of salvation is materialized in Jesus.<sup>688</sup> "The incarnation is also a disclosure, a sign of the faithful human response to that God. Not only does the incarnation manifest God's enduring, merciful care. The concrete, earthly, fleshly existence of God's Word reveals a man who worships God as creature. Jesus Christ is the perfect human

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<sup>684</sup>Errol D 'Lima, and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, P. 95.

<sup>685</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, PP.14-18. Jesus Christ is the sacrament of the presence of God, see, Patric Smith, Teaching Sacraments, the Liturgical press, RSM, Collegeville, Minnesota, P.88, see also, Jose Saraiva Martins, the sacraments of the new alliance, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 1988. Christ is the sacrament of God.

<sup>686</sup> William A. Van Roo, The Christian sacrament, PP.162-163.

<sup>687</sup> Sacrosanctum Concilium, 7.

<sup>688</sup>Patricia Smith, Teaching Sacraments, the liturgical press, RSM, Collegeville, Minnesota, PP.93-94.

response to the ever-caring, ever-present God. The structure of the incarnation is the two fold direction of God to humankind and of humankind to God. In Jesus Christ we see the mystery both of God's offer of salvation and of the human response to that offer. In the sacraments God offers a mode of presence and the people respond in grateful worship."<sup>689</sup>

The Lord who is present in the sacraments produces the grace. Jesus is the 'source', 'minister' and 'content' of the sacraments. In all the sacraments it is Christ himself that we are receiving in our life. In the sacrament of reconciliation Christ himself is the minister who takes upon himself the sins of the penitent. Christ is both the 'victim and the priest' in the sacraments who offers himself along with people to the Father. He presents himself in the sacraments as the 'healer of soul and body.' It is Jesus whom we receive in the Eucharist. It is the 'grace' of the Lord that we receive and not just the Eucharist.<sup>690</sup> "It appears that Carl Feckes was the first person in the twentieth century called Jesus Christ as the 'primordial sacrament or the ursacrament' on whom rest the sacramental world of the Church and the individual sacraments."<sup>691</sup> Christ is the 'foundation or primordial sacrament'. His incarnation, his presence on earth is a sacrament which is a manifestation of God's loving acceptance of man. In his visible humanity Christ is willed by God as the only access to salvation: "For there is only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2.5). Only by having contact with the 'humanity of Christ' that one can come to the intimate union with God. "I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me" (John. 14.6). Man is able to have union with God by having access to Christ. The death of Christ is also a sacrament of the union of all men in God.<sup>692</sup> Christ's coming back from the Father after having

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<sup>689</sup>Patricia Smith, Teaching sacraments, P.95.

<sup>690</sup>John Marquarrie, A guide to the sacraments, S.C.M press (ltd), London, 1997, PP.38-43. In the Eucharist we are receiving not just the Eucharist but we are receiving Christ, receiving his grace. When one hears of the baptism, he hears of Jesus as the one baptizes.

<sup>691</sup> Wolfgang Beinert, "Die Sakramentalität der Kirche im theologischen Gespräch", Theologische Berichte 9, Zürich, 1980, PP.13-66. All other sacraments originate from Jesus who is the source of all the sacraments.

<sup>692</sup>Denis O'Callaghan(ed), Sacraments, PP.76-78. Jesus is the

prepared the room is a sacrament of God. Franciscan theologian Kenan Osborne has made it clear that all the sacraments receive their meaning only in and through the sacramentality of Jesus because Jesus is the foundational sacrament. So Church herself is basically sacramental because Christ himself is sacrament.<sup>693</sup> "St Thomas understood Jesus as the fundamental sacrament insofar as his human nature, as the instrument of divinity, effects salvation."<sup>694</sup> Martin Luther was referring to Augustine when he said Sacred Scripture knows only one single sacrament and that is Christ himself.<sup>695</sup>

Edward Schillebeeckx described that "Jesus Christ is the 'sacrament of the encounter with God.'<sup>696</sup> One who has encountered Jesus in his life has encountered God. In Karl Rahner's theology Jesus Christ is understood as "the real presence in history of the victorious eschatological mercy of God in the world, or as the sacramental primordial word of God in the history of the one humanity."<sup>697</sup> The Anglican theologian, O.C. Quick has written half century before Schillebeeckx that the life of Jesus Christ is seen as the 'perfect sacrament.'<sup>698</sup> Jesus was a sacramental sign to many people who came in contact with him in Palestine. When they met him and associated themselves with him they experienced within themselves a divine presence which was beyond the human power. They encountered in Jesus the mystery of God himself.<sup>699</sup>

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sacrament. He is the visible form of the invisible grace, see, Joseph M.Powers, *The Eucharistic theology*, Burn and Oates, Herder and Herder, 1968, London, P.88.

<sup>693</sup> Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, P.76.

<sup>694</sup> *Summa Contra Gentiles*, IV a. 41.

<sup>695</sup> *Non est enim aliud dei mysterium nisi Christus*, Ep. 187, 9, 34 CSEL 57/ 4, 113.

<sup>696</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, P.15.

<sup>697</sup> Karl Rahner, *Kirche und Sakramente*, Freiburg,1960, P.99.

<sup>698</sup> John Macquarrie, *A guide to the sacraments*, PP.35-37.

<sup>699</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to the sacraments in the Catholic Church*, P. 141.



### 2.1.6.1.2 The Church as Sacrament

The concept of Church as the basic Christian sacrament is not completely new to theology.<sup>700</sup> Vatican II affirms that the “Church is in the nature of a sacrament- a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity with all men.”<sup>701</sup> Hence the word sacrament is also applied to the Church.<sup>702</sup> “the sacrament of unity”<sup>703</sup> “the universal sacrament of salvation.”<sup>704</sup> The Church continues to engage herself in the activities what Christ performed when he was in this world. Hence the Church becomes a visible and faithful sacrament in the world. The earthly Church is the “visible realization” and “manifestation” of the saving reality in history. The Church is a “historical manifestation” of God’s own infinite love and care for men in Christ. The Church is not only the means of experiencing salvation but it is Christ’s ‘salvation itself’ which has been realized and materialized in the world. It is the concrete visible manifestation of the ‘grace and redemption.’ The redemption attained for the humanity by Christ is present in the Church. The sacraments are administered in the church through which one can encounter Jesus Christ. Hence the whole Church becomes a sacred sign of his pervading and permeating presence in the world.<sup>705</sup> By her intimate relationship with Christ the Church becomes a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God and of the unity of all mankind.<sup>706</sup> “The Church is the sacrament of the risen Christ, his saving actions and ultimate victory over sin and death. It is not only the continuation of the risen Christ’s saving presence. It is the Christ’s ongoing mission in the world: proclaiming the reign of God and his calling people to conversion and discipleship, breaking bondage of all

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<sup>700</sup> Matthias Joseph Scheeben, *The mysteries of Christianity*, Cyril Vollert (tran), PP.561-566.

<sup>701</sup> Errol D’Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, *Sacraments in general*, P.97. See also William A. Van Roo, *The Christian sacrament*, Editrice pontificia universita Gregorian, Roma, 1992, PP.93-97, The Church is the instrument of redemption for all and is sent to the world as the light of the world. Vatican Council calls the Church a sacrament , a sign and an instrument.

<sup>702</sup>Lumen Gentium, 1.

<sup>703</sup> Sacrosanctum Concilium, 26.

<sup>704</sup>Lumen Gentium, 45. 48.

<sup>705</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, PP.48-54.

<sup>706</sup>Lumen Gentium, 1.

kinds."<sup>707</sup>The church which is a sacrament exists in the world to cater to the salvation of all humanity. The council described this service as 'martyria' or service to the Word of God.<sup>708</sup> "The mystery of the Church is in resume the whole mystery. It is par excellence our own mystery. It takes us wholly. It envelops us, since it is in his Church that God sees us and loves us, since it is in it that he wills us and that we encounter him, and in it also that we cling to him and that he makes us blessed."<sup>709</sup> Like Christ the Church is a great 'mystery' and 'wonderful sacrament.'<sup>710</sup> "The Church is Jesus Christ continued, propagated, and communicated."<sup>711</sup>

The earthly Church which belongs to God is a great sign of the hope and aspirations of the people of God. The Second Vatican Council spoke of Church as a 'designation' for the Church.<sup>712</sup> "The sacrament is to represent the mystery of the Church that is concealed in its visible form and only evident through faith; to express and emphasize that the Church, on the one hand proceeds totally from Christ and is always turned toward him, and on the other hand is completely a sign and instrument for service to human beings and to the world."<sup>713</sup> God's salvific will is fulfilled in Christ Jesus but 'the Church remains a co-medium in order to transmit the salvation.'<sup>714</sup> Through the liturgical celebrations Christ the high priest carries out the work of redemption in and through the holy church.<sup>715</sup> According to Karl Rahner "The Church is the assembly of the people in whom Holy Spirit dwells individually. Therefore the Church is an assembly of the Holy Spirit. The Church becomes an external means of the transmission of grace or the salvific will of God.

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<sup>707</sup>Patricia Smith, Teaching sacraments, P.112. See, Colman E.O'Neill, Meeting Christ in the sacraments, Alba House, 1964, PP.107-110, The Church becomes the sacrament through the actions, ministry of the word and sacraments of the minister. The glorified Jesus finds his corporeal shape in the actions of the ministers.

<sup>708</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.37.

<sup>709</sup> Henri de Lubac, Meditation sur l' Eglise ,(Theologie, 27), Desclee de Brouwer,Paris, 1985, P.36.

<sup>710</sup> Henri de Lubac, Meditation sur l' Eglise, P.39.

<sup>711</sup> Henri de Lubac , Meditation sur l' Eglise, P. 39.

<sup>712</sup>Lumen Gentium, 1, 9, 48.

<sup>713</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda M. Maloney (tran), P.37.

<sup>714</sup> Karl Rahner, "Worte ins Schweigen, Innsbruck, 1951, PP.59 ff.

<sup>715</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1069.

As an external and visible means, the Church has a sacramental character."<sup>716</sup> The Catechism of the Catholic Church stresses the relationship between sacraments and the saving death and resurrection of Jesus through which we are united to that event of Christ. Jesus' words and actions during his public life had already the power of the paschal mystery. That is why his words and actions were redemptive. The mysteries of Christ's life are the foundations of what he would dispense in the sacraments through the ministers of his Church.<sup>717</sup> According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church the sacraments are 'sacraments of salvation.' They are 'efficacious' because Christ himself is present and at work. It is he who baptizes, and it is he who is the chief actor in the sacraments to communicate the grace which each sacrament signifies.<sup>718</sup>

Karl Rahner says "the Church is the tangible, historical, manifestation of grace in which God communicates himself as absolutely present, close and forgiving, of the grace which is at work everywhere, omits no one, offers to each and gives to every reality in the world a secret purposeful orientation towards the intrinsic glory of God."<sup>719</sup> The Church is the 'visible presence of the invisible Christ.'<sup>720</sup> The Vatican Council looks at the Church being related to Jesus Christ who is the author of salvation and the church lives and works for the salvation of the humanity.<sup>721</sup>

The Church is the visible expression of Christ and this same Christ is made visible and made present in history as the fountain of all redeeming love of God. The Church becomes the sacrament by the virtue of the fact that the 'incarnation of Christ is being prolonged.' Every individual is invited freely to experience salvation and to make the salvation his own in and through the church.<sup>722</sup> Karl Rahner says

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<sup>716</sup>Richard Lennan, "The Ecclesiology of Karl Rahner, Oxford, 1995, PP.26 ff.

<sup>717</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1115.

<sup>718</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1127.

<sup>719</sup>Karl Rahner, The Christian of the future, Herder and Herder, New York, 1968, PP.82-83.

<sup>720</sup>Lumen Gentium, 48.

<sup>721</sup>Karl Rahner, "Fragen der Sakramententheologie", Schriften XV1, 401.

<sup>722</sup> Kevin McNaMARA, "The Church sacrament of Christ"; in: Sacraments, Denis

“Now the Church is the continuance, the contemporary presence, of the real, eschatological triumphant and irrevocably established presence in the world, in Christ, of God’s salvific will. The Church is the abiding presence of that primal sacramental word of definitive grace, which Christ is in the world, effecting what is uttered by uttering it in sign. By the fact of being in that way the enduring presence of Christ in the world, the Church is truly the fundamental sacrament, the well – spring of the sacraments in the strict sense. From Christ the Church has an intrinsically sacramental structure.”<sup>723</sup>

The Church has the sacramental character also because she continues to make the divine life available and present in a concrete and visible manner. The risen Christ continues to function and to be active in the Church in order to realize the salvation.<sup>724</sup> Hence in the Church Christ is made ‘present’, ‘accessible’ and ‘approachable.’ The Church is the symbol of a sacred thing or the outward form of the invisible grace. But it is in recent years that it has become an important theme in the ecclesiology. It is associated with the German theologians Otto Semmelroth<sup>725</sup> and Karl Rahner.<sup>726</sup> Otto Semmelroth quotes De Lubac: “The Church here below is the sacrament of Jesus Christ, as Jesus Christ in his humanity is the sacrament of God.”<sup>727</sup> Christ is the prime sacrament ‘Ursakrament.’<sup>728</sup>

In recent year Edward Schillebeeckx has described the doctrine of ‘Christ’s relationship’ to the Church in terms of sacrament.<sup>729</sup> “It is clear that behind the extension of the notion of sacrament from Christ to the Church is the traditional doctrine that in the Church the incarnation of Christ is mysteriously prolonged. As the human nature in Christ is the visible form of the Godhead, so in the Church, which extends the incarnation through space and time, the visible structure is the

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<sup>723</sup> Karl Rahner, *Kirche und Sakramente, questiones Disputate*, 10, Herder, Freiburg, 1960, P.18.

<sup>724</sup> Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, P.88.

<sup>725</sup> Otto Semmelroth, *Die Kirche als Ursakrament*, Frankfurt, 1953.

<sup>726</sup> Karl Rahner, *The Church and the sacraments*, London- Edinburg, 1963.

<sup>727</sup> Otto Semmelroth, *Kirche als Ursakrament*, am main knecht Frankfurt, 1955, P.39.

<sup>728</sup> Otto Semmelroth, *Kirche als Ursakrament*, P.40.

<sup>729</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christus Sakrament der Gottbegegnung*, Mainz, 1960.

symbol and embodiment of the life of grace within."<sup>730</sup> The Church is the 'symbol' and personification of grace. The Church is the 'mystical body' of Christ and the faithful today are able to discover the living presence of Christ in the Church because he is very much invisibly present in the Church. The Church is also considered as the 'bride of Christ.' There is an intimate and mutual proximate relationship that is existing between the Church and Christ. The Church is 'sanctified, made holy and immaculate by Christ.' One is able to find the grace of salvation in the Church which God has instituted. This Church is instituted for the whole human race and it is not the property of only some group. She exists as the sacrament of Christ's presence for the entire world. By following their own conscience the people are able to respond to the divine graces. Hence the Church becomes the 'sacrament' for them. The Church can also become a living sacrament of the visible presence of Christ in and through the life and good conduct of the believers. The ministry enables the faithful to come more close to Christ. The believers have to accept the 'visible structure' of the Church as something planned, willed and instituted by Christ and that they must embrace it as the 'instrumental means of grace' for the entire humanity. The whole purpose of the existence of the visible Church is to lead and guide every person to an intimate and lively communion and friendship with God in faith and love.<sup>731</sup> "God has gathered together as one all those who in faith look upon Jesus as the author of salvation and the source of unity and peace and has established them as the Church, that for each and all she may be the visible sacrament of this saving unity."<sup>732</sup>

The sacramentality of the Church was described by many Fathers of the Church through many 'images.'<sup>733</sup> "The Church is considered to be on the pilgrimage

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<sup>730</sup> Y: Congar, "Dogme Christologique et ecclesiology" in *Das Konzil von Chalkedon* 11, A Grillmeier-H.Bacht, Würzburg, 1954, PP.239-268.

<sup>731</sup> Kevin McNAMARA, *The Church, sacrament of Christ*; in: *Sacraments*, Denis O' Callaghan (ed), PP.77-85.

<sup>732</sup> Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, P.11. See also, *The dogmatic constitution*, 9.

<sup>733</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.34.

and at the same time already at home."<sup>734</sup> The ancient Fathers thought of the Church as a sacrament which is constantly directed towards the rule of God."The important Church Fathers like Augustine referred to the sacrament of the Church in the context of a description of the entire sacramental 'economy of salvation."<sup>735</sup> In the twelfth century the concept of the Church as a sacrament was given not prime importance on account of the narrow thinking of the sacrament. But in nineteenth century there was a revival of interest in ecclesiology and the concept of the Church as a sacrament was given sufficient attention and importance. In an attempt to renew the ecclesiology the French theologian Yves Congar and Henri de Lubac reapplied the perspective of the "sacramental economy of salvation and understanding of the Church as sacrament."<sup>736</sup>

### **2.1.7 Edward Schillebeeckx**

Schillebeeckx treated Christ as the 'primordial' sacrament.<sup>737</sup>For him the sacraments are outward signs that reveal a transcendent, divine reality. The sacraments open up a possibility of falling in love with God."<sup>738</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx has contributed to the theological and liturgical reform at the Second Vatican Council. "According to his model the essence of any sacrament is the encounter with Christ, made available to Catholics through ecclesial rites which admittedly had changed through the centuries."<sup>739</sup> Schillebeeckx suggests that there is an 'existential encounter' that happens between two persons in the sacramental experiences. In course of this encounter they discover the mystery of the other person.<sup>740</sup> He described "Jesus Christ as sacrament of the encounter with God. He saw the humanity of Jesus as the primordial sacrament since it was in his humanity

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<sup>734</sup> Karl Rahner, *Symbole der Kirche, Die Ekklesiologie der Väter*, Salzburg, 1964, P.653.

<sup>735</sup> Wolfgang Beinert, *Sakramentalität der Kirche*, PP.16-17.

<sup>736</sup> Wolfgang Beinert, *Sakramentalität der Kirche*, PP.24-25.

<sup>737</sup> John Marcquarrie, *A guide to the Sacraments*, P.35.

<sup>738</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, PP.141-142.

<sup>739</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, P.143.

<sup>740</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, P. 141.

that there occurs the twofold movements consisting of the inbreaking of grace from above and the cults of love of God from below."<sup>741</sup> He presented every single sacrament as the Church's manifestation of Christ's divine love and care for the entire humanity.<sup>742</sup> He says Jesus who is the visible realization of the divine grace of redemption is the "sacrament who is intended by the Father to be the actuality of the redemption."<sup>743</sup> For Schillebeeckx the 'sacraments and the liturgy' are indispensable elements to hope for eternal salvation and redemption.<sup>744</sup>

Schillebeeckx states: "The Church's sacraments are not things but encounters of men on earth with glorified man Jesus by way of visible form. On the plane of history they are the visible and tangible giving form to the heavenly saving action of Christ. They are this saving action itself in its availability to us; a personal act of the Lord in earthly visibility and open availability."<sup>745</sup> For Schillebeeckx Jesus approaches us and extends an invitation to us to have a closer and intimate encounter with the life-giving God and for him one who has an encountering experience of Jesus, has the same experience with the living God.<sup>746</sup> "He is of the opinion that the 'sacraments provide direct participation in the eternal communion of Son and the Father which is signified by the historical cross."<sup>747</sup> Hence he regards the sacraments as 'mediation' between Christ and men.<sup>748</sup> According to Schillebeeckx the most splendid thing in this world is to long for a profound and intimate relationship with the living God. This deep buried longing of the heart cannot be fulfilled and materialized by our own human capacities and abilities. Personal communication and friendship with God can be made a reality only in and through

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<sup>741</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.32. See, Ray Robert Noll, *A new understanding for a new generation*, London, 2002, P.11. Christ is the sacrament of God. He is the outward sign that comes from God.

<sup>742</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, P.74.

<sup>743</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, PP.14-15.

<sup>744</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the experience of Jesus as Lord*, J.Bowden (tran), crossroad, New York, 1989, P. 814. See also, William A. Van Roo, *The Christian sacrament*, Editrice pontificia universita Gregoriana, Roma, 1992, P.88, Jesus is the visible realization of the divine grace of redemption.

<sup>745</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, Paul Barret (tran), New York, Sheed and ward, 1963, P.44.

<sup>746</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, PP.15-16.

<sup>747</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, P. 62.

<sup>748</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, P.62.

God's generous initiative. Man is helpless by himself. "In this encounter God discloses himself and the men respond to this revelation of God. Man sees this encounter as the sanctifying grace."<sup>749</sup> The human love and human acts of Jesus which have a divine power within them are realized in the sacramentality.<sup>750</sup> "The sacraments are earthly prolongation of Christ's glorified only in and through God's generous initiative. The encounter that takes place between God and men is salvation."<sup>751</sup> For Schillebeeckx the sacraments are human actions in which things or gestures are included like washing with water, anointing with oil, laying on of hands and so on.<sup>752</sup> "The earthly Church is the visible realization of the saving reality in history..... The earthly sign of the triumphant redeeming grace of Christ. Thus the essence of the Church consists in this, that the final goal of grace achieved by Christ becomes visibly present in the whole Church as a visible society."<sup>753</sup> What occurs in the sacraments is the immediate encounter between the living 'Kyrios' and ourselves. The sacraments are thus encounter.<sup>754</sup> "The sacraments are Christ's redemptive will itself in visible and tangible in ecclesial form. The gift of grace comes to us in a visible form."<sup>755</sup>

### **2.1.8 Karl Rahner**

In Karl Rahner's Christology "Jesus Christ is understood as the real presence in history of the victorious eschatological mercy of God in the world, or as the sacramental primordial Word of God in the history of the one humanity."<sup>756</sup> Christ himself is regarded as the visible historical presence of God's infinite mercy and love. There was an uncertainty of the dialogue between God and his people before Christ. Christ now has become as a 'reality and a sign': 'sacramentum' and 'res

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<sup>749</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, PP. 4-5.

<sup>750</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, PP. 15.

<sup>751</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, PP. 4-5.

<sup>752</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, The Eucharist, Burns and Oates, London, 1968, P.136.

<sup>753</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, PP. 47-48.

<sup>754</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, P.62.

<sup>755</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, P.74.

<sup>756</sup> Karl Rahner, Kirche und Sakramente, P.99.



sacramenti' of the 'saving grace of God.'<sup>757</sup> According to Karl Rahner the "sacraments themselves are constitutive signs of grace. The faithful are offered this symbolic material so that in it his faith, that is, his actual personal union with the Word of Christ, may prove itself, find realization and at the same time be increased."<sup>758</sup> For him the sacraments are the 'historical manifestations and signs of grace.'<sup>759</sup> For Karl Rahner "The opus operatum (the work performed) is but a way of associating the sacraments with the irrevocable presence of Christ, and that assures the Church that Christ will give himself unendingly to his people in those significant moments when individuals and the community celebrate the sacramental identity in and with him. The sacraments are an affirmation of the communities faith in its continuing communion with Christ through the specific signs in which that communion is expressed."<sup>760</sup> The sacraments become the historical manifestation of the grace of God in the world only in relation to Christ as the 'primordial sacrament' and in relation to the 'church as the basic sacrament.' Karl Rahner is of the opinion that Sacraments must be seen as "ecclesial manifestations and historical incarnations of that grace which is at work everywhere in the history of humankind and manifests itself historically in diversified ways in the world."<sup>761</sup> According to Karl Rahner Jesus is the manifestation of God as he himself says that "whoever sees him, has seen the Father"(John 12. 45). God is not only visible in him but can be known through him, hence his words "that no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him" ( Mathew 11.27). "He is the man through whom God's salvific will is factually, efficiently and fruitfully realized.' He renders God accessible to man in the proper sense of accessibility."<sup>762</sup> Karl Rahner

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<sup>757</sup> Karl Rahner, *Kirche und Sakramente*,(Qestiones Disputatae 10), PP.11-16.

<sup>758</sup>Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, Burns and Oates, New York, 1968 P. 33.

<sup>759</sup> Karl Rahner, *The making of modern theology "ninteenth and twentieth century texts"*, Geffrey B.Kelly (ed), P.288.

<sup>760</sup> Karl Rahner, *The making of modern theology "ninteenth and twentieth century texts"*, Geffrey B. Kelly (ed), P.282.

<sup>761</sup> Karl Rahner, *The making of modern theology "ninteenth and twentieth century texts"* Geffrey B.Kelly (ed), P.288.

<sup>762</sup> Karl Rahner, *De Gratia Christi*, 1937/38, P.21.

taught that the sacraments have the 'matter and form.' The form is the 'sacramental words 'which are pronounced by the minister while administering the sacrament. Hence the word is an indispensable part of the 'sacramentality.' This word makes present the 'redemptive reality' which is the revelation of God in Christ in a concrete way.<sup>763</sup> Karl Rahner could call the individual sacraments "the essential, fundamental realizations of the Church itself situated at the critical moments in the salvation history of each individual human being."<sup>764</sup>

## **2.2.The Characteristics of Sacraments**

The sacraments of the Church possess many characteristics. These characteristics are being described as follows. Since they are founded divinely, they have various qualities which one needs to know and reflect. When they are administered in the Church by a minister, they demand certain requirements from the one who administers and receives them.

### **2.2.1 Faith and Sacrament**

According to Thomas Aquinas 'faith and intention' of the subjects are necessary and important condition for the reception of the grace of the sacrament. But they cannot cause grace. The source of the grace is not in the hands of the subjects who administer and receive. According to Thomas Aquinas grace is purely a gift. The faith of the subjects is only a response to the grace of God.<sup>765</sup> In the New Testament faith is emphasized as the means of attaining salvation. "Faith is man's 'yes' to God's revealing himself as man's savior in Christ."<sup>766</sup> The primacy and necessity of faith in attaining salvation was acknowledged and reaffirmed by the Roman Catholic Church tradition in the Council of Trent. We may be said to be justified through faith, in the sense that faith is the beginning of man's salvation, the foundation and source of all justification, without which it is impossible to please

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<sup>763</sup> Karl Rahner, *Szth 111, Einzeideln zürich, köln, 1956, ( 1967), P.292.*

<sup>764</sup> Karl Rahner, *Kirche und Sakramente, P.21.*

<sup>765</sup> David N. Power, *The Eucharistic mystery, P.236. The faith of the people does not cause grace.*

<sup>766</sup> Juan Alfaro, *Faith in Sacramentum Mundi, an Encyclopedia of theology, New York, Herder, 1968, 11 , P.315.*

God (Hebrews. 11. 6) and to be counted as his children.<sup>767</sup>The subject is also equally important to perform the ritual part and to connect and relate the ritual to some spiritual reality. The sacramental action which the minister performs is the action of God in Jesus Christ.<sup>768</sup>"The faith of the Church is also important for the existence of sacraments for it is the faith of the Church that relates a particular signification with a particular sign. The minister has to do the same thing what the Church does; to relate the sign with this meaning."<sup>769</sup> Personal faith plays an important role in the very 'essence of the sacramentality' and faith is extremely important to make the sacramental act fully a religious act.<sup>770</sup>The goal of the sacrament is to bring about an encounter with God and Christ. To attain this goal of encountering God, the recipient of the sacrament should possess a profound faith and a holy intention. The recipient must approach the sacrament in the spirit of love and faith which makes the sacrament something fruitful. So the 'internal disposition' and openness of the recipients is important for the sacraments to be fruitful.<sup>771</sup> The doctrine of the Council of Florence exhorts us to have an 'active positive disposition' which is a self-surrendering faith on the part of the recipient. The Vatican Council teaches that "sacraments not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen and express it. That is why they are called sacraments of faith."<sup>772</sup> Mans faith transforms the simple human actions and words into something more extraordinary words. This faith is really necessary for an effective reception of the sacrament. Without this personal faith, the ordinary human actions and words remain just the same, the human actions like washing with water, anointing with oil and eating the bread and drinking wine. They do not become symbols which express the actions of God.<sup>773</sup> God our father has congregated all the people as one

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<sup>767</sup>DS, 1532.

<sup>768</sup> Colman O'Neill, The role of the recipients and sacramental signification, the Thomist 21,PP.257-301, 508-540.

<sup>769</sup> ST, iii,64,8 ad.1; iii,67, 5 ad.2.

<sup>770</sup> Michael G. Lawler, Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology, P.39.

<sup>771</sup> Michael G. Lawler, Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology, P. 40.

<sup>772</sup> Sacrosanctum Concilium, 59.

<sup>773</sup> Michael G. Lawler, Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology, P. 58.

who having faith, look at Jesus as the source and fountain of salvation, unity and peace. He has brought them together as the Church that she may become the sign and sacrament of this wonderful unity.<sup>774</sup>

The Trent and the entire Christian tradition affirmed the absolutely necessary function of personal faith in sacramental efficacy. "They condemned not the insistence on the necessity of faith but the one –'sided insistence' on 'faith alone' as the source of grace, to the detriment of the sacramental action."<sup>775</sup> Luther's statement that faith alone was sufficient was discussed elaborately by Trent. The Catholic Church is of the opinion that faith is indispensable for the obtaining of grace, but she insists that sacramental action also has a great role in the conferring of grace. For the efficacy of the sacrament it is necessary to have personal faith. Up to the Council of Trent the Catholic theologians taught that the sacraments are efficacious by 'faith, in faith and in proportion to faith.' "In reacting to the theories of the Reformers, the Catholic Church insisted that 'faith alone' did not justify, but justified in and through the sacraments."<sup>776</sup>

### **2.2.2 The Institution of the Sacraments**

The Catholic doctrine teaches that only Christ had the absolute power to set up the sacraments. This fact is clearly affirmed and approved by Thomas Aquinas. The first reason he mentions is that "he who institutes a thing communicates to that thing its force and power, as it takes place in the case of those who institute laws. Now the power of the sacrament comes from God alone. Therefore only he can institute a sacrament."<sup>777</sup> The institution of a sacrament can also be grounded on the fact that Christ founded the Church with its 'sacramental nature.'<sup>778</sup> Thomas gives two important reasons for the institution of the sacraments. First of all, the institution of the sacrament meant to communicate to the material elements

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<sup>774</sup>Lumen Gentium, 9.

<sup>775</sup> Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, PP.41-42.

<sup>776</sup> Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, P.43.

<sup>777</sup> ST, iii,q.64 a. 2 c.

<sup>778</sup> Karl Rahner, *Kirche und Sakramente*, P.41.

likewater, bread, wine, oil and the words of human language, a 'supernatural power and spiritual power' which belongs to God alone. This supernatural power enables the material objects to become the 'signs and effective instruments of God's salvific will' and efficacious ways of communication of his grace. This ultimately can only be done by Christ who as the Son of God and omnipotent is able to produce the divine in the sensible things.<sup>779</sup>No apostles could establish sacraments. The sacraments are encounters with Christ in which he manifests, offers and communicates freely the divine life to people who are well open and receptive to it. Only Christ who is the Son of God is able to choose the right way to encounter and communicate. St Thomas sees in Christ an absolute power which is called the 'power of 'authority' which belongs to him as God.'<sup>780</sup>"The power of Jesus, which is the power of excellence that surpasses the power of the minister."<sup>781</sup> The Council of Trent in session VII, Canon 1 defined against the protestants the following dogma of faith: "whoever affirms that the sacraments of the New Covenant are not all instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ or that there are more than seven or less than seven of them—that is, baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders and matrimony or that one of these seven is not properly and really a sacrament, may be excommunicated."<sup>782</sup> The traditional language that is used at the council of Trent is that the sacraments are of 'divine origin' and not of 'human origin' and it is a 'divine action and not human action.'<sup>783</sup> "In Christian Church the sacraments stem from God's revelation in Jesus."<sup>784</sup>

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<sup>779</sup> Schmaus M., *Dogmatica Cattolica*, 1V/1. / Sacramenti, Marietti, 1970, P.24.

<sup>780</sup> ST, iii. q 64 a. 3 c.

<sup>781</sup> ST, iii. q 64 a. 3 c.

<sup>782</sup> DS, 1601.

<sup>783</sup> Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, P.106.

<sup>784</sup> Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, P.7. The sacraments are come from the divine will. No man can create sacraments on his own will except God. God saw in them a precise plan for the people. They are going to be the means of redemption flowing into the life of the people.

### 2.2.3 Number

The Church authoritatively teaches in the first canon of Trent on sacraments, that Jesus Christ 'instituted the seven sacraments.' The purpose of the teaching of Trent was to combat the wrong concept of Martin Luther who held that the seven sacraments were not rooted and based in the Scripture and that it was the Church's discovery on her own authority. The Church taught that if Jesus Christ had not instituted the sacraments it would not be possible for the sacraments to have the divine and sacred power present in them and to be effective and fruitful. As a result they would not bring about spiritual renewal and transformation in the life of the recipient. There were some theories with regard to the institution of the sacraments: Some held that Jesus instituted the sacraments in order to continue the mission of the Church and so he indirectly gave the power and authority to celebrate the sacraments.<sup>785</sup> "There was also a theological opinion which goes back to the time of Karl Rahner: In so far as Christ willed the Church, he willed the Scriptures, the sacraments and the 'Magisterium.' This was an opinion that Karl Rahner proposed to understand that the Bible is the book of the Church and as having God as its author. Hence to talk about the Church is to implicitly affirm the sacraments of the Church, which rest on the presupposition that God willed the Church."<sup>786</sup> The seven sacraments are grace-filled moments in the Church because they proclaim the presence and make available the presence of God in the world.<sup>787</sup> In twelfth century the number of seven sacraments was accepted under Peter Lombard. "This was to make a distinction between the sacraments of the New Covenant and of the Old Testament. A superior dignity and the certainty of effect were attributed to the New Testament sacraments."<sup>788</sup> At the time of the Reformation the Church taught that

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<sup>785</sup> Errol D' Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, *Sacraments in general*, PP.120-121.

<sup>786</sup> Errol D' Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, *Sacraments in general*, P.121. God willed the Church and so the sacraments are also willed by God.

<sup>787</sup> Errol D' Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, *Sacraments in general*, P.123.

<sup>788</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.52.

there were seven sacraments. To oppose the seven was to go against the authority, authenticity of the Church and her teaching.<sup>789</sup>

#### 2.2.4 The Causes

What causes grace is a question normally asked. Sacraments work as an instrument. God is the one who causes sacramental efficacy. God acts in the words and in the action spoken and done and the faithful respond to the initiating power and action. Along with God's divine action there are also certain 'ecclesial conditions' which have to be accompanied for the validity of the sacraments. The Church has the authority to determine the legitimate and valid matter and form of the sacraments. The Church insists that the official minister and the participants in sacramental action must intend to do what the Church does and wills in these ritual moments.<sup>790</sup> It is God who causes the sacramental grace and the minister does only what the Church intends to do. God is the 'principal cause' (*causa principalis*) of divine grace. The sacraments are the 'instrumental cause' (*causa instrumentalis*) of that grace. The content is the effect of the sacrament or the grace of God. It is called 'the *res sacramenti*.'<sup>791</sup> Christ as God possesses this innate power. "The sacrament is a symbolic action in which human beings are engaged as believers, as those who celebrate liturgy, as narrators, as persons who act symbolically', but the divine Spirit uses this human action as a means and a way by which to make Jesus Christ, with his historically unique saving activity, memorially, really and actually present. It is the Spirit of God who makes present the whole event, in the sacrament who causes the effect in the human person."<sup>792</sup> It is Christ who acts principally in the sacraments

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<sup>789</sup> Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, PP.108-109.

<sup>790</sup> Patricia Smith, *Teaching sacraments*, PP.123-125.

<sup>791</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda M. Maloney (tran), P.53. See, Donald Goergen and Michael Glanzier, *The death and resurrection of Jesus*, Wilmington, 1988, P.48. According to Thomas Aquinas only God can produce grace. See also, Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 1988, PP.23-24. Here it is said God is the principal cause of grace and that sacrament is only the instrumental cause.

<sup>792</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.71. The role of the Holy Spirit is emphasized in the sacraments. Grace is effected in the sacrament through the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit as efficient cause.; the passion of Christ as meritorious cause; the devotion of the recipient as dispositive cause, see, Francis Assisi Loughery, *The Eucharist the end of all the sacraments according to St.Thomas and his contemporaries*, Fribourg, Switzerland, 1970, P.13.

through the Holy Spirit and not the human person. Therefore the lack of sufficient faith and unworthiness of the administering minister cannot be a hindrance to the effectiveness and grace of the sacraments.<sup>793</sup> Thomas Aquinas insisted that the sacraments were not the ultimate cause of grace. The sacramental rites were only 'symbolic gestures' and so the ultimate cause of all the sacramental effects is God himself. 'The sacraments were God's instruments, vehicles, channels of grace.'<sup>794</sup> Thomas Aquinas notes that "the sacraments of the Church derive their power especially from Christ's passion, the virtue (power) of which is in a manner united to us by our receiving the sacraments."<sup>795</sup> What is this grace? The grace is seen as the history of God's redemptive action which is accomplished and perfected in Christ and which is being continued in the Church. Christ is the perfect and concrete visibility of God's 'gracious action' and the Church continues the saving and salvific action of God in her sacramental action. 'God sharing his divine life with men in the person of Jesus Christ is the grace.' God is one who takes the initiative in granting grace to men. Man responds to this initiative of God in faith. Man is related to God as the creature to the creator. This relation between God and man is a relationship of total love.<sup>796</sup> Grace has two theological meanings: "First, God's self-giving in love<sup>797</sup> and second, something other than God, a 'transformation' produced in men and women. The entire reality of God's gracing of man is the sacrament. God shares his life with men and man's life is a created gift of God. God wants man to enter into personal relationship with God. This is materialised by God entering into the history. God acts in the person of Jesus. This is seen as the sign of grace. Jesus is the visible form of the invisible grace. Jesus can be said to be the sign of grace because

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<sup>793</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.84.

<sup>794</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, PP.79 -84.

<sup>795</sup> ST,3,q.62,a.6. Even an unworthy priest could administer a valid sacrament because the sacraments were independent of the giver and receiver *ex opere operato*, see also, H.Grass, *Abendmahl*, vol.1, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, Tübingen, 1960, PP.83-86.

<sup>796</sup> Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, PP.79-81.

<sup>797</sup> Karl Rahner, *Grace in " Concise Theological Dictionary*, Burns and Oates, London, 1965, P.194.



he is the visible expression and manifestation.<sup>798</sup> Since Jesus Christ is the 'principal actor' and the 'inner sacred reality' of the sacraments the effects of the sacraments cannot depend on the moral unworthiness of the minister.<sup>799</sup>

The Council of Trent distinguished carefully between what it called 'containing grace and conferring grace.' "Sacraments contain the grace they signify and confer that grace on those who do not place an obstacle."<sup>800</sup> Sacraments always contain grace in the sense that they always symbolize the presence of grace, but it is not necessary that always cause grace. They do not cause grace absolutely and indiscriminately and against a person's will. They cause it only for those who are generous enough to provide the necessary 'climate' for it. The climate is explained by the Council of Florence as 'worthy reception', and by the Council of Trent as 'placing no obstacle', and by the 'classical theological tradition' as 'the faithful cooperation' of the participant in the sacramental action. A free, positive cooperation and a free disposition of the heart on the part of the believers who participate and celebrate the sacraments are essential requirements for the sacraments to cause grace in the believers.<sup>801</sup>

"The reality of grace is brought about in the sacraments because they are the acts in which God makes his own salvific reality present and operative in the visibility of the act of the Church which is one with Christ in the Spirit. Because of this sacramental bond between Christ and the Church, the sacrament is Christ's act, the sign act in which he conveys his own salvific reality to the believer as the objective invitation to personal response. The sacrament is the very shape of God's saving power offered to man in Christ."<sup>802</sup>

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<sup>798</sup> Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, PP.87-88.

<sup>799</sup> W.Simonis, *Ecclesia visibilis et invisibilis, Untersuchungen zur Ekklesiologie und Sakramentenlehre in der Afrikanischen Tradition von Cyprian bis Augustinus*, Frankfurt, 1970, PP.103-109.

<sup>800</sup>DS, 1606.

<sup>801</sup> Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, P.58.

<sup>802</sup> Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, PP.89-90.

### 2.2.5 Ex Opere Operato

This is a Catholic doctrine defined by the Council of Florence in 1439 and by Trent in 1547.<sup>803</sup> The sacraments have their origin and source in God and they are willed, and intended by God. Hence when they are celebrated according to the conditions, grace is made available to the recipients 'ex opere operato.'<sup>804</sup> "If anyone says that through the sacraments of the New Law grace is not conferred by the performance of the rite itself (ex opere operato) but that faith alone in the divine promise is sufficient to obtain grace, anathema sit."<sup>805</sup> The term 'ex opere operato' has been used at least since 13<sup>th</sup> century to express the valid sacramental action without depending on the attitudes of the minister or the recipient. "The phrase ex opere operato is meant to preserve intact the absolute gratuitousness of God's action."<sup>806</sup> The term ex opere operato also affirms that the efficacy and effectiveness of the sacraments is not the result of the special function and works of the recipient. "According to Boneventure the sacraments are said to be causes and effect grace because of the divine assistance. God is the one who produces grace in the souls of those who receive the sacraments."<sup>807</sup> The sacrament gives grace ex opere operato. This means that the sacrament imparts grace regardless of the merits and worthiness of the person receiving it or administering it. The only necessary condition for the efficacy of the sacraments is that the recipients should not place any hindrance.<sup>808</sup> The obstacles were said to be "an expressed will not to receive the sacrament or a disposition of serious and unrepented guilt."<sup>809</sup>

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<sup>803</sup> Bernard Leeming, Principles of sacramental theology, P.27. The objective efficacy of the sacraments is developed with particular clarity at the Council of Trent, see, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, D.C, 1995, P.74.

<sup>804</sup> Errol D' Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, P.79.

<sup>805</sup>DS, 1606; DS, 1608.

<sup>806</sup> Erroll D'Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, PP.79-80.

<sup>807</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, The Celebration of the Eucharist, PP.10-12.

<sup>808</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, The Celebration of the Eucharist, P.66. The obstacles of the recipient can be some mortal sins, lack of faith or some serious sins. The obstacle arises from the free will of the recipient, such as lack of faith or lack of sorrow for sin. See, Bernard Leeming, Principles of sacramental Theology, Longmans, the Newman Press, Westminster M.D, 1956, P.6. Such obstacles can prevent one from experiencing grace. The sacrament can be still valid but one does not experience grace when there is an obstacle. The expression 'not to place an obstacle' signifies a minimum requirement

The ministers moral and manners might negatively affect the celebration over which he presides. But his moral life cannot block God's grace and his saving presence.<sup>810</sup> "Human religious subjectivity,' human faith, human readiness to accept pardon and salvation from God are not the cause of the sacrament's effective power. They are the condition, brought about by the Spirit of God for the effective application of the grace of God that is offered in the sacrament."<sup>811</sup> By the power of the completed ritual (ex opere operato) the sacrament obtains its 'validity and effectiveness' from the 'power of God.'<sup>812</sup> "The term meant traditionally that the sacraments become effective when the matter and form come to the sacramental action according to the prescribed conditions laid down by the Church."<sup>813</sup> The sacraments are not just empty and futile signs but they really make available and present the grace to the believers. Ex opere operato does not bring out grace in a 'mechanical' and magical way. The mere passive celebrations do not bring about sanctification and holiness but the faithful have to freely and generously co-operate in the celebrations by being open and by being well disposed to the workings of the Spirit.<sup>814</sup> The presence of Christ within the symbols does not depend on the faith of the individuals. The value of the symbols transcends what the faith is able to achieve.<sup>815</sup>

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except in the case of infant baptism. The sacraments give grace only to those who place no obstacle. The Latin word 'obex' means obstacle or a blockage on the road, a hindrance, see, Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, a Sheed and Ward classic, Kansas city, 1960, P.135.

<sup>809</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.85.

<sup>810</sup> Patricia Smith, Teaching Sacraments, P.118. The moral condition of the minister does not affect the validity of the sacrament. Even a minister who is in sin, is able to validly administer the sacrament. See, Liam Kelly, Sacraments revisited "What do they mean today", Paulist press, New York, 1998, PP.12-13.

<sup>811</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P. 87.

<sup>812</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P. 87.

<sup>813</sup> Errol D' Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, P.80.

<sup>814</sup> Errol D' Lima and Thomas Paul Urumpackal, Sacraments in general, P.80. The faithful have also to render cooperation by way of devout and committed participation for the effective celebration of the sacrament. The term ex opere operato is a theological formula consecrated by the council of Trent. The sacrament produces effect by the fact that it is the act of Christ, see, Aime Georges Martimort, The Signs of the new Covenant, the liturgical press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1963, P.32.

<sup>815</sup> Colman O' Neill, New approaches to the Eucharist, Logos books, 1967, P.17.

The Reformers taught that the effects of the sacraments depend on the 'faith of the recipient and the Word of God.' They believed that the cause of the effect of the sacraments is the 'promise of God' and the human being's faith. The Catholic position is based on the relationship between creator and the creature: God is all powerful and the creatures are helpless without God. God communicates grace to human beings through Jesus Christ.<sup>816</sup> *ex opere operato* is an expression which brings out the 'objective power' of the sacraments. This means that Christ is truly and powerfully present in the sacramental action of the Church because of her sacramental identity with him in being and action.<sup>817</sup> "The essence of the sacramental efficacy is the actual redemptive act of the mystery of Christ. This means that the sacramental efficacy is identical with the historical sacrifice of the cross."<sup>818</sup> The sacraments derive their power from the passion of Christ. Thomas Aquinas is of the opinion that the sacraments of the New Law confer grace '*ex opere operato*.'<sup>819</sup> Hence Franz Leenhardt is of the opinion that "the efficacy *ex opere operato* means that God makes use of the things and the actions to manifest and to realize his will; it means that these actions and these things have consequently a supernatural capacity which is given them by the divine will which they embody."<sup>820</sup> A sacrament confers 'grace, salvation, and justification' *ex opere operato*, but this is not due to the abilities and activities of man but purely God's work. A sacrament effects grace solely because of the 'action of Christ and of God.'<sup>821</sup> Even an 'unworthy' priest could administer a valid sacrament because the sacraments were independent of the giver and receiver *ex opere operato*.

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<sup>816</sup>Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), P.75.

<sup>817</sup> Joseph M. Powers, Eucharistic theology, PP.88-89.

<sup>818</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God, PP.60-61.

<sup>819</sup> Thomas Aquinas, in IV Sent; d.2, q.1, a.4, pc.4, sol.4 ad.2.

<sup>820</sup> Franz Leenhardt, This is my body, in Essays on the Last Supper, Butterworth press, London, 1959, P.68.

<sup>821</sup> Thomas Aquinas, IV Sent; d.15, q.1, a.3, sol.3 ad 2.

### 2.2.6 Intention<sup>822</sup>

The minister intends to do what the Church does, namely, “to relate the sign and the meaning.”<sup>823</sup> The minister must do what the Church intends or what the Church believes is to be done. The people who concelebrate must also proclaim and celebrate the actions as the Church.<sup>824</sup> In the decree on the sacraments the Council (Trent) Fathers stressed the role of the minister. The action of the minister must be in keeping with the ‘action and intention of the Church.’ His personal intentions have no importance there when he celebrates the sacraments. Even an unworthy minister can validly administer the sacraments because what he does in the sacraments is in the ‘name of the Church’ and not in his own personal name.<sup>825</sup> This does not mean that God’s action in the sacraments depends on the intention of the minister. The reason is that “the Council of Trent did not want to make God’s grace depend on man’s good works, namely the intention of the minister or his holiness.”<sup>826</sup> A minister has to be holy but the human ‘sin is not powerful than the divine grace.’<sup>827</sup> His intention need not be explicitly actual at the very moment when the sacrament is being celebrated. The minister has to mean the words (the form) which make the sign sacramentally significant. “Even if the minister lacks faith, he can validly and legitimately administer the sacrament provided he has the intention of the Church and Christ.”<sup>828</sup> The faith on the part of the minister is not considered a necessary condition.<sup>829</sup> “From the moment the sacrament is celebrated in accordance with the intention of the Church the power of Christ and his Spirit act in and through it

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<sup>822</sup> DS, 854 “ if anyone says that in the celebration of the sacraments, the minister does not need to have at least the intention of doing what the Church does, let him be anathema.”

<sup>823</sup> Thomas Aquinas, iii, 64, 8 ad.1; 111,67,5 ad.2.

<sup>824</sup> Michael G. Lawler, Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology, P.42.

<sup>825</sup> David N. Power, Sacraments, the language of God’s giving, P.226. The minister has to express the intention of the Church when he administers the sacraments. This means that he does not have his personal intention, but the intention of the Church or what the Church expects.

<sup>826</sup> Kenan B. Osborne, Sacramental theology, a general introduction, P.112.

<sup>827</sup> Kenan B. Osborne, Sacramental theology, a general introduction, PP.112-113.

<sup>828</sup> Paul J. Glenn, A tour of Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 1993, P.367.

<sup>829</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.84.

independently of the personal holiness of the minister. The fruits of the sacrament depend on the disposition of the one who receives it."<sup>830</sup>

### 2.2.7 The Necessity

The first five sacraments were instituted for the welfare and for the spiritual renewal of the individual and the other two for the betterment of the Church. The first three among the five sacraments, are of life and the other two exist to combat sin.<sup>831</sup> Thomas Aquinas points out that in the sacrament of the Eucharist not only "is Christ's grace present, but Christ himself. According to him all other sacraments are ordered to the Eucharist and find their completion in the Eucharist."<sup>832</sup> The sacraments are necessary for 'perfecting the human beings condition' and to heal the harm caused by sin.<sup>833</sup> The first five of the sacraments are instituted specially for the 'interior spiritual perfection of the person' and the last two are 'for the government and increase of the whole Church.'<sup>834</sup> In the "economy of salvation the sacraments are necessary as the 'ordinary means' through which man places himself in contact with the Church, with Christ, with the Father in order to obtain the grace of justification."<sup>835</sup> The writings of the New Testament clearly state the 'necessity' of the sacraments for salvation. Christ sent his disciples to the whole world to baptize the people in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Mathew. 28. 18-19). According to Jesus those who believe and receive baptism will be saved, but those who do not, will be condemned (Mark. 16.16). According to Thomas Aquinas the sacraments are gifted to us humans to confront and to deal with different situations of life and hence they must contain different effects of grace.<sup>836</sup>

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<sup>830</sup>Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1128.

<sup>831</sup> ST, iii, q. 65, a.2.

<sup>832</sup> ST, iii, q. 65, a.3.

<sup>833</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M.Riley (ed), P.89.

<sup>834</sup>J.Neuner and J.Dupuis (eds), The Christian faith in the doctrinal documents of the Catholic Church, Alba House, New York, 1982, PP.369-370.

<sup>835</sup>Jose Saraiva Martins, The Sacraments of the new alliance, P.69.

<sup>836</sup> ST, iii, q.62, a.2, c.

Hence, according to the missionary mandate faith and baptism are necessary for salvation. "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God" (John. 3.5). In referring to the Eucharist Christ says "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his Blood, you have no life in you (John. 6. 53. 58). Hence it is clear that the sacraments are necessary to experience salvation. They are the ordinary and principal ways to experience divine grace.<sup>837</sup> Faith is absolutely indispensable in the economy of salvation. The sacraments are sacraments of faith. It is the faith that basically leads one to the sacraments. The human beings need sacraments in order to attain the spiritual realities through the bodily and visible sensible realities.<sup>838</sup> God is interested in having union with men but unfortunately they cannot by themselves come to God. So God comes to man either by revealing himself or by pouring out his grace into his hearts.<sup>839</sup> Hence St. Thomas and the Fathers say "God in his normal providence wills to draw men to himself by the experience or intermediacy of sensible events. By sensible signs and incidents God intervenes in human life, and man makes his personal encounter with God in his intervention and in the grace there offered to him. And historically God has so intervened because these salvific interventions have assumed a visible and recognizable form and it is proper to refer to them as sacraments- they are the signs and means of grace, of the personal religious union which God offers to men."<sup>840</sup> The prominent Scholastic theologians of the thirteenth century discussed and debated the question of the 'necessity of the sacraments' for salvation and they reached a definite decision. They said God has not limited or confined his divine grace exclusively to the sacraments and concluded that the sacraments are not absolutely necessary for salvation. "God has not chained divine grace to the sacraments."<sup>841</sup> They stated that the sacraments are one of the 'appropriate ways

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<sup>837</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, PP.70-71.

<sup>838</sup> Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, P.36, see also, DS, 1600.

<sup>839</sup> ST, iii, q.61, art.1c.

<sup>840</sup> ST, iii, q. 20, art. 2c.

<sup>841</sup> ST, iii, q. 64, ad 7c.

to experience salvation.' Hence they are not the only and 'exclusive way to salvation.' When a person acknowledges the sacraments of the Church as something important for salvation, he can accept them as the proper way to his salvation.<sup>842</sup>

Thomas personally claimed that sacraments were necessary because signs were a necessary part of human life. When people communicated to each other in daily life they made use of different sign languages like sound in the air, marks on a page and so on. Through the signs people were able to understand what the other party communicated. In the same way Thomas also argued that the sacraments were also necessary because they were instrumental causes. "They were signs of sacred realities that God wanted to communicate to people for their own benefit. Without signs such as the sacraments people would not come to know or experience God's salvation."<sup>843</sup> And he taught that sacraments are necessary to experience and encounter God here on earth. In order to have an encounter and experience with God it is necessary to have reciprocal availability. Christ is glorified and so he has to make himself available and visible to the humanity some way. He makes himself available to us not in bodily form but by 'extending among us the function of his bodily reality which is in heaven.'

Hence sacraments are the "earthly extension of the body of the Lord."<sup>844</sup>

## 2.2.8 Sacramental Character

In the fourth century the phrase 'seal of baptism' was developed and the Church looked at the seal as the 'sacramental character.'<sup>845</sup> "The sacramental character is a kind of indelible spiritual sign by reason of which these sacraments cannot be repeated."<sup>846</sup> No power on earth can remove the spiritual mark. With

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<sup>842</sup> Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), P.88.

<sup>843</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, P.83.

<sup>844</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, PP.40-44.

<sup>845</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), PP.68-69.

<sup>846</sup> DS, 1609. The sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Ordination, cannot be repeated. The priest who leaves his priesthood and after a period of time when he comes back, he does not need to be re-ordained. There is an indelible mark imprinted in him by the virtue of his ordination.



reference to baptism, confirmation and orders, the Council of Trent states “if anyone says that in these three sacraments a character is not imprinted on the soul, that is, a certain indelible spiritual sign which makes their repetition impossible, let him be anathema.”<sup>847</sup> These three sacraments, the sacraments of baptism, the confirmation and holy Orders have the character. The character is some kind of ‘inscription’ which is engraved on a medal or a coin.<sup>848</sup> The Epistle to the Hebrews makes use of this image to describe the sons of God “the radiance of the Father’s glory, the image of his substance” (Hebrews. 1.3). The character implies an “objective consecration.”<sup>849</sup> The theologians following Thomas Aquinas define sacramental character at once by “its property of indelibility and by likeness to Christ, a participation in the priesthood of Christ which deposes a person to divine worship and distinguishes men as to rights, duties, or powers related to worship.”<sup>850</sup> The sacramental character is the ‘mark of Christ. It is in some way the partaking of the ‘eternal priesthood of Christ.’<sup>851</sup> In the second letter to the Corinthians Paul writes “it is God who wishes to establish us with you in Christ, and has commissioned us; he has put his seal upon us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee” (2 Corinthians 1. 21-22). This text of St. Paul was given sufficient attention by the Fathers of the Church and the teaching authority of the Church. Before Augustine the Fathers of the Church had affirmed the existence of a sacramental reality which they called ‘sfragis or signaculum’ which means seal.<sup>852</sup> Cyprian spoke of the ‘seal of the Lord’ pointing to the sacrament of confirmation.<sup>853</sup> “Speaking on the baptismal character St. Basil the Great called baptism a seal which no force can break.”<sup>854</sup> The Fathers of the Church spoke that the nature of the sacramental character cannot be cancelled or broken in

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<sup>847</sup>DS, 1609.

<sup>848</sup>Aime Georges Martimort, *The Signs of the new Covenant*, P.53. The gift received at the baptism and in confirmation is the seal of the Holy Spirit. The imprint or the seal is the image of Christ.

<sup>849</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M.Riley (ed), P.72.

<sup>850</sup>Aime Georges Martimort, *The Sign of the new Covenant*, P.54. This likeness to Christ attains the greatest possible fullness in the sacrament of Holy Orders.

<sup>851</sup> Paul J. Glenn, *A tour of the Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas*, P.366.

<sup>852</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, P.277.

<sup>853</sup> Cyprian, *Epistel*, 73, 9 : PL 3 1115.

<sup>854</sup>Basil the Great, *Homil 13 in S. Bapt.*, 5 : PG 31 434.

any way because purely it is a 'spiritual seal which is deeply impressed in the heart.'<sup>855</sup>The Fathers of the Church used the word 'seal' to say that those who receive these particular sacraments are transformed into Christ's image.<sup>856</sup> For the Fathers "the seal is a sign which distinguishes the Christian from the non-Christian, a sign by which a Christian can be recognized; it is a sign of sanctity, a sign of consecration and configuration to Christ and to the Trinity."<sup>857</sup> Augustine taught that the sacramental character is a sign and it is a proof that one has been 'consecrated to Christ and that he or she belongs to him and to the holy Church.'<sup>858</sup> It is said that a person who has committed a mortal sin can lose the grace of God but he does not in any way lose his sacramental character.<sup>859</sup> The Reformers totally denied the objective truth of sacramental character which they taught, is only the invention some monks.<sup>860</sup>

St. Thomas describes the character required in the recipients as a "passive power."<sup>861</sup> The characters are not mere powers of giving and receiving grace. They are powers which manifest faith by external signs.<sup>862</sup> The bearer of the character of the sacraments is able to participate in the priesthood of Christ.<sup>863</sup> And he can become a worthy sign and sacrament in the world to bear witness to Christ.<sup>864</sup> For Thomas the character is a 'spiritual power' 'potential spirituali.'<sup>865</sup> "This spiritual power according to him is an 'instrumental power', a participation in the power of

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<sup>855</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The sacraments of the new alliance*, P.281.

<sup>856</sup>Jose Saraiva Martins, *The Sacraments of the new alliance*, PP.277-285. The Fathers held that seal is indelible and unbreakable but grace can be lost.

<sup>857</sup> Thomas Marsh, *The sacramental character*; in: *Sacraments*, Denis O'Callaghan (ed), The Furrow Trust, Gill and Son, Dublin, 1964, P.115.

<sup>858</sup> J. Galot, *La Nature du Caractere Sacramentel*, Brussels, 1956, PP.36-41.

<sup>859</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), PP.71-72.

<sup>860</sup> Jose Saraiva Martins, *The Sacraments of the new alliance*, PP.291-292. The Reformers did not accept the objective character of the sacraments.

<sup>861</sup> ST,iii,q.63,a.2.

<sup>862</sup> Colman E.O'Neill, *Meeting Christ in the sacraments*, Alba house, New York, 1964, P.113. The characters are a sort of power to expose our faith. These characters are instrumental powers.

<sup>863</sup> ST, iii,q. 63, a.3.

<sup>864</sup>Colman E. O'Neill, *Meeting Christ in the sacraments*, P.116. A baptized person is a visible sign of Christ in the world by the virtue of the character that he possesses from the sacrament.

<sup>865</sup> Thomas Aquinas, in *IV Sent*; d. vi, a. 4, ad 10, 1.

Christ. Recipients of the character become ministers of Christ through the instrumental power conferred by the character."<sup>866</sup>

There is no direct reference to the sacramental character in the Scripture. Yet the doctrine of character has a 'biblical basis.' The biblical writers borrowed this word 'seal' from the ordinary usage. The word seal meant 'mark' which is placed on one's property to show to whom it belonged. Sometimes it became a 'sign of warning' not to interfere with the property.<sup>867</sup> "In the thirteenth century the sacramental character was understood by St Thomas and others as something real or supernatural power which enabled the persons to respond and cooperate with the grace of God. It could not be lost or destroyed because it was a power of the human soul which was immaterial according to Catholic teaching."<sup>868</sup> The sacraments add two things to the soul. One is sacramental reality which is the character or some other 'adornment of the soul and the other is a reality namely grace.<sup>869</sup> The biblical writers speak of the seal of God (Job. 9.7, Daniel. 9. 24). By this they mean that God has a 'real mastery over the creatures' and history. Creation is the property of God which is marked by the seal of God. In the New Testament 'Christ is the one who is sealed by God the Father.' Christ's power of accomplishing redemption is attributed to his sealing by God.<sup>870</sup> The Christians are also specially sealed by God in the baptism in order to be his own property. This seal in him becomes a sign and a mark that he belongs to Christ. Christ continues to seal all those who through the baptism are incorporated into him.<sup>871</sup>

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<sup>866</sup>Thomas Aquinas, in *Sent*, IV, d. 4, q. 1, a. 1.

<sup>867</sup> Thomas Marsh, *The sacramental character*; in: *Sacraments*, Denis O' Callaghan (ed), P.110.

<sup>868</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, PP.8.

<sup>869</sup>Thomas Aquinas, on book of the sentences 1, 1, 4.

<sup>870</sup> Thomas Marsh, *The sacramental character*; in: *Sacraments*, Denis O' Callaghan (ed), P.111.

<sup>871</sup> Thomas Marsh, *The sacramental character*; in: *sacraments*, Denis O' Callaghan (ed), PP.113-128. The recipients are transformed into the image of Christ. It also consecrates the faithful to participate in the divine worship.

### 2.2.9 The Effects of Sacraments

The sacraments of the New Law confer grace. They make man participate in Christ. Through the sacramental grace a special divine help is given to the soul which enables it to attain the goal for which the sacrament is constituted. The sacramental grace is obtained from the passion of Christ which is communicated to the receiver of a sacrament faithfully.<sup>872</sup> Through the reception of the sacraments our relationship with God is initiated and deepened and one is able to encounter the living God. The sacraments also nourish our faith by word and action and proclaim that faith. By celebrating the sacraments the faithful receive the grace to live a holy life and to exercise Christian charity in their daily life. The faithful are made holy and perfected by the grace that flows from the passion, death and resurrection. The most important effect of the sacrament is to be 'immersed in the mystery of Christ.' Through the constant reception of the sacraments one is able to imbibe the spirit of Christ and put on Christ in his life. As a result one is able to come to the experience of salvation. God out of his mercy confers on us abundant life even when we are dead to our personal sins. The redeeming power of the humanity of Christ flows steadily into the sacraments. The different sacraments are gifted in the Church in order to confront different situations in life.<sup>873</sup> Hence we can say that sacraments are a spiritual energy that flows from the pierced side of Christ.<sup>874</sup> Pope Urban says "in the sacrament we celebrate in thanksgiving the memory of our Savior, we are drawn away from evil, we are strengthened in what is good, and we advance and increase in virtue and in grace."<sup>875</sup>

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<sup>872</sup> Paul J. Glenn, *A tour of the Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas*, PP.365-366.

<sup>873</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), PP.46-49.

<sup>874</sup> ST, iii, q, 62, Art, 5.

<sup>875</sup> DS, 1320-1322, see, 846.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE CONCEPT OF SACRIFICE

#### 3.1 Concept of Sacrifice in the Old Testament

The Old Testament has many references to sacrifices. There was an elaborate and complex sacrificial system by the time of the New Testament.<sup>876</sup> Sacrifice as an 'idea' and 'an institution' is very much rooted in Old Testament teachings and has been profoundly influenced by the Christian beliefs and practices.<sup>877</sup> The Israel performed mainly three types of sacrifices and used many terms for the way in which they were performed.<sup>878</sup> As Quarello points out that what makes Israelite sacrifice something special and distinct is that it is celebrated in the presence of a 'unique and transcendent God.'<sup>879</sup> Robertson Smith held that "predominantly sacrifice is an act of social fellowship between the deity and his worshippers; it is an act of communion, in which God and his worshippers unite by partaking together of the flesh and blood of a sacred victim."<sup>880</sup> There was another theory that sacrifice was a free gift submitted to God to induce him to act on behalf of the offerer<sup>881</sup> and that it 'released vital power' by the death of the animals.<sup>882</sup> The inclusive character of the Old Testament sacrifices reveal the true nature of the cults which were means of 'restoring and preserving the relationship and friendship with God.' The sacrifices are 'vehicles' of self-expression which make possible religious activities with which the worshipper is able to associate himself.<sup>883</sup> A surrendered and dedicated life was

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<sup>876</sup> Godfrey Ashby, *Sacrifice, its nature and purpose*, SCM press, London, 1988, P.26.

<sup>877</sup> Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and his sacrifice, a study of the passion sayings in the Gospels*, Maxmillan, St. Martin's press, New York, 1965, P. 49.

<sup>878</sup> Theodor H. Gaster, *Sacrifices and offerings*, *Old Testament in the Interpreter's dictionary of the Bible*, George a. Buttrick et al (ed), vol 4, Abingdon press, New York, 1962, PP.147-158.

<sup>879</sup> E.Quarello, *Per una Chiarificazione della Realta del Sacrificio*, Salesianum 27.3, Rome, 1965, PP.355-381. (translated )

<sup>880</sup> W. Robertson Smith, *The Lectures on the religion of the semites: The fundamental institutions*, A and C. Black Edinburgh, 1927, PP.224-226. This idea is also found in W.O.E. Oesterley, *The sacrifice in ancient Israel: their origin, purposes and development*, Clarendon press Oxford, London, 1927, PP.11 ff.

<sup>881</sup> This was the theory of E.B. Tylor, *Primitive culture: reasearches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, language, art and customs*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, university of Michigan, 1929, PP.375 ff.

<sup>882</sup> E.O.James, *Sacrifice, introductory and primitive*, London, 1920, P.256.

<sup>883</sup> Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and his sacrifice, a study of the passion sayings in the Gospels*, P.53.

the basis of true fellowship with God. It was also mentioned that sacrifice is essentially a gift which was presented to God.<sup>884</sup> From the perspective of the Old Testament practice a sacrifice could be described as “an act whereby, an authorized person, representing a group of worshippers,<sup>885</sup> changes a material offering in such a way as to withdraw it from profane use,<sup>886</sup> places it within the ‘sacred’ sphere and thus dedicate it to God as an expression of adoring and self-surrender to God,; to make it, when accepted and sanctified by God a sign in the community’s sacrificial meal of God’s gracious will to enter into communion with man.”<sup>887</sup> The sacrifice was a means of providing the forgiveness of sins. It is a means by which the people expressed their sorrow and made reparation of sins. The sacrifices being ‘expiatory’ are appointed means whereby the ‘sins are covered’ so that they no longer stand as a hindrance between the worshipper and God.<sup>888</sup> Hence the expiatory sacrifice cannot be separated and isolated from the sacrificial system of Israel. Sacrifice is one of the frequently used words in religious vocabulary. Some sacrifices in the Old Testament were ‘propitiatory’ and the others were not. Some sacrifices had ‘effect not only on the offerer but also on those for whom the offering is made.’<sup>889</sup>

Some sacrifices were thought of as ‘gifts’, others are presented in order to build up a relationship and communion with God, some partly consumed on the altar and some are not. All the sacrifices were not animal sacrifices; there were also first fruits which were regarded as sacred to God. The first fruits were considered as man’s property which was also gifted to God. It was considered to be a ‘sacrilege’ to use the property for himself.<sup>890</sup> God was recognized to be the source of all

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<sup>884</sup> G.B. Gray, *Sacrifice in the Old Testament: its theory and practice*, Clarendon press , Oxford, London,1925, P.20.

<sup>885</sup> ST,2a 2ae 85, 4.

<sup>886</sup> William F.Hogan, *Christ’s redemptive sacrifice*, prentice hall, Engle Wood cliffs, 1963, P.57.

<sup>887</sup>Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler, *Concise theological dictionary*, Herder-Burns and Oates, London, 1965, P. 418.

<sup>888</sup> Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and his sacrifice, a study of the passion sayings in the Gospels*, PP.51-52.

<sup>889</sup> Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and his sacrifice, a study of the passion sayings in the Gospels*, P.72. Job’s sacrifice at the end of the round of his sons banquets was partly to avert the anger and wrath of God and partly to cleanse his sons, see, the book of Job.1.5.

<sup>890</sup>J.Pedersen, *Israel, its life and culture*, Oxford university press, London, 1940, P.304. He is of the opinion that man has the full right to use the crops when he has given Yahweh his share.

fruitfulness and hence entitled to a share of what he has provided (Exodus. 13.2). The peace-offerings are designed for the 'maintenance or restoration of proper relationships with God.' The sin-offering and the guilt -offering are closely connected with the sin. Both are offered mainly for specific offences. Apart from these sacrifices the sacrifices were daily offered by the community in order to keep up a good and healthy relationship with God.<sup>891</sup> It is important to understand that no sacrifice attains anything merely by the act of offering it. The real teaching of the Old Testament concerning the sacrifice is that 'the sacrifice must have the 'spirit of the offerer' if it has to be effective. When the sacrifice is offered for the sin, the law demanded something more than mere external offering. The law demanded that there should be a 'confession of one's' sins' and a 'humble penitence of spirit' without which a sacrifice is not able to achieve anything. A sacrifice also required 'restitution' in the case of sins against another. In Leviticus we read "It shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that wherein he hath sinned, and he shall bring his forfeit unto the Lord for his sins which he hath sinned..... and the priest shall make atonement for him as concerning his sins" (Leviticus. 5.5f). This similar idea is found in the book of Numbers: "when a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit.... Then they shall confess their sin which they have done; and he shall make restitution for his guilt in full, and add unto it the fifth part thereof and give it unto him in respect of whom he hath been guilty" (Numbers. 5. 5-6).

Sacrifice was thought of as 'potent.'<sup>892</sup> It was not merely a manifestation of the spirit of the offerer or an empty form. It is thought to be charged with tremendous power. It is potent to effect something in the offerer or in another. The sacrificed animal was not a substitute for the offerer. He laid his hands upon it (Leviticus.1. 4; 3.2, 8, 13). The offerer was considered as being identified with it and the death of the

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<sup>891</sup> For further study, refer J. Pedersen, Israel, its life and culture, Oxford university press, London 1940, PP.249 ff.

<sup>892</sup> Henry Wheeler Robinson, Redemption and revelation in the actuality of History, London, 1942, P.131.

animal symbolized the 'spiritual death' of the offerer. The 'death of the victim also symbolized his own death to his sins and evils and his death to all that stood as an obstacle between him and God. Hence sacrifice was also thought of as the 'medium of his cleansing' or his 'fellowship with God. Hence the sacrifice expressed both 'the inner spirit of the worshipper' and did something positively for him.'<sup>893</sup> One cannot request for forgiveness if there is no 'renunciation of sin in his heart.' Sacrifice alone is not sufficient. Prayer for communion cannot be expressed by means of sacrifice. One has to have an intense desire to walk in harmony with God. The offerings have to possess the spirit of the worshipper if they are able to produce the fruits of forgiveness, cleansing and communion.<sup>894</sup> Sacrifice of the wicked brings him no blessings at all but it alienates him from God. This is the essential teaching of Amos and of other prophets: "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Yea, though ye offer me your burnt offerings, and meal offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your feasts..... But let judgment roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (Amos. 5.21-24). It is because of the lack of right spirit that sacrifices are condemned, and not because 'they are wrong in themselves.'<sup>895</sup> Both in the public sacrifices and in private sacrifices it was the right 'attitude of the heart' of those for whom the offering was made, was important. This alone could validate the ritual. The sacrifice which was accompanied by 'genuine penitence and submission' is powerful and effective. It was also considered in Israel's religion that 'obedience was better than sacrifice' (1 Samuel. 15.22). Man could not save himself from sin by sacrifice or penitence. It was the divine power that redeemed him at the moment when he offered sacrifice. "When the sacrifice was the organ of his approach in humble surrender and obedience to God, it became the organ of God's approach in

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<sup>893</sup> E. Jacob, *The Theology of the Old Testament*, London, 1964, P.269.

<sup>894</sup> H.H. Rowley, *From Moses to Qumran, studies in the Old Testament*, Lutterworth, London, 1963, PP.86-87.

<sup>895</sup> E. Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament*, P.176.



power to bless him.”<sup>896</sup> Wheeler Robinson suggests “the sacrifices were symbolic acts, actualized approaches to God.”<sup>897</sup> The sacrifice is man loves approach to God and also God’s ‘divine approach’ to him charged with sacred power. In sacrifice man approaches God in humility, submission and in a sense of sin and God approaches him, ready to release power of blessing and forgiveness.<sup>898</sup>

According to Jean Galot “sacrifice is an offering made to God in order to render him homage, to enter into communion with him, and to obtain his favor.”<sup>899</sup> The Old Testament sacrifice became a vehicle for man in approaching God.<sup>900</sup> E. Boisacq relates the word sacrifice to the meaning to ‘make smoke.’<sup>901</sup> R.K Yerkes maintains that the root meaning to make smoke contains three other basic ideas of “feeding the gods, eating the gods, and eating with gods.”<sup>902</sup> Wenham commenting on Leviticus gives his opinion that sacrifice is concerned with “restoring relationship between God and Israel and Israelites.”<sup>903</sup> The book of Leviticus is concerned with cleansing from ‘unintentional sin’ and repentance. The sacrifice is required to cleanse Israel from its sins and re-establish the covenantal relationship with God. “The covenant itself between God and his people was maintained in force, or re-established, upon the altar of sacrifice.”<sup>904</sup> The Old Testament does not furnish us with a single concept of sacrifice but it provides us with many inter-related ideas. Several prominent scholars are of the opinion that the Old Testament sacrificial rites

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<sup>896</sup> H.H.Rowley, From Moses to Qumran, studies in the Old Testament, P.91.

<sup>897</sup> H.H.Rowley, From Moses to Qumran, studies in the Old Testament, P.92.

<sup>898</sup> H.H. Rowley, From Moses to Qumran, studies in the Old Testament, PP.106-107. The sacrifice is an external act charged with his spirit. Sacrifice is a ‘two-way traffic.’ God and man work in the sacrifice.

<sup>899</sup>Jean Galot, La Redemption, mystere d’ alliance, Paris Desclee de Brouwer, 1965, P.112. (translated )

<sup>900</sup> Vincent Taylor, The atonement in the New Testament, the Epworth press, London, 1940, P.185.

<sup>901</sup> E. Boisacq, Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Grecque, Heidelberg, Paris, 1923, P.360.

<sup>902</sup> R.K. Yerkes, Sacrifice in Greek and Roman religion and early Judaism, New York, 1953, PP.25-26. Concerning the basic elements of all ancient worship, it is said, ‘the word sacrifice, which means to ‘make sacred’ or ‘to do a sacred act’ was used in Latin to describe various rites which arose from the common meal when that meal was held, not for the ordinary purpose of satisfying hunger, but for the purpose of entering into union with the mysterious power or powers which man felt within him and about them.

<sup>903</sup> G.S. Wenham, The book of Leviticus, new international commentary on the Old Testament, Eerdmans Grand Rapids, 1979, P.85.

<sup>904</sup> Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel : its life and institutions, J.McHugh (tran ), Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 1961, P.414.

and concepts have come into existence as the Israelites came into contact with the Canaanite cults (Leviticus. 20.2). Israel came to know Yahweh as the distant God who came very close not only for their salvation in time of need but especially for the sacrifice.<sup>905</sup> By means of different sacrifices Israel had confirmed Yahweh's presence being alive among them. Their sacrifices maintained a 'covenantal relationship' with Yahweh. The sacrifice occupied a prominent place which functioned as a centre of Israel's cultic life. On the 'day of atonement' the Yahweh's presence was assured by cleansing of the sanctuary which consisted of an essential part of the sacrifice. Hence through the sacrifice the Israel and Yahweh could strengthen their bond and relationship.<sup>906</sup>

Sacrifice in the Old Testament is treated as the 'gracious will of God.'<sup>907</sup> The freedom from Egypt is sought in order to have freedom for worship (Exodus. 9.1). This new worship requires as its own sacrifice (Exodus. 10.25). The ultimate freedom from Egyptians is brought about by means of sacrifice, clearly 'stipulated by the Lord God' (Exodus. 12. 1-10). The Israel is called to be God's precious possession (Exodus. 19.5), a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Exodus 19.6). The sacrifices were the principal parts of the cult of the Israelites.<sup>908</sup> The daily regular sacrifice that was being performed in the life of Israel was according to the will of God. (Exodus. 29. 38-43). The efficacy of the sacrifice depended on the right spirit of the offerer.

The manner of offering the sacrifices, both with regard to the victims and the rituals are according to God's directions (Leviticus. 1. 1-7, 38, 17.1-9, 22.1-30). One should enter the divine courts with sacrifice (Psalm. 95 and 96. 8). When the sacrifice is not offered duly there is displeasure (1 Samuel 2. 29, 3.14). God provides the place and occasion for the sacrifice (Exodus 3. 12, 18). When the man is unable to offer

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<sup>905</sup> Ancient Hebrew does not have a word for either transcendence or immanence. The Hebrew word *near* (Karov) occurs seventy five times referring to cultic nearness (Ezekiel. 42. 13; Psalm. 148. 14) and salvific nearness (Psalm. 85.10). See, Werner E. Lemke, *The near and the distant God*, journal of Biblical literature, Society of Biblical literature, Chico, 1981, PP.541 ff.

<sup>906</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, *Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity*, Peter Lang, New York, 1995, PP.193-196.

<sup>907</sup> F.M. Young, *New wine in old wineskins: XIV. Sacrifice*, 1974-75, P.306.

<sup>908</sup> J.J. Castelot, A. Cody, *religious institutions of Israel*, New Jerome Biblical Commentary, no.66, 76.

sacrifice because of his sins, it is God who provides the opportunity and possibility of purification from sin that he may offer the perfect sacrifice to God (Numbers. 15. 22-28), (Leviticus. 12. 1-8, 13-15). It is God who provides the gifts with which one can offer sacrifice (Leviticus. 17. 11, Deuteronomy. 26.10). God wants his offerings to be presented (Numbers 28. 1-5, 8-9).<sup>909</sup> Moses instructs the Israelites beforehand about the obligation to offer sacrifice with great slaughtering and rejoicing in the Lord when Joshua shall have led them into the Promised Land (Deuteronomy. 12. 27, 27. 7); (Numbers. 15. 4, 6, 9. 24). God who wills the offering of sacrifice, is the one who gives the possibility of presenting it. God has the freedom to take away the possibility of sacrifice (Hosea.3.4; Joel .1.9-13).

The divine acceptance and his pleasure with the sacrifice is an important fact in the Scriptures. God's goodness in accepting the sacrifice enables the offerer to have more 'confidence and trust in God.' The trust in God should go along with the sacrifice. "Offer right sacrifices and put trust in the Lord" (Psalm. 4.5). The victim that is offered should be free from blemish so that God will accept the sacrifice (Leviticus. 22.21). Secondly the sacrifice should not be presented with stolen goods ( Sirach. 31.20, 34.20), thirdly the priest who offers them should be holy to their God and not profane the name of the Lord ( Leviticus. 21 .6, 21). Fourthly, the ones for whom the sacrifice is offered and the participants of the sacrifice should be holy ( 1 Samuel. 16.5, 2 Chronicles 29.31, 33.16). Steadfast love and knowledge of God (Hosea. 6. 6) and attitudes of thanksgiving are proper dispositions for a good sacrifice (Psalm. 106, (107). 22). The prophets were not against the sacrifices but they being the 'agents and representatives' of God raised voices against the abuses of sacrifices. They rejected individual sacrifices and not sacrifices as a whole. The prophets stressed on the aspect of 'purity' and right spirit while offering the sacrifice.

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<sup>909</sup> J.J. Castelot , A. Cody, religious institutions of Israel,New Jerome Biblical commentary, no. 76, 66.

The concept of God's 'transcendence' developed in connection with the sacrificial rites of Israel. Yahweh's abiding presence continued to play a vital role in the sacrificial rites of Israel. At the same time the 'transcendence of God was very well preserved. Yahweh was the one who revealed himself to the people of Israel, and at the same time hid himself from them. The sacrificial aspect of Israel was very closely bound up with their life of worship. The God of Israel was always close to them especially at the time of distress and difficulties and powerfully manifested himself to them at the time of sacrifice.<sup>910</sup> According to the various motives the sacrifices can be divided into three. The first one is the 'burnt offering' (Exodus.10. 25 ). The second is the 'communion sacrifice' (Genesis. 31.54) and the last is the 'sin offering' (Leviticus.5.1-9). Rendtorff's work and that of Wenham in his commentary on Leviticus have clearly separated the various types of sacrificial rituals in Israel. There are mainly 'six sacrificial rituals that took place in Israel: the 'olah' or 'kali,' the 'zebach', the 'schelem', the 'minchah', the 'chattah' and the 'asham.'<sup>911</sup> The minchah is translated by the word 'thusia' in the Septuagent.<sup>912</sup>

Cain's and Abels's sacrifices in Genesis is called 'minchoth.' Each sacrifice began with an offering ceremony 'the bringing near of the sacrifice to God.' All these sacrifices, except 'minchah', were animal sacrifices. Rendtorff finds that 'olah' is a 'solemn act of homage' which became an offering of the kings(2 Kings. 16.13).In all the animal sacrifices, except in 'zebach,' there was an important ceremony of laying on of hand before an animal is slaughtered. The blood was used in many ways in each sacrifice. The prophets and the Psalmists attacked the sacrifice so strongly. For them sacrifice is a materialistic and unspiritual. For Hebrews the sacrifice was efficacious and it was a 'divine command.'<sup>913</sup> The old Israelite codes and the pre-exilic history give details of sacrifice. The 'priestly code' developed older forms of

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<sup>910</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, PP.188-191.

<sup>911</sup> R. Rendtorff, Studien zur Geschichte des Opfers im Alten Israel (Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 24, Neukirchen- Vluyn, 1967, PP.1-85.

<sup>912</sup> R.K. Yerkes, Sacrifice in Greek and Roman religion and in early Judaism, P.31.

<sup>913</sup> Godfrey Ashby, Sacrifice, its nature and purpose, PP.28-48.

sacrifice and some new forms of sacrifice. The priestly code is the source to be familiar with the sacrifices in Israel. Mainly the Israel's sacrificial ritual was taken over from the 'Canaanites' except the Passover because the Israelites were always influenced by the Canaanites.<sup>914</sup> The Israel comes to exist as a covenantal community by means of sacrifice. Moses demands the Israelites to offer sacrifices to God for they were led into the Promised Land (Deuteronomy.12.27).

### **3.1.1 The Meaning of the Sacrifice in the Old Testament**

The man, who interiorly becomes conscious of his union and nearness to God, has a strong innate desire to express this desire and interior feeling in an external manner possible. Hence the sacrifice is an appropriate external expression of the interior attitude and desire of one who longs to unite himself with the Almighty. In the Old Testament the important means by which one expressed his interior feeling is the sacrifice. The common word for sacrifice *minhah*<sup>915</sup> is used which means a 'gift', which is applied to unbloody food and drink offerings. The word 'qorban'<sup>916</sup> (bringing near) or oblation is a general term for sacrifice. Sacrifice involves giving a share of one's personal goods to God. The most important sacrifice was bloody in which the idea of oblation was clearly expressed. The blood was often dedicated to Yahweh because it was considered to be the seat of life (Genesis.9. 4). Man owes his life to God. Hence man offers an animal to God. Sacrificing an animal meant the sacrificing his own very life. Man was able to obtain forgiveness of his sins by the sacrifice of an animal.<sup>917</sup> The writers of the psalms and the authors of the Wisdom books (Proverbs. 16.6-21) stressed the fact that Yahweh does not need the blood and flesh of sacrificial animals since the whole world belongs to him (Psalm. 50.8-15). They stress the intention of the sacrifice. The sacrifice acceptable to God is broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart (Psalm. 51. 17). The prophets have internalized the

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<sup>914</sup> H.H. Rowley, *Worship in ancient Israel, its forms and meanings*, S.P.C.K, London, 1967, PP.111-141.

<sup>915</sup> Paul Heinisch William, *The theology of the Old Testament*, G. Heidt (tran), St. Paul Publishing company, Minesota, 1955, P.233.

<sup>916</sup> Paul Heinisch William, *The theology of the Old Testament*, G. Heidt (tran), P.223.

<sup>917</sup> Paul Heinisch William, *The theology of the Old Testament*, G. Heidt (tran), PP.223-224.

notion of the sacrifice which was followed by the 'institutionalization of the sacrifice.' The charity, reverence towards one's parents (Sirach. 3.3) and justice (Sirach. 3. 30) were also regarded as sacrifice.<sup>918</sup> The Leviticus narrates the main rituals of the sacrifices, the sacrifice of praise (Leviticus.7. 12-13), and the voluntary sacrifice (Leviticus.7. 16-17). In the Old Testament sacrifices were also means by which God could belong to his people and the people could become his property.<sup>919</sup> For Israel the sacrifice consisted of meals like 'bread and wine' which indicates the divine communion. The aspect of 'self-sacrifice' is very important along with rituals and feasts. In Israel the temple was considered to be the center of communion between God and human beings. Berman points out that "sacrifice and communion are united in the temple."<sup>920</sup> The Old Testament sacrifices were symbolical and typical. They pointed out to a 'future reality.' They conveyed future blessings to them who offered.

### **3.1.2 The Motives of the Sacrifice**

A proper motive plays an important role in the spirituality of the sacrifice. One sacrifice can have more than one motive.<sup>921</sup> According to Roland de Vaux "sacrifice is homage to God and establishes or re-establishes good relations between God and those who are faithful to him. The sacrifice appeases the anger of God against the sinner and averts punishment. For this reason every sacrifice has an expiatory force."<sup>922</sup>

The Scriptures show that God takes the initiative and invites man to enter into union through the partaking of the meal (Leviticus. 7. 15- 16, 22. 30). God does not want to remain a mere power for man, being distant from man; he wants to be a love

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<sup>918</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general introduction of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis(tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, D. C , 1995, P.250.

<sup>919</sup> Xavier Paul B.Viagula Muthu, Offering our bodies as a living sacrifices to God, Gregorian university press, Rome, 2002, PP.288-291.

<sup>920</sup> Mathew Levering, Sacrifice and community, Blackwell publishing, Malden,2005, P.66.

<sup>921</sup> J. Milgrome, Leviticus 1-16, AncB 3, New York, 1991, PP.442-443.

<sup>922</sup> Roland de Vaux, Studies in Old Testament sacrifices, Cardiff university of Wales press, Oxford, 1964, P.91.

for man so that man can enter into a love relationship with God. "Sacrifice is not an idea in the mind of the individuals. But it is an act."<sup>923</sup> In the act of sacrifice the human beings have to stand in the presence of God as victims. No communion with God is made possible without the reality of death.<sup>924</sup> "In Deuteronomy sacrifice is less considered as a means to obtain God's favor than an opportunity for acknowledging his goodness and his manifold benefits."<sup>925</sup> There are three motives of sacrifice: they are 'expiation', 'communion' and 'tribute.' The expiation cleanses and purifies the relationship that one has with God. Communion is also another motive of the Hebrew sacrifice. The rite used for such communion is the 'zebach.' The sacrifice was a time for Israel to be united with God and with their fellow Israelites. It was also a time to serve God and meet God.<sup>926</sup> According to Yerkes there were four reasons to sacrifice: "to learn the will of God, to co-operate with and do the will of God, to rely on the God for protection, and to surrender oneself to God and to his will."<sup>927</sup> "The fundamental goals of the sacrifice are 'atonement for one's own guilt, reconciling with God, deliverance from sin, rendering of praise to God, self-surrender to God, communion and community with God."<sup>928</sup> The purpose of the sacrifice is the life, freedom, joy, and peace of God's people.<sup>929</sup>

There are many sacrifices where blood is used. In the Passover sacrifice the blood is used (Exodus. 12. 1-36). The blood is to be sprinkled on the door posts and the lintel of the house (Exodus. 12.7,22) The function of the blood is stated in Exodus "The blood shall be a sign for you on the house where you live: when I see the blood, I will Passover and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt" (Exodus.12.13). The Lord wants the blood on the doorposts as a sign to the people (Exodus. 12. 13). The meaning is that the blood is a sign that does something for the

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<sup>923</sup> Mathew Levering, *Sacrifice and community*, P.42.

<sup>924</sup> Mathew Levering, *Sacrifice and community*, PP.42-48.

<sup>925</sup> G. B.Gray, *Sacrifice in the Old Testament, its theory and practice*, P.47.

<sup>926</sup> Godfrey Ashby, *Sacrifice, its nature and purpose*, PP.26-37.

<sup>927</sup> R.K. Yerkes, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman religion and in early Judaism*, P.47.

<sup>928</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M.Riley (ed), P.257.

<sup>929</sup> M.Barth, *Was Christ's death a sacrifice*, *Scottish journal of theology*, occasional papers 9, Edinburgh, 1961, P.21.

people. The scriptures use the word sign to point out a message and this sign acts as a symbol for something (Genesis. 1. 14; 9.12-13). The Scriptures also speak of sign by which God does something for the people (Genesis.4. 15; Exodus.31.13, Numbers. 14. 11).The function of the blood in sacrifices has an ‘expiatory function.’ Whether blood was used on the day of ‘Atonement’ (Leviticus. 16) or in the ‘sacrifices of sin’ (Leviticus.4. 1-5, 13) or of ‘expiation’ (Leviticus. 5. 14-16), blood was used to ‘purify and cleanse’ the holy place, from the sins of the people (Leviticus 16.19).This was the purpose of God in providing blood for sacrifice. “For the life of the flesh is in the blood; I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar, for, as life, it is the blood that makes the atonement” (Leviticus.17. 11). According to Thompson one of the motives of the sacrifice was ‘expiate the sins of the people so that one is made pure and clean in the sight of God.’<sup>930</sup> Since sacrifice establishes or restores good relationship with God, it must be to some extent expiatory.<sup>931</sup> According to Von Rad “expiation was not a penalty but a saving event.”<sup>932</sup>

### 3.1.3 The Kinds of Sacrifice

There are many kinds of sacrifice in the Old Testament. These sacrifices can be described in the following. These sacrifices were means by which the people of Israel worshipped God and experienced him in different situations of their life. The Israelite sacrifice can be divided into two broad categories of bloody and non-bloody sacrifices according to the kinds of gifts that are brought to the Lord. According to the different interior motives that inspired them to offer the sacrifices, the sacrifices can be divided into three groups. They are the burnt offerings (Exodus. 10.25, 29, ), communion sacrifices (Genesis. 31. 54, Leviticus. 3.1) and the sacrifices which are connected to sin. The sacrifice of sin offerings and guilt-offerings serve as

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<sup>930</sup> R.J. Thompson, *Penitence and service in early Israel outside the Levitical Law*, Brill Leiden, 1963, P.175.

<sup>931</sup> Godfrey Ashby, *Sacrifice, its nature and purpose*, P.32.

<sup>932</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament theology*, D.M.G. Stalker (tran),vol.1,Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, 1962, P.270.



preparation for proper sacrifice.<sup>933</sup> It is also important to realize that all sacrifices were not related to 'expiation of sin.'<sup>934</sup>

### 3.1.3.1 Communion Sacrifice

One of the motives of the sacrifice in the Old Testament is the communion. This is a celebration of Israel with their God. It is really a community celebration. It was a special time to meet God and interact with one another. It was an occasion to establish fellowship with God and with fellow human beings. The sacrifice was made to restore the relationship between God and the Israelites. They celebrated their being with God because the expiatory sacrifices removed the obstacles and sins that stood on the way of covenantal relationship with God.<sup>935</sup> It was time for serving and experiencing the absolute loving presence of God.<sup>936</sup> In communion sacrifice the joyful character is often mentioned. In numerous books and in prophets it is simply called 'zebah'.<sup>937</sup> The term zebah indicates blood sacrifices which involve a ritual meal and the name is also applied to the Passover meal (Exodus. 12.27, 34.25).<sup>938</sup> In this sacrifice the victim is immolated and is shared between God, the priest and the offerer. The victim is an animal from the cattle which can be either male or female. The victim is presented by the offerer who lays his hand on it and slaughters it himself. The priest is the one who pours the blood around the altar (Leviticus. 7.14). (Leviticus .7. 12-17) distinguishes three kinds of communion sacrifice: the sacrifice of praise 'todah' which was offered on the occasion of a solemnity<sup>939</sup>, the free will sacrifice 'nedabah' offered out of devotion, piety apart from any prescription or promise and the votive sacrifice 'neder' which the offerer is 'bound by vow to perform'. The todah sacrifice has to be consumed in the same day whereas the nedabah and neder can be kept for the following day and what remains on the

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<sup>933</sup> R.K. Yerkes, *Sacrifice in Greek and Roman religion and early Judaism*, PP.168-172.

<sup>934</sup> H.H. Rowley, *From Moses to Qumran, Studies in the Old Testament*, P.82.

<sup>935</sup> Godfrey Ashby, *Sacrifice, its nature and purpose*, PP.36-48.

<sup>936</sup> Godfrey Ashby, *Sacrifice, its nature and purpose*, PP.36-37.

<sup>937</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, P.37.

<sup>938</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, P. 37.

<sup>939</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, P. 33.

following day has to be burned.<sup>940</sup>“In ancient times the communion sacrifice was the most frequent and it is mentioned forty-seven times in the historical books from Joshua to Kings.”<sup>941</sup> It is offered on the great feasts on the occasion of a pilgrimage to the sanctuary (1Samuel.1.21). In these sacrifices the blood and fat belong to the altar and the rest is to be consumed by fire because these ‘belong exclusively to God and not as food for him.’ They are not to be consumed by men because they are too sacred.<sup>942</sup>The peace-offerings are called ‘schelamim’ which is connected with the root word from which comes ‘shalom’ which means ‘peace’ or well being. The peace or the well being of man springs from man’s rightful and honest relationship with God.<sup>943</sup> The term schelamim expressed the idea that these sacrifices were performed for the maintenance or restoration of good relations with God. This means that there existed ‘peace’ and ‘well-being’. Hence man’s well-being rested on ‘right relationship with God.’<sup>944</sup> The peace offering or the communion sacrifice established peace and reconciliation between God and men who entered into communion with him.<sup>945</sup> The blood that is sprinkled on the altar and on the people indicates a union between God and his people. This ritual also symbolically indicated a ‘blood relationship between God and his people.’ Yahweh becomes the Father of his people and hence he takes care of the flock with great attention and the flock renders devoted service to its God. In the sacrificial meal of the peace- offering Yahweh invites his worshipers to be partakers of the meal.<sup>946</sup> This sacrifice has always a social occasion and significance. The worshipper invited his friends to the meal to eat and drink before Yahweh (Exodus. 34. 15). In this sacrifice the participants knew that Yahweh was invisibly present as the guest of honor. There was a spirit of joy and

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<sup>940</sup>Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, PP.31-33.

<sup>941</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, PP.34-35.

<sup>942</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, P.42.

<sup>943</sup>H.H.Rowley, *Worship in ancient Israel, its forms and meanings*, PP.111-141. The peace offerings were sacrifices of friendship expressing or promoting peaceful relations with deity, and almost invariably accompanied by a meal or feast, an occasion of great joy. They are sometimes called zebhachim, sometimes zebhach schlamim and were of different kinds, such as zebhach ha-todhah.

<sup>944</sup> H.H. Rowley, *Worship in ancient Israel, its forms and meanings*, P.123.

<sup>945</sup> Max Thurian, J.G. Davies and Raymond George, *Eucharistic memorial part 1*, Lutterworth press, London, 1959, P.41.

<sup>946</sup> Michael Hurley (ed), *Church and Eucharist*, Gill and Son, Dublin, 1968, PP.151-152.

celebration.<sup>947</sup> The main characteristic of peace –offering was the ‘sacrificial banquet’ at which Yahweh was host. And the immolator was a guest at the Lord’s Table (Psalm. 23.5). Yahweh gave back a portion of the offering to the offerer which indicated friendship and a strong bond between them. The peace- sacrifices were made to God from motives of gratitude, praise or to fulfill a vow. Only the ‘ceremonially clean’ people were allowed to participate in the sacrifice (Leviticus. 7.19-21). The communion sacrifices are ‘festive in character’ and they demanded ritual purity.<sup>948</sup> The people of Israel had a specific concept of union with the Lord. They believed that to enter into union and intimacy with God meant entering into the holiness of God. “For I am the Lord your God; sanctify yourselves therefore, and be holy for I am holy” (Leviticus. 11.44). ‘Keeping the Laws’ of the Lord was one of the means of participating in the holiness of God. Roland De Vaux expresses the function of the sacrifices:

“Religion does not consist merely in expressing our dependence up on God: it includes also a quest for union with God (.....) When Yahweh had accepted the victim and had received his part upon the altar, the men who had offered the sacrifice then ate the rest in a religious meal, and so shared the sacrifice (....) just as a contract between men was sealed by their taking a meal together, so the covenant between the worshipper and his God was established or strengthened by this sacrificial meal. Hence it is called the ‘zebah shelamim,’ the sacrifice of communion, the sacrifice of the covenant.”<sup>949</sup> The fact that the victim which was offered to God was consumed by the worshippers brought the two parties together in a spiritual communion. This was a joyful occasion and the communion sacrifice was the most popular ritual.<sup>950</sup> Through the symbol of food man offers his own self to God. When God accepts that food and allows man to participate in that meal, God offers

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<sup>947</sup>Gerhad von Rad, Old Testament theology, vol 1, D.M.G.Stalker (tran), P.257.

<sup>948</sup> Kenneth W. Stevenson, Eucharist and offering, pueblo publishing company, New York, 1986, PP.3-4.

<sup>949</sup> Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel, its life and institutions, J.McHugh (tran), P.453.

<sup>950</sup> J.J. Castelot- a Cody, Religious institutions, no. 76, 94.

himself freely to man through the symbol of food. Therefore man has to be 'spiritually clean and pure' in order to enter into this union with God. The Scriptures show that it is God who takes initiative and invites man to enter into communion with himself through the partaking of the meal ( Leviticus. 7. 15-16, 22.30). The communion sacrifices are in one way or another expression of the recognition of the goodness of God.

### 3.1.3.1.1 Todd

The word 'todd' is derived from a verb which means 'make known.'<sup>951</sup> It refers to a prayer which proclaims the 'redeeming power of God.' The individual surrenders himself with his sorrows and difficulties along with a proclamation of the wonderful and powerful intervention of divine action. There is a prayer of praise for such an intervention of God. Among the communion sacrifices there is mentioned in Leviticus 'zebah todd' which literally means a sacrifice of praise.<sup>952</sup> A sacrifice of praise is a peace-offering made on a solemn feast (Numbers. 15.3). It is the most perfect form of sacrifice of the Israel's in which the victim is 'immolated' and there is a praise in the form of thanksgiving of the marvelous works of God., (Psalms. 105, 107). He who offers sacrifice of praise honors me (Psalm. 50. 23). This praise that takes the place of sacrifice pleases God, of a broken heart (Psalm. 51. 17). "The ritual sacrifice was transformed into an offering of words and therefore a pure offering of the human heart and its inmost dispositions can be seen in Jewish circles that no longer sacrificed in the temple."<sup>953</sup> Zebah todd is the mixture of 'meal and praise.' Therefore the todd sacrifice can be called the most 'perfect form' of Israelite sacrifice for it shows that the 'essential thing is the surrender of self to God in a proclamation of the covenant of God.'<sup>954</sup> "In the days to come sacrifices will all cease, but the

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<sup>951</sup> Xavier Leon- Dufour, Sharing the Eucharistic bread, the witness of the New Testament, Mathew J. O' Connell (tran), Paulist press, New York, 1982, P.42.

<sup>952</sup> Xavier Leon - Dufour, Sharing the Eucharistic bread, the witness of the New Testament, Mathew J. O' Connell (tran), P.42.

<sup>953</sup> Xavier Leon- Dufour, Sharing the Eucharistic bread, the witness of the New Testament, Mathew J. O' Connell (tran), P.43.

<sup>954</sup> Xavier Leon-Dufour, Sharing the Eucharistic bread, the witness of the New Testament, Mathew J. O' Connell (tran), PP.42-44.

sacrifice of Todd will never cease canticle will all cease, but the canticle of todd will never cease."<sup>955</sup>

### 3.1.3.2 Holocaust Sacrifice

It got its name from the Hebrew root 'Alah' which means 'to ascend.' The sacrificial victim was burned entirely, except for the skin, which ascended to God through the smoke.<sup>956</sup> "It is the sacrifice in which the victim ascends to the altar or perhaps better, the smoke of which ascends to God."<sup>957</sup> Its characteristics are that the entire victim is carried on the altar and the offerer is not able to get any because the whole victim is completely burnt.<sup>958</sup> The holocaust sacrifice symbolized 'how man is obliged to give himself completely to God'(Leviticus. 1.3). The holocaust is an 'act of homage' which is expressed by a gift. It becomes a perfect sacrifice, or homage and worship rendered to God.<sup>959</sup> The sacrifice of holocaust or burnt offering was very important in the life of Israel. The primitive and fundamental meaning of the burnt offering or the holocaust was 'a thanksgiving going up to God to unite him to the faithful offerer.' The presence of the Lord went in the smoke of the burnt offering. The angel who acts as the mediator,'carries the thanksgiving to God to unite the faithful to God.' In the burnt offering what is important is not the kind of food that is offered, but the 'action of burning and of sending up the smoke before God' and this is the sign of thanksgiving and union. The burnt offering is an "offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the Lord" (Leviticus. 1. 9, 13).<sup>960</sup> It was also offered for the intentions of the nation as a sacrifice by private persons. "This sacrifice was made on the occasion of joy and also offered as a gratitude for the success of some undertakings"(1 Samuel. 6.14). It was also offered at the time of troubles and difficulties (1 Samuel.13.9).The priestly documents attribute the expiatory function to

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<sup>955</sup>Xavier Leon-Dufour, Sharing the Eucharistic bread , the witness of the New Testament, Mathew J. O' Connel (tran),P. 44.

<sup>956</sup> Roland de Vaux, Studies in Old Testament sacrifices, P.28.

<sup>957</sup> G.B. Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament: its theory and practice, P.7.

<sup>958</sup> Roland de Vaux, Studies in Old Testament sacrifice, P.27.

<sup>959</sup>Roland de Vaux, Studies in Old Testament sacrifice, PP.36-37.

<sup>960</sup>Max Thurian, J.G. Davies and A. Raymond George, Eucharistic memorial part 1, PP. 40-41.

the burnt offerings (Leviticus. 1. 4). "The complete destruction of the sacrificial offering was considered an expression of a complete dedication to Yahweh."<sup>961</sup> The essential characteristic of a holocaust was that it was completely destroyed by fire and no part of it is left to be consumed either by the priests or by the donors of the victim.<sup>962</sup> This would mean that man ought to give himself fully to God. The burnt offerings are symbolically the praises offered to God.<sup>963</sup> "The sacrifice denotes the dispossessive gift of self to God."<sup>964</sup> The whole burnt offering was sometimes called 'olah'<sup>965</sup> which means 'went up' in smoke to God and sometimes 'kalil' which means wholly consumed on the altar. There is another term found in priestly code namely 'ishsheh' which means 'consumed by fire.'<sup>966</sup> The purpose of the whole burnt offering was to express homage and obedient surrender to God and to win his favour by a costly gift (Leviticus. 4.7, 18, 25, 30, 34). The priestly code describes the burnt offering as a 'pleasing odour' to the Lord (Leviticus. 1.9, 13, 17). The priestly code makes use of the burnt offering twice a day as a public offering, once in the morning and once in the evening (Exodus. 29. 38 ff, Numbers. 28. 2ff). This was the sacrifice in which a bull, lamb, or a turtledove was entirely burned and the smoke ascended as fragrant sacrifice to God. The ritual specified that the offerer had laid his hand on the victims head as a 'solemn gesture' which indicated that the animal was his property and it belonged to him and that he was the one offering it. The priest had the obligation to pour the blood on the altar. The entire burning of the victim denotes also the 'irrevocability' of the gift.<sup>967</sup> It is the sacrifice in which the smoke of

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<sup>961</sup> E.Beck and Gabriele Miller, A guide to understanding the Bible, Geoffrey chapman, London,1967, P.287.

<sup>962</sup> Louis F. Hartman, Encyclopedic dictionary of the Bible, Mc Graw-Hill book co., London, 1962, P.1020.

<sup>963</sup> Kenneth W. Stevenson, Eucharist and offering, P.13.

<sup>964</sup> Mathew Levering, Sacrifice and community, P.64.

<sup>965</sup> W.B. Stevenson, In Festschrift für Alfred Bertholet, 1950, PP.489 ff.

<sup>966</sup> H. Cazelles ,( Levitique 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1958, P. 13 ; Deuteronomie 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1958, P. 82. Connects it with Sumerian Es= food. See, G.B. Gray, Sacrifice in the Old Testament, Oxford, London, 1925, PP.9ff.

<sup>967</sup> Lucien Deiss, It is the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist of Christians, Collins, U.S.A, 1976, P.72. Holocaust is the complete transformation of the victim into smoke by being burned after its blood has been poured out, see, Aime Georges Martmort, The signs of the new covenant, the liturgical press,

the victim that is burnt rises to God's presence as a sacrifice. According to the Leviticus the victim is a male without blemish either from the cattle or sheep (Leviticus .22. 18-20). According to (Leviticus .1. 14f) a bird, which is a turtle, dove or pigeon, may be offered. In Israelite sacrifice the priest and the altar are mutually related. Without them no sacrifice is legitimate (2 Kings. 23). Except the skin everything is burned. The holocaust is called 'korban' something which one brings close to God or altar. The holocaust is also called ' isseh' (Leviticus.1. 9, 13).<sup>968</sup> The holocaust is an act of homage, loyalty and 'loving surrender which is clearly expressed by a gift.' Hence it becomes a perfect type of sacrifice, and homage paid to God by the total gift.<sup>969</sup> According to Wenham the basic motives for offering the olah were 'faith and the thanksgiving for the deliverance.'<sup>970</sup>Through this sacrifice God wants to meet his people and live with them. He wants to belong to them forever as their loving God.(Leviticus. 7.20). The victims of the sacrifice of holocausts are ordinary objects that are connected to human consumption like animals, vegetables etc.They symbolize the existence and being of the one offering.<sup>971</sup> Roland de Vaux gives two reasons for burning the victims. The first "The destruction makes the offering useless and makes it therefore an irrevocable gift. The second reason is that the destruction is the only way to give the offering to God, by transferring it into the realm of the invisible..... all other parts which are given back to God are destroyed up on the altar, and they take a spiritual form as they rise in smoke from the altar towards him."<sup>972</sup> So burning expresses and reveals the 'aspect of totality.' The burning or the holocaust is 'complete' and absolutely total which signifies perfect and total surrender of one's self and the gift.<sup>973</sup>

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Collegetown, Minnesota, 1963, P.187. See also, Rick Franklin Talbot, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, Peter Lang, New York, 2005, PP.191-192.

<sup>968</sup> Roland de Vaux, Studies in Old Testament sacrifice, PP.27-31.

<sup>969</sup> Roland de Vaux, Studies in Old Testament sacrifice, P.37.

<sup>970</sup> Godfrey Ashby, Sacrifice, its nature and purpose, PP.26-36.

<sup>971</sup>J.J.Castelot- a Cody, Religious institutions, no. 76, 93.

<sup>972</sup> Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel, its life and institutions, J.McHugh (tran), P.452.

<sup>973</sup> Roland de Vaux, Ancient Israel, its life and institutions, J.McHugh (tran), P.453.

### 3.1.3.3.Sin Offering and the Guilt Offering

The sacrifice for sin and the sacrifice of reparation are the expiatory sacrifices.<sup>974</sup> The sin offering is an act of reparation for sins committed in ignorance. The guilt offering was an expiatory sacrifice involving 'substitution': the sacrificial animal replaced the guilty and made expiation for him.<sup>975</sup> With regard to the sin offering, besides the ritual observance there was also verbal confession (Leviticus. 5.5f). The purpose of the sacrifice was to make the people acceptable and pleasing in the sight of God (Leviticus.1.3f). "The priest was the mouth piece of Yahweh and the priest pronounced the divine word on the material and the material became the saving event between Yahweh and the people."<sup>976</sup> The sin offering was also done for the sins of the high priest (Leviticus.4.1-12), the entire community and the private persons. In guilt offerings, the offering is done for an offence against the other.<sup>977</sup> "The sin offering is the sacrifice of purification, purification from sinful transgression."<sup>978</sup> Through the sin offering the people were able to acknowledge their 'disobedience to God' and their 'disrespect to the transcendental reality.' The sacrifice of sin offering is an authentic expression of a profound desire on the part of the people to live a morally upright life.<sup>979</sup> The sacrifice for sin is 'hattat.'<sup>980</sup> and the sacrifice of reparation is 'asam.'<sup>981</sup> Some scholars are of the opinion that hattat covers the wider field than the asam. The asam is in a special way concerned with the 'faults' by which God or the neighbors were disappointed or hurt or made sad and this gives to this sacrifice a 'reparation character.'<sup>982</sup> The hattat is offered when one sins inadvertently against one or other of the commandments of Yahweh

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<sup>974</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, PP.91-102.

<sup>975</sup> Max Thurian, J.G.Davies and Raymond George, *Eucharistic memorial part 1*, P.43.

<sup>976</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament theology*, vol 1, PP.258-262.

<sup>977</sup> T.M.Manickam, *Dharma according to Manu and Moses*, Dhamaram publications, Bangalore, 1977, P.303. See also, Xavier Paul B.Viagula Muthu, *Offering our bodies as a living sacrifice to God*, Gregorian university press, Rome, 2002, P.250.

<sup>978</sup> Mathew Levering, *Sacrifice and community*, P.64.

<sup>979</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic university*, doubleday and company, INC, garden city, New York, 1943, P.236.

<sup>980</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, P.91.

<sup>981</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, P.91.

<sup>982</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Studies in Old Testament sacrifice*, P.100.



(Leviticus.4.2). The expiatory sacrifice is distinguished from the other sacrifices by the 'use of the blood' which plays an important role. The rites of this 'expiatory sacrifice manifests and stresses the 'expiatory and cleansing value of the blood.' According to the Hebrew conception, the blood contains the life; it is life itself (Genesis. 9.4; Leviticus. 7. 26-27). The life of the flesh is contained in the blood. "The blood I have given it to you so that you may perform on the altar the rite of expiation for your lives; for it is the blood which expiates by the life which is in it"(Leviticus. 17. 11). "Blood expiates because it has or because it is life."<sup>983</sup>

### 3.1.3.3.1 Atonement Sacrifice

The purpose of the atonement sacrifice was to please God and thereby escape the punishment due to sin. It was extremely necessary to acknowledge and admit one's sins and to make reparation for the damage done. Only the sins which were, committed through error or weakness or inadvertently were forgiven by the atonement sacrifice and not those sins committed deliberately. The personal amendment and transformation in one's life also was emphasized along with the sacrifice. The offerer of the sacrifice must make confession of his sins which he has committed and must make appropriate reparation for the damage.<sup>984</sup>

The Hebrew term 'Kipper' connotes both the meaning 'rub off' and 'cover.'<sup>985</sup> It is translated as 'expiate' 'atone' or 'forgive.'<sup>986</sup> In Arabic Kipper means to cover so that the sins may not be seen by God. In this sacrifice the word kipper was used also in connection with the rite of smearing on the blood of hattath.<sup>987</sup> The word kipper is also used of 'expiation for sin' apart from sacrifice (Exodus 32.30, Numbers.16.46 ff)

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<sup>983</sup> J.E. Steinmueller, Sacrificial blood in the Bible; in: *Biblica* xl, 1959, PP.556-567.

<sup>984</sup> Jose Thachil, *The Vedic and Christian concept of sacrifice*, Pontifical institute of theology and philosophy, India, Alwaye, 1985, PP.221-223.

<sup>985</sup> J. Milgrom, *Atonement in the Old Testament*, P.78.

<sup>986</sup> J. Milgrom, *Atonement in the Old Testament*, P.83. Scholars think that early Israel did not know of forgiveness of sin but only a repentance of sin to avoid evil. Even the abstract idea of 'expiate' took some time to develop in the cult from the action of rubbing off impurities to expiation in a more general sense.

<sup>987</sup> Theodor H. Gaster, *Sacrifices and offerings*, *Old Testament in the Interpreter's dictionary of the Bible* PP.151-152. The word kipper comes from the Hebrew word for sin that carries the notion of 'missing the mark.' The rite of Hattath was used to cleanse or purge whatever it touched and to regenerate the persons for whom it was applied.

and when God becomes the subject, the meaning is to 'forgive', or to 'purge away' (Deuteronomy.21.8). The most common use of the word kipper is in connection with the sacrificial rites where it means covering ritual imperfections or expiating sins.

#### **3.1.3.4 The Passover Sacrifice**

The Passover sacrifice has certain characteristics which differentiate it from other Israelite sacrifices. This is the only sacrifice which is eaten and consumed at night and which requires neither sanctuary nor altar, nor priest, and what it requires is only the victim which is roasted whole and eaten whole. The Passover was the greatest of the Jewish festivals. The most important rituals of the Passover sacrifice are narrated in Exodus chapter 12. Passover is a purely a religious act which originally was a 'sacrifice of nomads or semi-nomads.' The rites of the Passover sacrifice consist of certain things. In each house an animal from the flocks, either a sheep or a goat is slaughtered. The victim has to be male, without blemish which is one year old. The lintel of the house door is smeared and spingled with blood. The Passover victim is immolated between the two evenings between the 'disappearance of the sun over the horizon and actual nightfall.' The Passover is eaten at night and the left over is to be burnt. It is the only 'nocturnal sacrificial meal' which is prescribed in the religious law of Israel. This is the only sacrifice in which there is a clear prescription of dress. "This is how you must eat: the loins must be girt, sandals on the feet and staff in the hand. You must eat it hurriedly: it is a Passover in Yahweh's owner"(Exodus.12.11). It is an 'annual sacrifice' and its date is fixed in (Exodus. 12.2-6). This sacrifice is a very ancient ritual which goes back to Israel's 'nomadic time. In the account of the (Exodus. 12.14) the Passover is connected with the exodus event from Egypt. Hence this sacrifice is the 'memorial of the exodus event.' The Passover has a new religious meaning. The name 'pesah' is explained as the 'act of Yahweh's leaping over the houses marked with the blood of the victim.'<sup>988</sup> "Thus this pasch was considered always as the supreme sacrifice of the

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<sup>988</sup> Roland de Vaux, Studies in Old Testament sacrifice, PP.3-21.

people of Israel. This sacrifice remained as a spiritual and a religious meal in the life of the believers. By the celebration of the pasch the people of Israel recognized God as the protector and redeemer."<sup>989</sup>

### 3.1.3.5 The Sacrifice of Isaac

Abraham was asked by God to leave and abandon the land and was promised that he would be made the father of the nations. Abraham was able to surrender himself in silence of his heart in order to carry out the supreme command of God. He responded to God's invitation by building an altar, recognizing God's supreme authority and power over him. God wanted Abraham to sacrifice his only child Isaac. This was to prove the fidelity and trust of Abraham. "Take thy son Isaac with thee to the land of clear vision, and..... And Abraham rose at once"(Genesis. 22. 1-3). God demanded from Abraham an offering of what he possessed. God takes initiative in this sacrifice to offer. God himself supplies the material for sacrifice. Abraham willingly accepted the demands of God. There is no going away from the demands and commands of the God. He was ready to sacrifice his son. Abraham submitted to the supreme worship of God in the way desired and intended by God himself, and acknowledged his sovereign and absolute rights. The external act is not very important in the eyes of God. What God values the most is not the external action. What God wanted was the 'intention of his heart.' He wanted the 'inner sacrifice', the worship of the heart rather than the external sacrifice. Hence this was the sacrifice of Abraham. Abraham exercised the virtue of obedience in the spirit of living faith. He recognized the sovereign powers and rights of God over him. Hence sacrifice in the first place, is the 'obedience to God's word.' Though the sacrifice was not 'externally carried out', inwardly it 'was fully accomplished.' Abraham was suitably rewarded by God.<sup>990</sup> Hence one can say that Abraham's willingness to sacrifice everything manifests his "deepest intentionality' and 'communion with

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<sup>989</sup>M.D. Philippe, *The worship of God*, Burns and Oates, London, 1959, PP.27-37.

<sup>990</sup> M.D. Philippe, *The worship of God*, PP.27-28. Abraham responded to God with perfect obedience and love. This is the greatest worship. Offering of material objects without having love for the Lord is worthless and fruitless.

God.’ His readiness to sacrifice was an external act of his own deep rooted longing for communion with his God.”<sup>991</sup> God demands unconditionally the virtue of obedience which is exercised in the light of living and loving faith. The virtue of religion comprises of giving to God what is due to him.’ It is the virtue of obedience that draws us closer to God and enables us to enter into a deep and intimate relationship with him. Abraham obeyed God’s command and his powerful word unconditionally and it was in this act of surrendering obedience that he was able to recognize the ‘supremacy and the sovereignty’ of God. Hence we can say that sacrifice consists in the act of obedience to the Word of God and to his commandments. This virtue of obedience can be practiced and exercised only in a ‘pure and unreasoning faith’ which does not doubt God’s Word. In essential the sacrifice of Abraham consisted of an act of ‘worship’, ‘the fruits of the virtues of faith’, ‘hope and charity.’ It emerged from the depth of his being. The sacrifice of Abraham, we can say, was inwardly fully accomplished. The inward sacrifice of Abraham which is carried out through the act of obedience leads to a deeper contemplation of God’s mystery and grandeur.<sup>992</sup>

### **3.1.3.5.1 A Shift from Cult to Morality**

The classical prophets had a different outlook on the sacrifice.<sup>993</sup> They considered ‘morality to be the essence’ of religion and valued it more than the sacrifice for the Lord says “I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings” (Hosea. 6.6). The Love towards God is more important. Samuel says “has the Lord a great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams” (1 Samuel. 15. 22). The Psalmist also shares the same spirit: asking: O Lord who shall sojourn in thy tent? Who shall dwell in thy

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<sup>991</sup> Mathew Levering, *Sacrifice and community*, PP.33-40.

<sup>992</sup> M.D. Philippe, *The Worship of God*, PP.27-28.

<sup>993</sup> The Biblical tradition ascribes the whole of classical prophecy to fourteen Prophets from Amos to Malachi who produced the books which are called by their names, see, Yehezkel kaumann, *The religion of Israel*, George Allen und Unwin, London, 1960, P.347.

holy hill?, he answers: "He who walks blamelessly and does what is right and speaks truth from his heart; he does not slander with his tongue, and does no evil to his friend.....who does not put out his money at interest and does not take a bribe against the innocent" (Psalms. 15. 2-5). In the writings of Tobit the primacy is given to 'morality.' Doing kind work and keeping oneself away from evil are the whole burnt offering that God prefers (Sirach. 34. 21-35). The book of proverbs says "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord but the prayer of the upright is his delight" (Proverbs 15. 8). The spirit of sacrifice here is stressed. Another passage of the Proverbs says "To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice". (Proverbs. 21.3). Similarly in Psalms too we can find passages which speak not so much in favour of cultic sacrifices: "I will accept no bull from your house, nor he-goat from your folds" (Psalm. 50.9). The Psalm continues to speak: "The sacrifice acceptable to God is broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart o God thou will not despise" (Psalm.51.17). The prophets and the wisdom writers were not opposing the sacrifices but they were stressing the 'authenticity and genuineness of the inner disposition' and the spirit.<sup>994</sup> In a true and authentic sacrifice the external offering should stand for the 'inner spirit and dispositions' and self-surrender of the offerer. This inner life is more reflected through the moral life of the offerer. The inner sprit of the offerer becomes clearly transparent in the moral life that he practices and holds.

The repentance is really greater and more significant than the sacrifice itself. In certain cases where sacrifice is not an effective remedy the repentance leads one to forgiveness of sins. No sacrifice is prescribed for such sins like 'murder, or adultery (2 Samuel.12.13). The 'spirit' is more important than any ritual act. The Psalm 51 makes the worshipper realize that the offering was of less importance than the right 'spirit' in which it was brought to God. Hence the sacrifice "must be the organ of the approach of men to God in the sincerity of their confession before it could be the

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<sup>994</sup> Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel, its life and institutions*, J.McHugh (tran ), P.454.

organ of God's approach to them in delivering them from their iniquity and in restoring them to righteousness."<sup>995</sup>

### 3.2 The Concept of Sacrifice in the New Testament

It is true that "each Gospel has its own theology in general and a theology of sacrifice in particular."<sup>996</sup> The Gospel often does not make use of the word sacrifice itself but rather makes use of 'sacrificial usages and terminologies.' The Gospel of Mathew contains passages in (20.28 and 26.28) that suggest a 'sacrificial understanding of the life of Jesus.' A study of the gospel of Mark shows that probably the key intention of Mark is to "announce the theology of the Kingdome of God."<sup>997</sup> John in his letter expressly states the sacrificial character of the death of Jesus. We read "and the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John. 1.7). The blood that cleanses us from sin is 'sacrificial blood', 'atoning blood' (Leviticus 17.11). Jesus is the sacrifice in the New Testament. In the book of Revelation, the sacrificial death of Jesus is implied when the blood of Jesus is interpreted as the source of purification from sins.' In the new sacrifice of Jesus, 'he himself is the victim.' He declares that he has come to give his life as a ransom (Mark. 10.45). In giving himself as the new sacrifice, Jesus "inaugurates the new covenant with the pouring out of his blood for the forgiveness of sins" (Luke. 22. 20; Mark. 14.24). In (1 Timothy. 2.5-6) the author speaks of the sacrificial death of Jesus: "Jesus who gave himself as ransom for all." In (Colossians. 1.14) there is a reference to the sacrifice of Jesus in the words "In whom we have redemption through the forgiveness of sins." Paul speaks of our 'redemption through the blood of Jesus' (Ephesians.1.7). The blood that Jesus shed for us is 'sacrificial in nature.' The letter to the Hebrews 'gives greater prominence to the theology of the sacrifice of Jesus.'<sup>998</sup> The sacrifice of Jesus is "unique and definitive", because it actually removes all the sins and is meant for all

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<sup>995</sup> H.H. Rowley, *Worship in Israel, its forms and meanings*, P.143.

<sup>996</sup> P.M.Head, *The self-offering and death of Christ as a sacrifice in the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles*; in: *Sacrifice in the Bible*, R.T. Beckwith-M.J.Selman (eds), Carlisle- Grand Rapids, 1995, PP.111-129.

<sup>997</sup> C.S. Mann, *Mark, AncB*, 27, New York, 1986, PP.139-159.

<sup>998</sup> A. Feuillet, *The priesthood of Christ and his ministers*, New York, 1975, PP.106-112.

time (Hebrews. 9 .11-14). According to Rudolf Otto the “distribution of the broken bread which symbolizes, Jesus, was an ancient ritual act that served to sanctify his disciples. This sanctifying act removed the disciple from the profane realm and they participated in the holiness of Jesus by eating the broken bread and hence they were expiated, and thus consecrated to be his witnesses in the world.”<sup>999</sup>

### **3.2.1 The Eucharist, Concept and Definition**

The word Eucharist comes from the Greek words ‘Eucharistein’(Luke. 22.19) and ‘Eulogein’(Mathew. 26.26; Mark. 14.22) which recalls the Jewish blessings that proclaim, especially ‘during the meal,’ ‘God’s creation, redemption, and sanctification.’<sup>1000</sup> The word ‘Mass’ originates etymologically from the Hebrew word ‘Missah nedaha’ which “means a sacrificial offering offered out of one’s free will” (Deuteronomy. 16.10). John Reumann said “to give thanks (Eucharistein) was more and more coming to mean ‘consecrate’ and was eventually to mean ‘offer sacrifice.’”<sup>1001</sup> The Eucharist has been associated from the inception with rite. For Ignatius the ‘word becomes for the service’ and is used for agape. The Eucharist also had a ‘fellowship’ connotation in the early Church. This fellowship is with ‘one another and with the Lord himself.’ The early Church considered this ‘union with one another and with the Lord’ as the essence of the Eucharist. In the Didache also the unity of fellowship is stressed.<sup>1002</sup> The Eucharist in the Old Testament was viewed as a ‘figure.’ The Eucharist comes to us as the ‘gift of the Holy Trinity.’ But the people benefited spiritually and sacramentally from the Eucharist. This is a unique

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<sup>999</sup> Rudolf Otto, *The Kingdom of God and the son of man*, Starr King press, Boston, 1957, PP.290 ff.

<sup>1000</sup>The Catechism of the Catholic Church, Theological publications in India, Bangalore, 2003, P.257, art, 3, no.1328. See also, Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran) ,liturgical press, Colledgeville, Minnesota,1987, P.152. The Greek word for Eucharist is eucharisteo which means to give thanks, see, Michael G. Lawler, *symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, Paulist press, New York, 1987, P.135.

<sup>1001</sup>John Reumann, *The Supper of the Lord*, Fortress press, Philadelphia,1985, P.57

<sup>1002</sup> H.B. Swete, *Eucharistic belief in the second and third centuries*; in: *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M. Scholer, A garland series, New York, 1993, PP.135-137. The fellowship in the early Church found expression in common prayer, the kiss of peace and the communion itself.

sacrament. This is what distinguishes Christian sacrifice from all other sacrifices.<sup>1003</sup> The word 'Eucharist' also means 'thanksgiving.' It is a thanksgiving to the Father for everything accomplished in "creation, redemption, and sanctification."<sup>1004</sup> Giving thanks means recognizing the freely given gift. The whole liturgy is a blessing and this 'blessing is a gift of God.'<sup>1005</sup> Jesus is not in the Eucharist as 'passive object but he is present as the one celebrating the ritual meal of deliverance from sin and death.'<sup>1006</sup> "The Eucharist is a ritual mystery that is not to be solved but to be confronted and celebrated by the entire community."<sup>1007</sup> It is a sacrament and is 'principally an action of Christ'. The Sacrament of the Eucharist is not 'restricted to the moment of the consecration and communion' but it consists of the whole 'Eucharistic action' from entrance to the dismissal and blessing.<sup>1008</sup> It is a sacrament which is specially instituted by Christ himself to bring the 'fruits and graces of the Calvary to men.'<sup>1009</sup> It is instituted by Christ in order to extend his forgiveness, mercy and peace to the people through its sacrifice.

The essence of the Eucharist consists in the mystery of the body and blood of Christ which considered as the 'inward kernel of the external sacrifice.' Hence when we participate in the Eucharist, we try to enter into the 'mystery of the body and blood of Christ.'<sup>1010</sup> The Fathers of the Church were willing to use the word 'sacrifice' in a "heightened' sense for the Eucharist."<sup>1011</sup> According to Edward Schillebeeckx

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<sup>1003</sup> Raniero Cantalame, *The Eucharist our sanctification*, St. Pauls publication, published originally in Italy, 1998, P.17.

<sup>1004</sup> John Reumann, *The Supper of the Lord*, P.153. The Eucharist also means 'berakha' which the Church expresses for all the benefits of God.

<sup>1005</sup> Arturo Elberti, *The Eucharist: the Fullness of Christian initiation*; in: *Rediscovering the Eucharist*, Pontificium Consilium pro Laicis, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005, P.41.

<sup>1006</sup> William J. Bausch, *A new look at the sacraments*, twenty-third publications, mystic, New London, 1998, P. 131.

<sup>1007</sup> William J. Bausch, *A new look at the sacraments*, P.131. It is a mystery that is placed in the history of humanity, see, Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, Burns and Oates, Herder and Herder, London, 1968, PP.11-12.

<sup>1008</sup> Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, Burns and Oates, Herder and Herder, London, 1968, P.91.

<sup>1009</sup> Colman E.O' Neill, *Meeting Christ in the sacraments*, Alba house, New York, 1964, P.214.

<sup>1010</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, *The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist*, Burns and Oates, washbourne (ltd), London, 1925, PP.111-112.

<sup>1011</sup> Aidan Nicholas, *The Holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, Oscott 6, Dublin, 1991, P.87.



“the basis of entire Eucharistic event is Christ’s personal gift of himself to his fellow-men and within this to the Father. This is simply his essence, the man Christ Jesus is the one giving himself.”<sup>1012</sup> The Eucharist is the sacramental form in which Jesus gives himself to the Father. It is a ‘commemorative meal’ in which the wine and bread become the bearers of Christ’s gift of himself. Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist is meant for the faithful.<sup>1013</sup> According to the Second Vatican Council “the Eucharistic sacrifice is the font and culmination of the whole Christian life.”<sup>1014</sup>

Hence Pope Paul VI summarized the basic doctrinal themes present in the Eucharist “The Mass, the Lord’s Supper is at once and inseparably the sacrifice in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated; the memorial of the death and resurrection of the Lord who said: ‘Do this in memory of me’ (Luke .22.19); the sacred banquet in which, through the communion of the body and blood of the Lord, the people of God share the benefits of the paschal sacrifice, renew the new covenant with us, made once and for all by God in Christ’s blood, and in faith and hope foreshadow and anticipate the eschatological banquet in the Father’s kingdom as they proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.”<sup>1015</sup> When the Church together celebrates the sacrament of the holy Eucharist, the ‘central event of redemption becomes present and available to the faithful and the redemption is being carried out in the Eucharist.’<sup>1016</sup>

### 3.2.2 Paul on Eucharist

For Paul the “Eucharist is an essential truth of the greatest importance, bound up with the accomplishment of the work of salvation.”<sup>1017</sup> Jesus, who instituted the Eucharist, continues to offer his body and blood through his continuous intervention in the Church. ‘Do this in memory of me’ means that Jesus wanted his followers to

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<sup>1012</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, Burns and Oates, London, 1968, P.137.

<sup>1013</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, P.137.

<sup>1014</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 11.

<sup>1015</sup> Paul VI, *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, 1967, AAS 49 (1967).

<sup>1016</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 3.

<sup>1017</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist, gift of the divine life*, Pauline publication, Bombay, 1999, PP.33-

remember him and celebrate his love for the humanity. Hence he wished to make the Eucharist a memorial. This memory does not consist in a 'subjective remembering', or 'recollecting the events' in mind. The Passover was a memorial of the deliverance granted by God to his people. In the Eucharist Jesus wished to establish a new memorial in order to reproduce what happened at the last supper. It was not enough to keep the redemption and love merely in mind and thought. He wanted to give a concrete expression to the love in a meal which would be shared within the life of the Church to provide everlasting life to all those who shared it. Through the mediation and instrumentality of the priests Christ continues to act and offer the Eucharist. Hence we can say in the Eucharistic meal there is the 'memory and the actual presence of Christ'.<sup>1018</sup> Hence in Paul's teaching on the Eucharist the "aspect of memorial and commemoration is emphasized."<sup>1019</sup>

In 1 Corinthians the Eucharistic is presented as the 'liturgical action of the believing community which is celebrated as the memorial of the death, and which is celebrated in obedience to the command of Jesus "do this in memory of me" (1 Corinthians. 11.24). Paul tells the Corinthians "as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Corinthians .11. 26). For Paul the purpose of the celebration of the Eucharist is the 'proclamation of his death of Jesus'.<sup>1020</sup> Paul is of the opinion that participation in the body and blood of the Lord would mean, 'participation' in the 'sacrificial death of the Lord' and hence by eating the body and drinking the blood of the Lord one is able to proclaim the death of the Lord.<sup>1021</sup> The holy Eucharist is an action performed by the faithful community, and this action has the power and capacity to 're-present' or 'renew' the redeeming event of Christ's death. According to Paul what constitutes the Eucharist

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<sup>1018</sup> Robert R.Barr, *The Eucharist gift of the divine life*, PP.34-37. There is a comparison made between the Passover meal and the Eucharist. In the Eucharist there is the memorial and the actual presence of Christ. The Eucharist is the liturgical presence of the sacrifice of the cross.

<sup>1019</sup> H.B.Swete, *Eucharistic belief in the second and third centuries*; in: *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M. Scholer, P.164.

<sup>1020</sup> Sebastian Ullatt, *The spirituality of the sacrificial and the meal aspects of the Eucharist*, Gregoriana universita, Rome, 1995, P.93.

<sup>1021</sup> Bjorn Sandvik, *Das Kommen des Herrn beim Abendmahl im Neuen Testament*, zürich: Zwingli- Verlag, 1970, P. 67.

is the “action performed and not the things eaten and drunk.”<sup>1022</sup> He thinks that when Eucharist is seriously and meaningfully celebrated it has ‘enormous potential to transform and change the persons and the society at large. He insists that a real celebration of the Eucharist is a ‘memorial of Jesus’ supreme gift of himself’ which is realized in his sufferings and which is symbolically communicated in the Eucharist.<sup>1023</sup>“As a memorial it is a recalling of the past events and as a proclamation it is an announcement of the future events.”<sup>1024</sup> Paul’s special contribution to the Eucharistic theology is to indicate the connection between the ‘Eucharistic liturgy and Christian ethics.’ Paul is of the opinion that the believers would not be able to profit from spiritual food if they indulge in ‘immorality’ (1 Corinthians. 10. 1-13). He adds that “whoever eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord” ( 1 Corinthians.11.27), and be under divine judgment (1 Corinthians.11. 29. 32). Paul introduces the name ‘Lord’s Supper’ (1 Corinthians 11.20).The expression Lord’s Supper refers to a Supper reflecting the ‘qualities of Jesus’ risen life.’ The risen Jesus has a ‘spiritual body’ (1 Corinthians 15.44); which is “spirit filled and spirit giving” (1 Corinthians. 15. 45-49) and which “transcends all human divisions and gathers all unity.”<sup>1025</sup> Jesus is the one who gathers all people together in God. In Pauline theology ‘Christian fellowship’ (agape –meal) and the Eucharist (Lord’s Supper) are God’s ‘redemptive work.’ “The Eucharist represents God’s unconditional forgiveness through Christ’s death and resurrection while the ‘table fellowship’ conveys the ministry of Jesus in love and compassion which accepts all the members, both rich and poor, Jews and Gentile, men and women (Galatians. 3.28) in ‘one body’ the Church.”<sup>1026</sup>

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<sup>1022</sup> T.Worden(ed), Sacraments in Scripture, Geoffrey Champman, London, 1966, PP.69-70. The Eucharist is the liturgical action of the community. Paul also warns of the personal responsibilities in the community. The above idea is found in Kenan B.Osborne, Sacramental theology, a general introduction, Paulist press, New York, 1988, P. 69.

<sup>1023</sup> Carroll Stuhl Mueller (ed), Dictionary of biblical theology, the liturgical press, Colledgeville, Minnesota,1996, P.272.

<sup>1024</sup> Carrol Stuhl Mueller (ed), Dictionary of biblical theology, P.273.

<sup>1025</sup> Carrol Stuhl Mueller (ed), Dictionary of biblical theology, P.273.

<sup>1026</sup> S.Scott Bartchy, “Table fellowship with Jesus and the Lord’s meal at Corinth” increase in learning, Manhatten, Kansas, 1979, PP.54-58.

For Paul the Eucharistic meals establish a connection between the faithful and Christ. He uses the word 'koinonia' in order to express the idea of communion and closeness with Christ. The word indicates a truly 'personal communion' between the faithful and Christ either directly or through the bread and wine. This communion with the Lord does not bring about 'identification with him.' According to Paul 'eating' refers to 'spiritual eating' which has nothing to do with the 'absorption of the divinity.' The Eucharist is the source of unity and mutual love among all the believers. This intimacy and communion with the Lord cannot accept relationship with demonic powers.<sup>1027</sup> For Paul to celebrate the Eucharist is to renew and strengthen participation in the death of Jesus Christ. When Lord's Supper is properly and meaningfully celebrated as his memorial, it becomes really a proclamation.<sup>1028</sup> By eating the bread and drinking the wine the faithful are able to proclaim the death of the Lord until he returns (1 Corinthians 11.26). The Lord's Supper will find its fulfillment at 'parousia.' The Eucharist has value only by reference to 'future realities.' Hence "the Eucharist is already and not yet the very reality with God."<sup>1029</sup> For Paul the Eucharistic banquet prepares and shapes one for the 'heavenly banquet' and for the return of Christ.<sup>1030</sup> "The breaking of bread is interpreted as the violence of death and the pouring of wine as the shedding of his blood."<sup>1031</sup> Paul adds few ideas on the teachings of the Eucharist: Jesus commands that the Eucharist be

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<sup>1027</sup> Xavier Leon- Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic bread, the witness of the New Testament*, Mathew J. O' Connell (tran), PP.208-211. The word koinonia is used by Paul to mean a personal relationship and communion. In Christian sense the identification of the believers with God is not possible. For Paul the Eucharist is the foundation of the Church unity. See, Aidan Nicholas, *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, Oscott 6, Veritas, Dublin-1, 1991, P.31. Augustine also speaks of the spiritual eating which is the union

between the believer and the Christ. He insists that faith is needed for such a union, see also, C.W.Dugmore, *Sacrament and sacrifice in the early Fathers*; in: *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M.Scholer, A garland series, New York, 1993, P.187. Paul emphasized the fellowship aspect. Koinonia is a communal gathering some of which had ritual meals together. Paul uses this word Koinonia to describe a deep participation in Christ's body and blood. So Koinonia denotes the bond between Christ and the individual believer, see also, John Koenig, *The feast of the world's redemption*, trinity press international, Harrisburg, 1938, PP.120-121.

<sup>1028</sup> Carrol Stuhl Mueller (ed), *Dictionary of biblical theology*, PP.272-273.

<sup>1029</sup> Xavier Leon- Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic bread, the witness of the New Testament*, Mathew J.O' Connell (tran), P.226.

<sup>1030</sup> M.E.Boismard, *The Eucharist according to St.Paul*; in: *The Eucharist in the New Testament*, J.Delorme P. Benoit, J. Dupont, and D. Mollat, E.M Stewart, (tran), Geoffrey chapman, London, 1965, P.136.

<sup>1031</sup> Aidan Nicholas, *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, P.22.

celebrated in his memory. The concept 'memorial' does not mean just remembering and recalling the past events that happened but these events need to become present at this moment, 'here and now.'<sup>1032</sup> This bringing the past reality into the present will be re-enacted till the end of the world. He teaches that those who receive the body and blood of Jesus in an unworthy and unfitting manner would be guilty of his body and blood.<sup>1033</sup> St. Paul always thought of the Eucharist as 'providing an opportunity' in order to enter into a profound relationship with Christ as the crucified Saviour and to be able to appreciate the graces and blessings materialized through his death.<sup>1034</sup>

### 3.2.3 John on Eucharist

The Eucharist enables us to comprehend the meaning and value of incarnation. The close connection between the 'incarnation and the Eucharist' appears in a special way in the Gospel of John. The prologue of the Gospel presents us with the word "who became flesh" (John. 1.14). The Evangelist reports to us the very words of Jesus in the discourse of the Eucharist: "the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh" (John. 6.51). Here the word 'flesh' is used to indicate 'incarnation and Eucharist.' Jesus used the word flesh in his institution of the Eucharist. The Latin word for flesh 'carn' is the root word for incarnation. Hence one can see a close connection and similarity between the mystery of the coming of Christ into this world at incarnation and the mystery of the Eucharist. When Jesus dwelt among us at incarnation he also had an intense desire and longing to offer himself for the redemption of the world and for the life of the whole world. Thus we can say that the mystery of incarnation finds its 'completion and fulfillment in the Eucharist.'<sup>1035</sup> "For John the wine and the bread are the real blood and flesh of

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<sup>1032</sup> Aidan Nicholas, *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, P.31.

<sup>1033</sup> Aidan Nicholas, *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, PP.31-32.

<sup>1034</sup> Vincent Taylor, *The atonement in New Testament*, P.70.

<sup>1035</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of the divine life*, P.15. It was not only a matter of living with human beings except sin, but also he wanted to give himself to the people as the food for the nourishment. This idea is found in the teachings of Francis de Sales. In both Eucharist and in incarnation the intention of God is the same, the union with human beings. According to him Jesus instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist in which everyone achieves union with the Lord and that the human beings

Jesus" (John. 6. 55-56). For him the Eucharist is the center of the community and its life. It is the renewal of the banquet celebrated by Jesus. For him what is important is not what Christ did but what Christ 'is here and now and eternally.' The feeding of five thousand people is a sign of what Christ is for all the believers namely the 'bread of life' which descended from heaven as a spiritual food which gives life to the entire world. In the sixth chapter of John Jesus is presented as the fundamental source of life in so far as he is the bread of life, the food which 'endures to eternal life.' Jesus is the 'supernatural and the heavenly food.' Those who come to him in faith will experience life and salvation. John insists on the necessity of faith which is the gratuitous gift of God. One needs to come to Jesus so that he will not hunger and thirst. The contemporaries of John experienced salvation and had the encountering experience of Jesus through the celebration of the Eucharist. Hence salvation is experienced not only through the knowledge of Jesus but also through eating the flesh and drinking his blood. So, one experiences the eternal life 'here and now' by eating and drinking of Jesus who is the source of life. For him partaking of the Eucharist is the 'eating of the flesh of Christ.'<sup>1036</sup> John also associates the Eucharist with the "post-resurrection manifestation of Jesus as risen Lord" (John. 21. 1-23). For him the Eucharist was instituted on the cross itself when Jesus, the Lamb of God was immolated.<sup>1037</sup> The Eucharist in St. John can be looked in terms of 'spiritual relationship.' It is the supreme means by which Jesus communicates eternal life to all.<sup>1038</sup> In order to have eternal life one must eat his flesh and drink his blood (John. 6. 53-54). Hebrew expression 'flesh and blood' refers to a 'mortal human

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might be personally and intimately united to the goodness of the Lord. This sacramental union impels that union of soul with God. for Francis de sales the Eucharist is the ultimate end of the incarnation of Christ, see, for detailed study, Francois de Sales, *Euvres de Saint Francois de Sales: Eveque et prince de Geneve et Docteur de L' Eglise*. 27 vols/ publiee par les soins des religieuses de la visitation du premiere monastere d' Annecy, edition complete d' apres les autographes et les editions originales, Annecy, imprimerie J. Nierat et al ; 1892-1932, vol 1, les controverses , vol 11 ; defense de l'Estendard de la sainte Croix, P.14.( translated )

<sup>1036</sup> T. Worden (ed), *Sacraments in Scripture*, PP.72-82. For John the Eucharist is the source of eternal life. Jesus as the bread of life is the source of supernatural life. One needs to partake in the Eucharistic food in faith. One has to eat and drink of the bread and blood which is Jesus himself. See also Kenan B. Osborne, *Sacramental theology, a general introduction*, Paulist press, New York, 1988, PP.72-90.

<sup>1037</sup> Raniero Cantalame, *The Eucharist our sanctification*, P.14.

<sup>1038</sup> Aidan Nicholas, *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, P.19.

being' (Mathew.16.17) and so eating Jesus' flesh and drinking his blood would mean 'appropriating the whole person revealed in his humanity.' The Christians who take part in the Eucharist can have a qualitative life. The Eucharist enables us to have a profound relationship and a lasting communion with Christ.<sup>1039</sup> Eternal life in the Gospel of John is not merely everlasting life. But it is a 'qualitatively new life, the 'divine life of God the Father and the son' (John 5. 26). This new life has a 'resurrectional dimension.'<sup>1040</sup> "I will raise him up on the last day" (John 6.54). What we receive in the Eucharist is the 'spiritual flesh of the glorified Jesus.' The fundamental source of eternal life is Jesus Christ; the fundamental and essential link between Christ and men is faith; fundamentally therefore he who has faith has eternal life (John 6. 47).<sup>1041</sup>

### 3.2.4 The Eucharist as Sacrifice

R.D Richardson stated "the typical sacrifice of Christians had at first been considered to be prayer or the spirit of prayer; but with the destruction of the Jewish temple and the infiltration of ideas from contemporary pagan mysteries, the Christian Supper rite began to be interpreted as the pure sacrifice."<sup>1042</sup> The Catholic theology has always officially taught and maintained that the holy Mass is truly a sacrifice which draws its 'efficacy and power' from the redemptive sacrifice of Christ. But how the Eucharist is considered a sacrifice, has to be investigated and thoroughly studied.<sup>1043</sup> Already in 1562, the Council of Trent summarized dogmatically the belief of the Catholic Church about the Mass as sacrifice: "that in the Mass there is offered to God a true and proper sacrifice; that the Mass is not just a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, not just a memorial (*nuda commemoratio*) of

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<sup>1039</sup> George Mlakuzhyil, Listen to the Spirit: The Gospel of John; in: Vidyajyoti, theological reflections, vol 701, no.8, New Delhi, August 2006, PP.616-617.

<sup>1040</sup> George Mlakuzhyil, Listen to the Spirit: The Gospel of John; in: Vidyajyoti, theological reflections, PP.616-618.

<sup>1041</sup> T. Worden (ed), Sacraments in Scripture, P.75.

<sup>1042</sup> R.D.Richardson, "Eastern and Western liturgies: the primitive basis of their later differences"; in: Harvard theological review 42, 1949, P.14.

<sup>1043</sup> Francis Clark, Eucharistic sacrifice and Reformation, Darton, Longman, Todd, London,1960, PP.96-97.

the sacrifice of the cross; that the sacrifice of the Mass in no way derogates from the sacrifice of the cross.”<sup>1044</sup> The Eucharist is a visible sacrifice. The Council of Trent interpreted the sacrificial character of the Mass as something that is found in the visible liturgical action. The ‘oblation of the Mass’ which is the invisible action of Christ is the one that constitutes the sacrifice. In the sacramental action of the Mass Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is ‘represented.’<sup>1045</sup> This sacrificial character of the Eucharist is ‘stemming from the unity’ that exists between the Eucharist and the cross.<sup>1046</sup> “It is because of the representation of the death of Christ that Mass may be offered as sacrifice.”<sup>1047</sup> The words of the institution clearly show that the Eucharist is a true ‘propitiatory sacrifice.’<sup>1048</sup> It is propitiatory because it has a share in the sacrifice of Christ which he offered on the cross.<sup>1049</sup> Hence the Church affirms that the Mass is not only propitiatory but it is also sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise. “If anyone says that the sacrifice of the Mass is only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving or simple commemoration of the sacrifice accomplished on the cross, and not rather a propitiatory sacrifice, let him be anathema.”<sup>1050</sup> The words “this is

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<sup>1044</sup> DS, 1751-1754.

<sup>1045</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, Burns and Oates, New York, 1968, PP.17-21. The sacrificial character of the Mass belongs to the visible elements of the rite. The elements of the visible rite are the destruction, the two species, transubstantiation and communion. The sacrifice of the Eucharist is the representation of the Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. The Eucharist is a sacrifice because it represents the sacrifice of the cross and applies the fruits of the sacrifice on the cross, see, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 2003, P.264, art, 3, no.613, 1365. The Eucharist is the sacramental presence of the sacrifice of the cross and a liturgical presentation of that sacrifice to the Father, see Max Thurian, *The Eucharistic memorial part 11*, J.G. Davies (tran), John Knox press, Richmond, Virginia, 2002, P.79. The Mass is a ritual sacrifice because Jesus by his sacrifice on the cross delivered people from sin and death, see, William J. Bausch, *A new look at the sacraments*, twenty-third publications, mystic, New London, 1998, P.131. Here the Mass is considered as the sacrifice. The Mass is a true sacrifice.

<sup>1046</sup> Raymond Moloney, *The Eucharist*, Geoffrey Chapman, Villiers house, 41/47 strand, London, 1995, P.212.

<sup>1047</sup> David N. Power, *The Eucharistic mystery*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1992, P.209.

<sup>1048</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of divine life*, P.84. See also, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 2003, P.264, nos.1367,1545.

<sup>1049</sup> Ernst R. Falardeau, *A holy and living sacrifice: the Eucharist in Christian perspective*, liturgical press, America, 1996, P.16. The Mass is a sacrifice because it is the memorial of the sacrifice of Christ, see also, Michael McGuckian, *The holy sacrifice of the Mass: a search for an acceptable notion of sacrifice*, Gracewing publishing, 2005, PP.1-5.

<sup>1050</sup> DS, 1753. According to Trent the Eucharist is not just a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and praise. This was against the teaching of the Protestants. The Eucharist has a propitiatory value. The Catholic theologians laid stress on the propitiatory character of the Mass. But the Reformers reserved this propitiatory value to the sacrifice of the cross. In 1562 the Council of Trent summarized dogmatically the belief of the Catholic Church about the Mass as a sacrifice that Mass is not just sacrifice of thanksgiving,



my body which is given for you" (Luke.22.19) and the words of the wine point to sacrifice more explicitly: "This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many" (Mark.14.24). Paul brings the sacrificial meaning of the expression of Jesus "my body that is for you" (1 Corinthians. 11.24). All the theologians and the teaching of the Church confirm that the essence of the Eucharistic sacrifice lies in the 'consecration.'<sup>1051</sup> John Chrysostom referred to the Eucharist as an "awful sacrifice" in which Christ is set before us to be slain."<sup>1052</sup> He speaks of the 'Spirit' which descends upon the elements and the Lamb is sacrificed and consummated.<sup>1053</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem referred to the 'Eucharist as a sacrifice for the propitiation of sin.'<sup>1054</sup> Cyprian of Carthage commented "the Lord's passion is the sacrifice we offer."<sup>1055</sup>

The Eucharist is sacrifice for three reasons: First of all the sacrifice of the cross is 'sacramentally and liturgically' made present by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the Church. Secondly the Eucharist is also the participation of the entire Church interceding with the son before the Father for the redemption of the world. Thirdly the Eucharist is an offering which the Church makes to the Father with the Son.<sup>1056</sup> "This sacrificial understanding of the Eucharist in the light of the 'biblical memorial' gives us a basis for a Christian definition of sacrifice."<sup>1057</sup> Thus in the early Church 'sacrificium' denoted not only the 'expiatory sacrifice of Christ', but all that is offered to God at the Eucharist such as 'Eucharistic elements', the 'spiritual

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not just mere memorial of the sacrifice of the cross, see, Michael G. Lawler, symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology, Paulist press, New York, 1987, P.136. It is really a propitiatory sacrifice which removes the wrath of God.

<sup>1051</sup> Paul O'Dea, The Mass and the passion, Clonmore and Reynolds (ltd), Burns and Oates, London, 1965, P.28.

<sup>1052</sup> G. Lampe, The Eucharist is in the thought of early Church, S.P.C.K, London, 1968, P.44.

<sup>1053</sup> John Chrysostom, Hom. In Coemet. Et Cruc. 3, 401D, opera omnia 2, B. De Montfaucon (ed), 2<sup>nd</sup> edition; Gaume Paris, 1838, PP.469-475, 397-402.

<sup>1054</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, Mystagogical Catecheses 5. 8-10, Migne, Patrologia Graeca 33, col. 1065.

<sup>1055</sup> Cyprian, Epistel 63.9, Migne, Patrologia Latina 4, cols. PP.383-401.

<sup>1056</sup> Max Thurian, The Eucharistic memorial, part 11, J.G. Davies (tran), John Knox press, Richmond, Virginia, 2002, P.76. The Eucharistic sacrifice is the liturgical presentation of the sacrifice of the son by the Church to the Father, see also, Max Thurian, The mystery of the Eucharist an ecumenical approach, Emily Chischo (tran), Mowbray, London, 1981, PP.19-20. The Eucharist is the Anamnesis of the offering of Christ, see, Ernst R. Falardeau, A holy and living sacrifice: the Eucharist in Christian perspective, liturgical press, America, 1996, P.6.

<sup>1057</sup> E. Masure, Le sacrifice du chef, Paris, 1957, PP.31-51. (translated)

offerings' 'charity', 'repentance' 'humility', 'fasting'.<sup>1058</sup> "Sacrifice is an act of presentation of a reality to God, for the purpose of blessing upon that reality or upon him who presents it."<sup>1059</sup> Hence the Eucharist can be called sacrifice in which the Church's offerings are presented as reality to God for the purpose of obtaining blessings and graces. The bread and wine are presented to God for the sake of blessings.<sup>1060</sup> Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas maintain that the Eucharist is called a sacrifice precisely because a "commemoration is made of the sacrifice of the cross and the sacrifice of the Lord's death is applied to us that we partake of its benefits."<sup>1061</sup> Hence the Mass is an 'application of Christ's bloody sacrifice on the cross.'<sup>1062</sup>

According to Thomas Aquinas the Eucharist is said to be a sacrifice in two ways: Firstly it is a kind of "representative symbol of the passion of Christ", which is a true sacrifice. Secondly it is said to be a sacrifice with regard to the effect of his passion. Through the sacrament of the Eucharist we are made sharers of the 'fruits of the Lord's passion.'<sup>1063</sup> For Thomas Aquinas the Eucharist is a 'real sacrifice', because the 'victim-priest' is 'truly present and acting' in the Eucharist and he applies the values and fruits of the passion. It is also called sacrifice on account of the fact that the sacrifice on the cross is symbolically represented through the twofold consecrations.<sup>1064</sup> In which the sacrament is completed.

The Eucharistic 'presence' occurs not because of the faith of the individuals.<sup>1065</sup> The scholastic theologians have said "the Eucharistic was constituted in its sacramentality, not by faith of the individuals but, thanks to the intention of the

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<sup>1058</sup> A. Blaise, Dictionnaire latin- francais des auteurs chretiens, art, sacrificium, PP.731 ff.(translated)

<sup>1059</sup> Max Thurian, The Eucharistic memorial, part 11, J.G Davies (tran), P.78. This is the definition of sacrifice. Things are offered to God for the blessings.

<sup>1060</sup> Max Thurian, The Eucharistic memorial, part 11, J.G. Davies (tran),P.78. In the Eucharist the persons offer themselves along with the bread and wine, for the blessings.

<sup>1061</sup> ST, iii, q.83,art 1 .

<sup>1062</sup> Francis Clark, Eucharistic sacrifice and the Reformation, P.149. All the merits of the cross are applied in the Mass.

<sup>1063</sup> ST, iii, q.76,a.2, ad 1 and q. 79, a.1,11, q. 83, a. 1.

<sup>1064</sup> ST, iii, q. 78, a. 1.

<sup>1065</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, The Eucharist, PP.139- 142.

celebrating priest as expressed in the rite of consecration, by the faith of the Church.”<sup>1066</sup> The people should have faith in order to experience the effects of the Eucharist. But it is not faith that creates and brings about the presence of the Lord in the Eucharist and makes it a sacrifice. The promise of the Lord is certainly the ground for the existence the Eucharist. However It is necessary to have ‘faith’ and ‘right intention’ to experience the fruits of the Eucharist within us.<sup>1067</sup> Hence the “Eucharist is very much ‘active and effective’ in us under conditions of faith and intention of an individual and under the objective conditions of the gift of grace and repentance.”<sup>1068</sup> The Fathers of the Church say that the whole creation is present in the Eucharist and it is offered as a thanksgiving for the entire creation.<sup>1069</sup>

John Paul II’s encyclical ‘Ecclesia de Eucharistia’ similarly warns against ‘displacement of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist’: “At times one encounters an extremely reductive understanding of the Eucharistic mystery. Stripped of its sacrificial meaning, it is celebrated as if it were a simply a fraternal banquet. Furthermore, the necessity of the ministerial priesthood, grounded in apostolic succession, is at times obscured and the sacramental nature of the Eucharist is reduced to its mere effectiveness as a form of proclamation.”<sup>1070</sup>

The paschal meal which is a ‘sacrificial meal and a memorial meal’ in which Jesus announces the bread to be his sacrificial flesh and wine to be his sacrificial blood and he gives to the apostles. Paul presents the death of Jesus as the sacrificial death for the sinners. His sacrifice is the sole sacrifice.<sup>1071</sup> Justin and the author of

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<sup>1066</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, P.142. Christ’s presence in the Eucharist is the offer of grace. This grace does not depend on the faith of the individuals.

<sup>1067</sup> Max Thurian, *The Eucharistic memorial*, part 11, J.G.Davies (tran), PP.101.

<sup>1068</sup> Max Thurian, *The Eucharistic memorial*, part 11, J.G. Davies (tran), PP.101-102. The intention, faith and repentance of the subject who receive the sacrament of Eucharist, are important conditions for the fruits of the Eucharist. According to the theologians the application of the sacrifice is not automatic, but it requires faith and charity. There should be certain spiritual conditions in order to receive the graces of this sacrifice. God’s grace is needed for the Eucharist to act.

<sup>1069</sup> Max Thurian, *The mystery of the Eucharist, an ecumenical approach*, Emily Chischo (tran), MowBray, London, 1981, PP.20-21.

<sup>1070</sup> John Paul II, ‘Ecclesia de Eucharistia’, no. 10. Catholic truth society, Great Britain, April 17, 2003.

<sup>1071</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), P.260.

Didache refer to the Eucharist as 'thusia', a sacrifice of Christians. Iranaeus calls it as the 'pure sacrifice' or the 'new oblation of the new covenant.'<sup>1072</sup> It is in the 'Didache' that the word sacrifice is first used of the Eucharist.<sup>1073</sup> Cyprian writes that "the Lord who offered himself to the Father and commanded us to do for a memorial of himself, then what the priest does, imitating what Christ did, is an offering in the Church, a real and complete sacrifice."<sup>1074</sup> Augustine calls the Eucharist as the sacrifice of redemption which is the sacrifice of peace and of the Church.<sup>1075</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem calls the Eucharist the "sacrifice of propitiation and most awful sacrifice."<sup>1076</sup>

Gabriel Biel gives us the 'best mediaeval theology of the sacrifice.'<sup>1077</sup> He is very much convinced that Mass is not mere a 'commemoration'. He teaches that the body and blood of Christ are not given to us as a gift, but they are present as an offering made to the father in the appearance of bread and wine. Hence the sacrifice of the altar is in true sense 'one reality with the sacrifice of the cross.' The Mass is the same sacrifice as the sacrifice of the cross. "For Biel the Eucharist was instituted not as an 'absolute sacrifice but as a 'relative or relational sacrifice: one which draws its significance and power from its relationship to the 'once-for-all death' of the redeemer. Hence the Eucharist is a 'salutary and efficacious sign' through which the

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<sup>1072</sup> Aidan Nicholas, *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, P.47.

<sup>1073</sup> C.W.Dugmore, *Sacrament and sacrifice in the early Fathers*; in: *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M. Scholer, a garland series, New York, 1993, P.45.

<sup>1074</sup> Cyprian Letter, 83, Cyprian, *Epistel* 63, Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 4,colc. 383-401. See also, Aidan Nicholas, *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, Oscott, veritas, Dublin-1,1991, P.48. For Cyprian the Eucharist is the real sacrifice. See also H.B. Swete, *Eucharistic belief in the second and third centuries*; in : *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M. Scholer, A garland series, New York, 1993, P.1.

<sup>1075</sup> The relevant texts are gathered and interpreted in M. Blein, *Le sacrifice de l Eucharistie d' après saint Augustin*, Lyons, 1906. Augustine recognizes it as true sacrifice of the Church. He calls the Eucharist as visible sacrament of the invisible sacrifice. See also, C.W.Dugmore, *sacrament and sacrifice in the early Fathers*; in: *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M.Scholer, a garland series, New York, 1993, PP.182-183. The Eucharist is also called the redeeming sacrifice of Christ or the sacrament of the sacrifice of Christ.

<sup>1076</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 23; in: *Lectures on the Christian sacraments*, Frank Leslie Cross, St Valdimir's Seminary press, New York, 1951.

<sup>1077</sup> Gabriel Biel, *Sacri canonis missae exposition resolutissima litteralis ac mystica* (Basle 1910); on his teaching: P.Anatriello, *La dottrina di Gabriele Biel sull' Eucaristia* ,Milan,1937.

salvation of the cross flows to the redeemed.”<sup>1078</sup> The theologians always affirmed that the ‘ritual moment’ of the sacrifice consists of the consecration of the bread and wine which is the symbol of the flesh and blood of Christ.<sup>1079</sup> The Spanish Jesuit, Cardinal John de Lugo and his followers claimed that “every authentic sacrifice must involve an act not only of offering but also of destruction, not only of oblation but of immolation.’ He said the death of Jesus was not something different and that Christ cannot suffer nor die while he is in glory. But he submits himself to a kind of ‘kenosis or self-humiliation’ in consenting to become present under the sacramental species. By this self-emptying on the altar he does something analogous to dying and this is what makes the Eucharist a sacrifice.”<sup>1080</sup> John Cuthbert Hedley is of the opinion that the ‘separate consecration’ by the priest in the person of Christ symbolizes the ‘shedding of blood on Calvary.’<sup>1081</sup>“The Eucharist has certainly sacrificial values and attempting to eliminate the sacrificial elements and the values from the Eucharist is a narrowing of the Eucharistic idea.”<sup>1082</sup>

### 3.2.4.1 The Eucharist as Anticipation

The Eucharist is the memorial of the passion, but the Christ present in the Eucharist is the risen Christ.<sup>1083</sup> “The presence of the glorified Christ in the Eucharist makes it an anticipation of the blessed parousia.”<sup>1084</sup> The Christ who suffered in Calvary is present in the Eucharist, but he does not suffer in the Eucharist. The Eucharist is at the same time a ‘proclamation and an expectation’ of the kingdom of God to come. The Eucharistic communion is the ‘sign of the Church and the ‘anticipation of the heavenly banquet.’<sup>1085</sup> The world council of Churches said the believers experience joy in the Eucharist, a joy that is anticipation in glory. The

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<sup>1078</sup> Gabriel Biel, *Sacri canonis missae expositionem*, Lectio 85.

<sup>1079</sup> Aidan Nicholas , *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, P.93.

<sup>1080</sup> John de Lugo, *De venerabili Eucharistiae sacrificio*, disputatio, 19, 5. Jesus emptied himself on the cross and he does this same self-emptying on the altar.

<sup>1081</sup> J.C. Hedley, *The Holy Eucharist* , London, 1907, PP.159-160.

<sup>1082</sup> H.B. Swete, *Eucharistic belief in the second and third centuries*; in: *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M. Scholer, P.156.

<sup>1083</sup> Aime Georges Martimort, *The signs of the new covenant*, P.201.

<sup>1084</sup> Aime Georges Martimort, *The signs of the new covenant*, P.201. The Eucharistic meal has an eschatological aspect.

<sup>1085</sup> Aime Georges Martimort, *The signs of the new covenant*, PP.202-203.

Eucharist is also a joyful experience and expectation of the heavenly banquet when the entire creation will be delivered from the bondage of sins. Hence the Eucharist invites us to 'the wedding feast' of a new heaven and new earth.<sup>1086</sup> "The fellowship with Christ in the Eucharist is intrinsically ordered to fellowship with him in glory."<sup>1087</sup>

### 3.2.4.2 The sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacrifice of the Cross

According to the teachings of the Church the sacrifice of the Mass is a 'representation of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.'<sup>1088</sup> The passion of Christ is 'really and truly present under the sacramental signs.'<sup>1089</sup> Masure says "the signs instituted by Christ contain and make real what they represent. The Eucharist was instituted by Christ as the sign of the sacrifice of the cross. Thus the Eucharist contains and makes real the sacrifice of the cross."<sup>1090</sup> The sacrifice of the Mass is not a repetition of the sacrifice on the cross: to actualize would mean to 'make present and available that which is already present.'<sup>1091</sup> Karl Rahner says "the Church recalls what once happened but does not bring about a repetition of the actual event which happened once and for all on Calvary. Rather what happened then enters into our place and our time and acquires presence and redemptive power within our being. Karl Rahner brings out a close relationship between the Eucharist and the Calvary event;

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<sup>1086</sup>Polycarp Chuma, *The Eucharist, the discussion on the Eucharist by the faith and order commission by the world council of Churches*, Lausanne, 1927, Lima 1982, PP.218-258. The food and drink are the anticipated self-gift of Christ of the Kingdom, see, *The Lima text on Eucharist*, Edward J. Kilmartin; in: *Catholic perspectives on baptism, Eucharist, and ministry*, Michael A. Fahey (ed), University press of America, Inc, 4720 Boston way, 1986.

<sup>1087</sup> Francis Assisi Loughery, *The Eucharist the end of all the sacraments according to saint Thomas and his contemporaries*, Fribourg, Switzerland, 1970, P.321.

<sup>1088</sup>Karl Rahner, and Angelius Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, P.22. The medieval commentators also stressed that the Eucharist is the representation of Christ's death on the cross, see, Carroll Stuhl Mueller(ed), *Dictionary of biblical theology, the liturgical press*, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1996, P.278. See also, Paul O' Dea, *The Mass and the passion*, Clonmore and Reynolds (ltd), Burns and Oates, London, 1965, P.24.

<sup>1089</sup>Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, PP.22-23. In the Mass the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is made present again, see, Lucien Deiss, *It is the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist of Christians*, Collins, U.S.A, 1976, P.89. See also, Colman E.O' Neill, *Meeting Christ in the sacraments*, Alba house, NewYork, 1964, P.218. The Eucharist does not contain the death of Christ, but it refers to the death of Christ which is expressed in the separate species.

<sup>1090</sup>E.Masure, *The Christian sacrifice*, P.J.Kenedy and sons, New York, 1943, P.15.

<sup>1091</sup> Lucien Deiss, *It is the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist of Christians*, P. 89.

the Eucharist is the renewal of the sacrifice of Calvary."<sup>1092</sup> Hence the Council of Trent was able to assert that each Mass is a sacrifice and Vatican Council II added that Christ is the one 'sacrifice of the New Testament' because the Mass is the 'sacramental actualization' of this one sacrifice.<sup>1093</sup> According to the Council of Trent there were two distinct offerings; one was made at the Last Supper, the other on the 'altar of the cross by his death.' The sacrifice on the cross was the real sacrifice which happened for the salvation of the world. The first offering which Christ left to the Church was a 'memorial', 'perpetual' and 'efficacious' representative sacrifice.' This sacrifice existed in the Church in order to 'represent the sacrifice of redemption' till the end of time<sup>1094</sup> Pope Paul VI recalls the truth connected with the Eucharist "through the Eucharistic mystery the sacrifice of the cross, completed once and for all on Calvary, is represented in a wonderful manner, is always called to mind, and its saving power is applied for the forgiveness of the sins that we commit daily."<sup>1095</sup> The Mass makes present the sacrifice of the cross; it does not add anything to that sacrifice nor does it multiply it.<sup>1096</sup> The teaching of Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical 'Mediator Dei' mentions that "what is repeated is its memorial celebration, its commemorative representation(memorialis demonstration)"<sup>1097</sup> emphasizes that Christ's one 'definitive redemptive' sacrifice is ever present through the Eucharist. "Every time the Eucharist is celebrated, the sacrifice of Calvary is re-visited, re-enacted and renewed. And since the sacrifice of Calvary was offered by Christ for the whole world, its historical enactment has validity also for the whole world."<sup>1098</sup> According to Karl Rahner Christ's sacrifice is represented in the holy Mass so that it may become our sacrifice not as a result of our human effort and human work but

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<sup>1092</sup> Karl Rahner, Eucharist and suffering; in: Abstracts of Karl Rahner's theological investigations, Daniel T. Perks, Milwaukee, 2002, P.73.

<sup>1093</sup> Lucien Deiss, It is the Lord's Supper, the Eucharist of Christians, PP.89-90.

<sup>1094</sup> Paul O'Dea, The Mass and the passion, PP.75-76.

<sup>1095</sup> Paul VI, *Mysterium Fidei*, AAS 57, 1965.

<sup>1096</sup> John Paul II, 'Ecclesia de Eucharistia', 12. It is one and the same victim here offering himself by the ministry of his priests, who then offered himself on the cross; it is only the manner of offering that is different.

<sup>1097</sup> Pius XII: 'Mediator Dei, Encyclical', November, 20, 1947, AAS 39, 1947, P.542.

<sup>1098</sup> Karl Rahner, Eucharist and suffering; in: Abstracts of Karl Rahner's theological investigations, P.74.

because of the working of God.<sup>1099</sup> The sacrificial nature of the Eucharist cannot be thought of as something 'separate, or something 'independent of the cross'.<sup>1100</sup>

The allusion to sacrifice is more clear and explicit in the words of consecration: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured for many" (Mark. 14.24). 'For many' would mean 'for the 'multitude' which is a 'Semitic expression' used by Jesus to state that his sacrifice is offered for the entire humanity. Many can be understood as 'all'. The intention to secure a new life for the humanity is the motive of Jesus' coming into the world.<sup>1101</sup> The 'entire personal offering of Jesus 'in its totality, is expressed in the Eucharistic offering. Those who are invited to participate in the celebration are to offer themselves along with Christ. The Eucharist is not just limited to commemoration of the sacrifice on the Calvary, but it also celebrates the 'mystery of resurrection of the Lord.'<sup>1102</sup> "The body of Christ that is offered in the Eucharist is not his body in its earthly state. It is actually the body that has now attained its definitive state in the resurrection. By the virtue of the power of the resurrection the Lord continues to offer in the Eucharist through the mediation of priests."<sup>1103</sup> The purpose of the Mass can be seen and understood only when we understand the purpose of the sacrifice of the cross on Calvary.<sup>1104</sup>

There is only one and unique victim who continues to make his offerings through the ministry of priests, the one who sacrificed himself on the cross.<sup>1105</sup> At the Last Supper Jesus himself was the offerer who pronounced the words of consecration and now in every Eucharist he repeats the offering through the priests in an invisible manner. Hence Christ is the 'victim and offering' in every Eucharist. The manner of offering the sacrifice distinguishes one from the other. The

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<sup>1099</sup>Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, P.18.

<sup>1100</sup>John Paul II, 'Ecclesia de Eucharistia', no. 12, P.16.

<sup>1101</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of the divine life*, P.17. The sacrificial character of the Mass is manifested in the words of the institution of the Eucharist.

<sup>1102</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of the divine life*, P.18. The Eucharist celebrates not only the death of the Lord but also the resurrection which he won for the whole world. There is an aspect of life involved in the Eucharist. There is the celebration of life.

<sup>1103</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of the divine life*, P.18.

<sup>1104</sup> John Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacrament of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran) ,Hugh M. Riley (ed), P.287.

<sup>1105</sup>DS, 1743.



sacrifice of the cross was 'bloody' and the sacrifice of the Eucharist is without blood. The Eucharistic sacrifice is 'sacramental and the sacrifice of the cross is historical.' But the sacramental sacrifice which is the Eucharist, 'reproduces' the 'redemptive sacrifice in the world.' The sacramental sacrifices are multiplied and increased in the Church's worship whereas the sacrifice of Christ on the cross is 'one and the unique.' On the Calvary the salvation was accomplished once and for all.<sup>1106</sup> "In the sacrifice of the cross and in the sacrifice of the Mass the priest is the same, the victim is the same, the worship, the merit and the salutary power is the same."<sup>1107</sup> Hence the sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice and not different sacrifices.<sup>1108</sup> This death of Jesus on the cross expresses itself in a meal form in which Christ gives himself to us as a gift.<sup>1109</sup> The sacrifice of the Eucharist is the principle means, which Jesus himself established in order to bestow on the people the forgiveness of sins. The sacrificial atonement of the great immolation of the cross comes down on to the individual man and enters into his soul. The Eucharistic sacrifice today becomes a divine means for the people to enter into spiritual contact with sacrifice of the cross. The Calvary immolation occurs in the Eucharist through 'representation.'<sup>1110</sup> "In the sacrament of the Eucharist 'representation and application' of the sacrifice of the cross are the only kind of immolation to be admitted. The cross is Christ's true immolation and Mass is its perfect image,

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<sup>1106</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of divine life*, PP.86-88. Here the difference between the two sacrifices is pointed out. Both the sacrifices are the same, but the difference is only the manner of offering. See also, Aidan Nicholas, *The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II*, Oscott 6, veritas, Dublin-1, 1991, P.103. Christ offered himself on the cross in a bloody manner and on the altar in an unbloody manner under the form of bread and wine, see, Benni Grigoriose Koottanal, *Eucharist is love, a Dogmatic understanding of the Salesian Eucharistic theology*, transaction publishers, Freiburg, 2005, P.139.

<sup>1107</sup> Paul O' Dea, *The Mass and the passion*, P.24.

<sup>1108</sup> The Catechism of the Catholic Church, P.264, nos.1367,1545. The sacrifice of Christ and the Eucharistic sacrifice are the one offering of Christ under two different modes, see, Max Thurian, *The Eucharistic memorial*, part 11, J.G. Davies (tran), John Knox press, Richmond, Virginia, 2002, PP.93-94. The mass is the memorial and representation of the sacrifice of the cross, see, David N. Power, *Sacraments, the language of God's giving*, A Herder, and Herder book, the crossroad publishing company, New York, 1992, P.224. John Paul II states that the sacrifice of Christ and sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice. John Chrysostom puts it well " we always offer the same Lamb, not one today and another tomorrow, but always the same one, see, Mathew Levering, *Sacrifice and community*, Jewish offering and Christian Eucharist, Blackwell publishing, 350 main street, Malden, 2005, P.90.

<sup>1109</sup> Edward Schillebecckx, *The Eucharist*, PP.134-137.

<sup>1110</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, *The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist*, PP.125-126.

therefore it is immolation."<sup>1111</sup> The celebration of the Mass is 'immolation' because of the effect of the passion of Christ.<sup>1112</sup> "In the Holy Eucharist happens only a 'sacramental immolation' and not a physical immolation."<sup>1113</sup>

The new sacrifice of the Eucharist draws all the values and merits and graces from the sacrifice of the cross.<sup>1114</sup> The Vatican Council and Trent assert that in the Eucharist "the victory and triumph of his death are again made present."<sup>1115</sup> There is certainly the unity of the cross and the Eucharist. The "redemption of the cross and its powers of purification are given to us in the Eucharist."<sup>1116</sup> Calvin taught that Eucharist is a means to experience the reconciliation of the cross. "We have come to enjoy through it a share in the redemption and application to us of the benefits of his sacrifice..... The Supper is a mirror which represents Christ crucified to us."<sup>1117</sup> The Eucharist is a kind of 'cross' which is present in the Church extending and spreading the unique and perfect work of Christ to all in the world. The sacrifice of the cross is sacramentally made present and visible by the infinite power of the Holy Spirit and by the effective word of God. The real presence of Christ and his sacrifice become present on account of the word of God 'this is my body..... This is my blood. The Spirit gives 'divine power and potency' to these words pronounced by the priests.<sup>1118</sup>

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<sup>1111</sup> ST,iii, q 83, Art, 1. The celebration of the sacrament is a certain image representative of the passion of Christ which is his true immolation. Representation is to make present the sacrifice of the cross through the sacramental rite and application is to apply the fruits of the redemption through the action of the Church to her individual members, see, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist Erasmio, Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M.Riley,(ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, D.C,1995, P.272.

<sup>1112</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist, PP.146-147.

<sup>1113</sup> Colman E. O' Neill, Meeting Christ in the sacraments, P.218. There is no physical death taking place in the Eucharist. In the Eucharist Calvary immolation is represented so truly and is applied so directly to the faithful through the Eucharistic body and blood.

<sup>1114</sup> Robert R. Barr, The Eucharist gift of divine life, P.89. John Eck speaks that Christ once made his offerings on the altar of the cross and its effects flow to us through the Eucharist, see, Max Thurian, The Eucharistic memorial , part 11, J.G Davies (tran), John Knox press, Richmond, Virginia,2002, P.86.

<sup>1115</sup> Sacrosanctum concilium, 6,quoting the Council of Trent, session 22,Decree on the Eucharist, chap.5.

<sup>1116</sup> Max Thurian, The Eucharistic memorial , part 11, J.G. Davies (tran),P.80.

<sup>1117</sup> J.W. Fraser(tran), The first Epistel of Paul the Apostel to the Corinthians, 1960, PP.244 ff.

<sup>1118</sup> Max Thurian, The Eucharistic memorial ,part 11, J.G. Davies (tran), P.83. Calvin also has similar ideas. He said the cross is present in the Eucharist.

Through the daily celebration of the Eucharist we are able to be present to the unique event of Calvary.<sup>1119</sup> One can have constant spiritual contact with the Calvary redemptive event and can experience the redemption and merits of the sacrifice of the cross by actively and devoutly partaking in the holy Eucharist. Hence both the event of the Eucharist and the event of Calvary are closely connected to each other and cannot be alienated. They are identical and are one single event. The sacrifice of Calvary is made 'historically present' in the Mass. Each includes the other.<sup>1120</sup> In both the sacrifice there is a forgiveness of sins but in the Eucharist the sins are forgiven by 'applying the redemption to the people.'<sup>1121</sup> Hence one can say that "the sacrifice of the Mass is purely the application of the fruit of Christ's sacrifice on the cross."<sup>1122</sup> God's grace-giving will and love is appropriated in the Mass. Hence the Mass produces no new merits and graces.

The Protestants strongly held that Christ's death on the cross was a sufficient sacrifice to forgive and wipe away the sins of the world and if one considers the Eucharist as the sacrifice, this will 'threaten' and affect negatively the uniqueness of the sacrifice of Calvary. They hold that there is only one sacrifice which is the sacrifice of the cross. As a result they thought that the Mass is only a 'repetition of the Calvary sacrifice.' But in response to these problems and challenges, the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century used the word 'representation' or 'representing or making present again.' The Eucharist only makes present the sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary and the Eucharist is not a new sacrifice or a 'supplementary' sacrifice but the 'same sacrifice of the cross.' Nobody can deny the 'finality and adequacy' of the sacrifice of Calvary. Calvary event is 're-presented and applied.' The sacrifice of

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<sup>1119</sup> Raniero Cantalame, *The Eucharist our sanctification*, P.19. The Eucharist presents to us the death of Jesus on the cross. We are able to enjoy the fruits of the redemption through the Eucharist.

<sup>1120</sup> Donald J. Keefe, *Covenantal theology: The Eucharistic order of history*, revised edition with an appendix, Novato, Presidio press, California, 1996, P.55.

<sup>1121</sup> Benny Grigoriose Koottanal, *Eucharist is love, a Dogmatic understanding of the Salesian Eucharistic theology in the Calvinistic era*, Freiburg University, 2004, P.141.

<sup>1122</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, P.63.

Calvary is not tied to a moment of time but touches all time.<sup>1123</sup> According to the one New Testament writer, 'the sacrificial Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world.' This has been interpreted by Hegel and other theologians to mean that "an act of self-giving or self-emptying is an eternal characteristic of God."<sup>1124</sup> Hence one can say that in the Eucharist Christ's sacrifice is made available to the believers just as it was present to the people of that time. Through the Eucharist the redemptive works of Christ on the cross is being announced to the world and made effective and fruitful in the life of the Church.<sup>1125</sup> The reconciliation and forgiveness brought about by Christ on the cross becomes ours when we participate in the Eucharist. What was done on the cross by Jesus for the salvation of all mankind becomes our salvation.<sup>1126</sup>

"The Eucharistic separation' of the body and blood is the memory, the representation of that real separation which happened in historic times."<sup>1127</sup> The believer is able to receive all the living powers, spiritual advantages of the Calvary.<sup>1128</sup> Thomas Aquinas is of the opinion that "the body which is offered up is one and the same everywhere, be it on the cross, be it on the Christian altar. The sacrifice of Calvary and the sacrifice of Eucharist are the replica of each other. One contains what the other contains."<sup>1129</sup>

### **3.2.4.3 The Eucharist as a Meal**

Meal played a significant role in the life of Jesus. The Eucharist having the nature of a meal is the sign of the kingdom of God. In the context of the Eucharistic meal there is a close relationship that takes place between God and men' and there is a bonding to the whole Church. "The vertical aspect' of the Eucharistic meal is important in which there is a bond between Jesus and people. Without such a

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<sup>1123</sup> John Macquarrie, A guide to the sacraments, S.C.M press (ltd), London, 1997. PP.137-138. The word re-presentation means that a past event is recalled and experienced so that the significance and power are known and felt as if the event were present.

<sup>1124</sup> John Macquarrie, A guide to the sacraments, P.138.

<sup>1125</sup> John Macquarrie, A guide to the sacraments, P.139.

<sup>1126</sup> Louis Bouyer, Word and sacrament; in: Sacraments, Denis O' Callaghan (ed), The furrow trust, Gill and Son, Dublin, 1964, PP.149-150.

<sup>1127</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist, P.124.

<sup>1128</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist, PP.146-147.

<sup>1129</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist, PP.149-150.

vertical aspect, it will end up in just agape meal.”<sup>1130</sup> The Eucharistic meal ‘is the ‘prefiguration of the final banquet’ in which human beings will be gathered. The Eucharist as a food enables us to be bound together with the universe and to all people and above all to Jesus Christ.<sup>1131</sup> The Eucharistic meal is a community Christian meal in which all people come together around the table of the Lord in order to ‘realize, celebrate and to proclaim.’<sup>1132</sup> It is the meal of the new people of God which he has given to them as a perpetual lasting memory to encounter him through the ritual actions of the sacrifice.<sup>1133</sup> This Eucharistic meal is not simply a means of nourishment of faith. “It is the meal of the risen Lord with his Church, the anticipation of the banquet of the Kingdom.”<sup>1134</sup> Through the participation in the Eucharistic meal Jesus offers his very own self, that is his life itself. What Jesus gives us in the Eucharist is more than just ordinary bread that satisfies the physical hunger. Jesus offers to the faithful the ‘life that is his own being.’ He gives divine life to the faithful in the form of bread. By sharing in this life giving bread the receiver is able to enter into an intimate relationship and communion with the person who offers himself in the meal of the Eucharist. This meal has divine life in itself and hence it is able to preserve the life of others. Through this meal Jesus brings about in us a ‘qualitative change’ and a spiritual transformation. This transformation is into the person of Jesus Christ. The Eucharistic meal works as a remedy against all the destruction and evils.<sup>1135</sup> According to John Macquarrie, Mark and Mathew stress the future reference of the meal as an “anticipation of the eschatological banquet.”<sup>1136</sup>

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<sup>1130</sup> John Macquarrie, *A guide to the sacraments*, PP.102-120.

<sup>1131</sup> Xavier Leon-Dufour, *Sharing the Eucharistic bread, the witness of the New Testament*, Mathew J.O’Connell (tran), PP.38-39.

<sup>1132</sup> Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, Paulist press, New York, 1987, PP.130-131.

<sup>1133</sup> Edward J. Kilmartin, “The Lima text on Eucharist”; in: *Catholic perspective on baptism, Eucharist, and ministry*, Michael A. Fahey (ed), 3 Henrietta street, London, 1986, PP.135-136.

<sup>1134</sup> Edward J.Kilmartin, “The Lima text on Eucharist”; in: *Catholic perspectives on baptism, Eucharist, and ministry*, Michael A. Fahey (ed), P.154.

<sup>1135</sup> Franz -Josef Nocke, *Spezielle Sakramentenlehre*; In: *Handbuch der Dogmatik. Bd 2/ Theodor Schneider* (ed); erarb.von Bernd Jochen Hilberath, et.al Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 2000, PP.188-376.

<sup>1136</sup> John Macquarrie, *A guide to the sacraments*, P.109. The above idea is also found in M.E. Boismard, *The Eucharist according to St .Paul*; in: *The Eucharist in the New Testament*, J.Delorme P. Benoit, and J.Dupont, E.M Stewart (tran), Geoffrey chapman, London, 1965, P.136.

Jesus offers to the believer an indestructible life through this intimate sharing of his own very being. He himself is that bread of life (John. 6. 35, 48) and to eat from this bread (John. 6. 51) means, to believe in him and to live from the 'communitarian spirit derived from him.' "The evangelist John understands the verb 'to eat' and 'to drink' as a 'metaphor' to understand the persisting longing one must have for the union with the Lord."<sup>1137</sup> Through this Eucharistic meal Jesus works in us and offers to us all that we need for a worthy and holy life. He gives us the charity and grace. He brings about a qualitative life in us by the means of this meal.<sup>1138</sup>

#### **3.2.4.4 The Eucharist as a Memorial**

The word memorial has great significance in the Eucharist. 'Memorial' is not 'subjective memory'; "it is a liturgical gesture, making actual an event in the history of salvation in and for the Church and it is at the same time, a liturgical action through which the Church presents to the Father, Christ's unique sacrifice as her offering of thanksgiving."<sup>1139</sup> Hence the memorial is to actualize the work of God and to remember it in prayer.<sup>1140</sup> Jesus at the Last Supper said 'do this in memory of me' (Luke.22.19). This is a reminder to the apostles and the successors to present the sacrifice to the Father in memory of the sacrifice on the cross. Hence the Eucharist becomes an 'actualization of the passion and the resurrection of Christ.'<sup>1141</sup> The memorial of God's great and marvellous action in Jesus Christ is the Eucharistic meal. While establishing the feast of the Corpus Christi, Pope Urban IV praised the Eucharistic ritual as a "wonderful and saving memorial of our redemption."<sup>1142</sup>

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<sup>1137</sup> Franz- Josef Nocke, *Spezielle Sakramentenlehre*; in: *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, Bd, 2, P.282.

<sup>1138</sup> Franz- Josef Nocke, *Spezielle Sakramentenlehre*; in: *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, Bd 2, P.282.

<sup>1139</sup> Max Thurian, *The mystery of the Eucharist an ecumenical approach*, Emily Chischo (tran), PP.14.

<sup>1140</sup> Max Thurian, *The mystery of the Eucharist an ecumenical approach*, Emily Chischo (tran), PP.17-18.

<sup>1141</sup> Max Thurian, *The mystery of the Eucharist an ecumenical approach*, Emily Chischo (tran), PP.18-19. The incarnation and resurrection of Jesus are remembered in this Eucharistic meal, see, Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, Creighton university press, Omaha , Nebraska, 1995, P.111.

<sup>1142</sup>DS, 846.

### 3.2.4.5 The Sacrifice of the Mass as the Sacrifice of the Church

The liturgical action which represents the sacrifice of the cross is performed by the Church at the command of Christ. "The Church is entrusted by Christ to celebrate liturgically his sacrifice on the cross so that the Church may enter by faith and love into the action of the Christ."<sup>1143</sup> The Church celebrates the Eucharist in such a way that the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross receives a presence in 'space and time.' The Mass, becomes an effectual sign of the sacrificial attitude and mentality of the Church because it is celebrated in the name of the Church.<sup>1144</sup> The Church and the Eucharist are mutually related to each other. Those who are 'incorporated into the body of Christ' should also be nourished and sustained by the life and teachings of Christ.<sup>1145</sup> "It is the Eucharist that gives rise to the Church and not the Church."<sup>1146</sup> The sacrifice of Christ is totally offered for the sake of the spiritual goodness of the Church. This sacrifice becomes a cause of the Church.<sup>1147</sup> "The Church is an immediate consequence of the Eucharistic presence of the Christ. Where Christ is present, there is his bride in covenantal union."<sup>1148</sup>

### 3.2.5 The Priest as Representative

Only a priest who is validly ordained can consecrate the elements of bread and wine. The power of consecration is independent of his weakness and moral unworthiness.<sup>1149</sup> In the celebration of the Eucharist the priest has a special role to play. He bears 'Christ's image' in whose person and by whose power he pronounces

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<sup>1143</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, The celebration of the Eucharist, PP.30-31.

<sup>1144</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, The celebration of the Eucharist, PP.29-31.

<sup>1145</sup> C.W. Durgmore, Sacrament and sacrifice in the early Fathers; in: Studies in early Christianity, Everett Ferguson and David M. Scholer, P.184.

<sup>1146</sup> Lieven Boeve and John C. Ries(eds), The presence of transcendence, Peters, Leuven, 2001, PP.136-138.

<sup>1147</sup> Donald J. Keefe, Covenantal theology: The Eucharistic order of History, P.64.

<sup>1148</sup> Richard A. Nicholas, The Eucharist as the center of theology, a comparative study, Peter Lang publishing Inc, New York, 2005, P.64.

<sup>1149</sup> Paul J. Glenn, A tour of the Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 1993, P.388. The fourth Lateran Council of 1215 proclaimed that the Eucharistic sacrifice can be offered only by a priest who has been duly ordained. The Reformers abandoned the specific office of the ordained priesthood and replaced it with general priesthood of all the baptized. Luther taught that in New Testament there is no special priesthood to offer sacrifice and that the Eucharistic sacrament is not brought about by the words of the priest, see, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, D.C, 1995, P.306.

the words of consecration.<sup>1150</sup> It is the common Thomistic teaching that the “divine power of transubstantiation is brought to a particular altar through the priest who celebrates the Mass. God uses him as his instrument.”<sup>1151</sup>The priest is the instrument of Christ to ‘transubstantiate’ the bread and wine into his body and blood.<sup>1152</sup> Christ is the one who celebrates and offers the Mass in and through the Church and the ‘victim’ in this sacrifice is Christ himself who offered himself on the cross.<sup>1153</sup> Without priest’s active intervention the Eucharistic body and blood does not constitute the sacrifice. Thomas Aquinas says “the priest acts as the image of Christ when in his person and by his power he consecrates.”<sup>1154</sup> God uses the priest as the instrument to produce the effect. When the priest administers the sacrament according to the intention of the Church it becomes valid and effective.Christ commanded the Church ‘do this in memory of me.’ Hence the priest acts always in the name of the Church. The action of the priest becomes ‘sacramentally valid through the intervention of the Christ.’ As a result Christ is present in the celebrant through whom ‘Christ’s priestly act’ is made present and is applied to the sacramental body and blood. He is also present in the sacramental species.<sup>1155</sup>“Today Christ needs the priest to ‘embody himself’ on earth to establish the sign action of sacrifice in the Church which will be ‘sacramentally effective.”<sup>1156</sup>Hence the sacrifice, if it has to become sacramentally valid, must be carried out and administered by the ‘ministerial priest.<sup>1157</sup> “God who alone is the Holy One and sanctifier, willed to

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<sup>1150</sup> ST, iii, q.83,a 1, ad 3.

<sup>1151</sup>Colman E. O’ Neill, Meeting Christ in the sacraments, P.223. See also, C.W. Dugmore, sacrament and sacrifice in the early Fathers; in: Studies in early Christianity, Everett Ferguson, and David M. Scholer, a garland series, New York, 1993, P.187.

<sup>1152</sup> ST, iii,q. 82, a.10.ad 1.

<sup>1153</sup>Colman E. O’ Neill, Meeting Christ in the sacraments, P.219. Christ is the sacrificing priest, see, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M.Riley (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, D.C,1995, P.282.

<sup>1154</sup> ST, iii, q.83, a.1, ad 3.

<sup>1155</sup>Colman E.O’ Neill, Meeting Christ in the sacraments, PP.222-224.

<sup>1156</sup>Colman E.O’ Neill, Meeting Christ in the sacraments, P.225.

<sup>1157</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), P.282.



raise up for himself as companions and helpers men who would humbly serve the work of sanctification."<sup>1158</sup>

### 3.2.6 Transubstantiation

This is a doctrine which explains the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. This doctrine appeared first in the official teaching of the Church in 1215 at the 'fourth Lateran Council.'<sup>1159</sup> "In the Mass, despite the continued appearances of bread and wine on the altar, following the words of consecration, Christ's body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, the bread and wine having been changed in substance by God's power into his body and blood."<sup>1160</sup> The Council of Trent teaches that the 'transubstantiation as a truth' is intimately connected to the real presence of Christ.<sup>1161</sup> The Holy Council declares that "through the consecration of the bread and the wine there is effected a conversion of the entire substance of bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the entire substance of wine into the substance of his blood. This conversion is conveniently and properly called transubstantiation by the holy, Catholic Church."<sup>1162</sup> When the transubstantiation does happen the species of bread and wine certainly obtain a 'new meaning and purpose' and become a sign of a sacred reality and spiritual eternal food. They receive a new meaning and a new purpose because of the new spiritual reality which is called 'ontological'.<sup>1163</sup> There is a change of substance taking place and not a change of species of bread and wine.'<sup>1164</sup> "The transubstantiated bread and wine are the historical, sacrificed, and

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<sup>1158</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 5, December 7, 1965.

<sup>1159</sup> John Macquarrie, *A guide to the sacraments*, P.128.

<sup>1160</sup> *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos, 1413, 1375, DS, 1640, 1651. Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, Doubleday and company, INC, Garden City, New York, 1943, P.271.

<sup>1161</sup> DS, 1652. The general council of Trent, thirteenth session, Decree on the most holy Eucharist, 1551,

<sup>1162</sup> DS, 1642.

<sup>1163</sup> AAS 57, 1965, P.766.

<sup>1164</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of divine life*, pp.79-80. The above idea is also described well in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, see, *The catechism of the Catholic Church*, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 2003, P.267, art, 3, no. 1367. Transubstantiation is a change of the substance of bread and wine into body and blood respectively. The Council of Trent affirms a complete change of substance with the result that bread and wine have only the outward appearance. Peter

risen personal reality (body, blood, soul and divinity) of the sacrificial victim and priest, Jesus Christ."<sup>1165</sup> Christ is the 'principal cause of transubstantiation' and his power constantly flows through the priest.<sup>1166</sup> "Through the transubstantiation the redemptive sacrifice which was once offered on the cross is made available and present in the sacrifice of the Mass."<sup>1167</sup> So the teaching of the Church on transubstantiation is something 'official and definitive' inspired by the Holy Spirit and it is not something as, Luther claimed, the 'invention of St. Thomas'. The Church has always professed and lived the faith in the change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.<sup>1168</sup> "Thomas Aquinas and his school of thought taught that 'the actual moment of change' and the consecration happened when the priest spoke the 'institutional words' over the elements while the Franciscans maintained that direct act of God alone decided this transformation of reality."<sup>1169</sup>

This word transubstantiation has the 'foundation in the words of Jesus.' 'This is my body and this is my blood' (1 Corinthians 11:24, 25). This statement means that "the bread has given its place to the body and the wine to the blood."<sup>1170</sup> The Fathers of the Church too emphatically assert the change. "What seems bread is not bread, even if it seems such to the taste, but the body of Christ, and what seems wine is not

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Lombard is of the opinion that the substance of bread and wine is destroyed in order to have the substance of the body and blood of Christ. He holds the theory of change of one substance into another, without change in appearances, see, David N. Power, *The Eucharistic mystery*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1992, PP.213-214. Thomas Aquinas also holds the same opinion that one substance changes into another. But the appearance of bread and wine remains. See also, Liam Kelly, *Sacraments revisited*, "what do they mean today", Paulist press, New York, 1998, P.12. It was not an accidental change but a substantial change, see, Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, Doubleday and company, INC, garden city, New York, 1943, P.272. The bread and wine are substantially changed. The properties of bread and wine remain unchanged.

<sup>1165</sup> Donald J. Keefe, *Covenantal theology: The Eucharistic order of history*, P.54.

<sup>1166</sup> Paul J. Glenn, *A tour of the Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas*, P.384. The priest is the representative of Christ who says the words of consecration. The words have the efficacious power which comes from Christ.

<sup>1167</sup> Richard A. Nicholas, *The Eucharist as the center of theology, a comparative study*, P.55.

<sup>1168</sup> Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, P.30.

<sup>1169</sup> H. Grass, *Abendmahl*, vol 1, Tübingen, 1960, PP.27-28.

<sup>1170</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of divine life*, PP.81-82. Justin finds analogy between the incarnation and consecration. Just as the word was made flesh by the divine word so too the word that proceeds from the Lord makes the bread and cup his flesh and blood, see, H.B. Swete, *Eucharistic belief in the second and third centuries*; in: *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M. Scholer, A Garland series, New York, 1993, P.118.

wine, even though it has its taste, but the blood of Christ.”<sup>1171</sup> The Fathers of the Church teach that the change in the elements takes place not due to man’s power but certainly by the power of God.<sup>1172</sup> Ambrose insists that “if the word of Christ is powerful enough to bring into existence what did not exist; it is obviously powerful enough to bring to change what already exists into something else.”<sup>1173</sup> Hence the word ‘transubstantiation’ is used in the Catholic theology in order to bring out the fundamental truth that God by being present and active in the Eucharist is able to bring about changes in the ‘inner reality of the elements.’ The term is looked at as the affirmation of truth of God’s mysterious presence that happens. In contemporary Roman Catholic theology it is not understood as explaining how the ‘change takes place.’<sup>1174</sup> According to John Macquarrie the material change of the elements is not stressed but the real ‘abiding presence of Christ is presented.’<sup>1175</sup> According to Jean-Luc Marion “the value of transubstantiation is that it maintains the exteriority of the gift as such that the Eucharist is not reducible to the work or action of an individual or a corporate group. The Eucharistic presence persists beyond our conscious attention.”<sup>1176</sup>

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<sup>1171</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem, Cat. 4, 9, 22, PG 33: 1104; in: *The Fathers of the Church*, Leo P.mc Cauley, and Anthony A. Stephenson (tran), Catholic university of America press,1970, P.186.

<sup>1172</sup> Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, P.21. Cyril of Jerusalem and Augustine attribute the change of the species to the power and operation of the Holy Spirit. The Fathers spoke of the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, see, Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, Doubleday, and company, INC, garden city, New York, 1943, PP.269-270.

<sup>1173</sup> Ambrose of Milan, *De myst*,52; in: *Early Christian doctrines*, J.N.D.Kelly, 80 maiden lane, Suite 704, New York, 1958. Same idea is also found in C.W Dugmore, *Sacrament and sacrifice in early Christianity*; in: *Studies in early Christianity*, Everett Ferguson and David M. Scholer, a garland series, New York, 1993, P.188.

<sup>1174</sup> John Macquarrie, *A guide to the sacraments*, P.131.

<sup>1175</sup> John Macquarrie, *A guide to the sacraments*, P. 131.

<sup>1176</sup> Jean-Luc Marion, *God without being*, Thomas A. Carlton (tran), Chicago, University of Chicago press, 1995, P.177. Marion notes that in terms of transignification the community which celebrates the Eucharist finds itself and not anything else. The community becomes the finality and the centre of the Eucharist. What is important is that the community must become conscious not of itself but of a reality other than itself which is the Eucharistic presence. The finality of the Eucharist takes its origin beyond the community that celebrates it.

### 3.2.6.1 The Real Presence

In the Eucharist Christ is present in the sacramental form, and this presence is mediated and made available by using the symbols of the bread and wine.<sup>1177</sup> “The whole meaning of a Eucharistic sacrifice is centered on the doctrine of the real objective presence of Christ in the consecrated elements.”<sup>1178</sup> In the Eucharist, the presence of Christ begins to be available at the moment of consecration and this presence endures till the Eucharist substance subsists.<sup>1179</sup> In the Decree of the Holy Eucharist of the Council of Trent, it is declared “In the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist are contained, truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, in union with the soul and the divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ, and hence the whole Christ.”<sup>1180</sup> Christ’s presence in the sacrament is a mystery which can be comprehended by our intelligence enlightened by faith. The tradition of the Church also stresses on the real presence of Christ.<sup>1181</sup> “His presence under the signs of bread and wine is not to be isolated from his presence in the Church.”<sup>1182</sup> The presence of Christ in the Eucharist indicates his presence in the Gospels, in the world, and in the minister. Hence his presence is not just confined to the bread and wine alone even though these elements have become the special ‘focus of his presence.’<sup>1183</sup> The words of Jesus and the ‘active role of the Holy Spirit accomplish the mystery of the living presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.’ The real presence of Christ in the Eucharist is the

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<sup>1177</sup>Colman E.O’ Neill, *Sacramental realism, a general theory of the sacraments*, Dominican publications, Dublin, 1983, P.106.

<sup>1178</sup>C.W. Dugmore, *Eucharistic theology then and now*, SPCK, London, 1968, P.63.

<sup>1179</sup> The Catechism of the Catholic Church ,no.1377, DS,1641. The words of the consecration make the living Christ , God and man present in the Eucharist, see, Paul J. Glenn, *A tour of the Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas*, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 1993, P.380. This idea is seen also in Paul O’ Dea, *The Mass and the passion*, Clonmore and Reynolds (ltd), Burns and Oates, London, 1965, P.106. The Eucharist Christ is present from the moment of consecration until the species are corrupt in the stomach. But in other sacraments the presence of Christ ends with the administration of the sacraments. It is transient in other sacraments. The consecration of the sacrament makes the whole Christ present to us in the sacrament, see, Mathew Levering, *Sacrifice and community*, Blackwell publishing, Malden, 2005, P.92.

<sup>1180</sup> DS,1636. This idea is also found in Herbert Vorgrimler, *Sacramental theology*, Linda A. Maloney (tran), liturgical press, Colledgeville, Minnesota, 1987, PP.166-167.

<sup>1181</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of divine life*, P.77.

<sup>1182</sup> Donald Goergen, *The death and resurrection of Jesus*, Michael Glazier, Wilmington, 1988, PP.156-157.

<sup>1183</sup> John Macquarrie, *A guide to the sacraments*, PP.126-127.

consequence of the word 'This is my body..... This cup is the new Covenant in my blood'. This word is not something mechanic and magical. But the Holy Spirit fills these words with life and power. Without the Spirit being active the celebration becomes meaningless and lifeless devoid of any spiritual power. Hence the Eucharistic celebration must consist of the 'Christ's Words' of the institution of the Last Supper and of the invocation of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1184</sup> The Holy Spirit makes the risen Lord present in the Eucharist. "Paul VI says there is one way of presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. This presence is called 'real' not by way of exclusion as if the others were not real.—because of its excellence, that is, it is substantial presence by which Christ, God and man, becomes present 'whole and entire.'"<sup>1185</sup>

According to Edward Schillebeeckx "what is given to us in the Eucharist is nothing other than Christ himself. What the sacramental forms of bread and wine signify and at the same time make real, is not a gift that refers to Christ who gives himself in them, but Christ himself in living, personal presence."<sup>1186</sup> His presence in the Eucharist is 'real, objective and never 'subjective.' He is not present as an object or a thing. He is present as the one who gave himself to the world as the salvation.<sup>1187</sup> Cyril of Jerusalem comments "Consider therefore the bread and the wine not as bare elements, for they are, according to the Lord's declaration, the Body and Blood of Christ; for even though sense suggests this to you, yet let faith establish you. Judge not the matter from the taste, but from faith be fully assured without misgiving, that the Body and Blood of Christ have been vouchsafed to you."<sup>1188</sup>

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<sup>1184</sup> Max Thurian, The mystery of the Eucharist, an ecumenical approach, Emily Chischo (tran), P.22. The Eucharistical action is not a magical action. The Spirit of the Lord works in the Eucharist. The presence of the Lord comes about in the Eucharist on account of the power of the Holy Spirit and not because of the faith of the faithful, see, John Reumann, The Supper of the Lord, fortress press, Philadelphia, 1985, P.104.

<sup>1185</sup> *Mysterium Fidei*, AAS 57, nos. 38-39.

<sup>1186</sup> Edward schillebeeckx, The Eucharist, P.139.

<sup>1187</sup> Michael G. Lawler, Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology, PP.124-126.

<sup>1188</sup> Cyril Of Jerusalem, *Mystagogical Catechesis* 6; in: St Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the sacraments, Frank Leslie Cross, P.69.

One needs faith to discern the body and blood of Christ.<sup>1189</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx is of the opinion that “the presence offered by Christ in the Eucharist naturally precedes the individual’s acceptance of this presence and is not the result of it. It therefore remains an ‘offered reality’, even if I do not respond to it. My disbelief cannot nullify the reality of Christ’s real offer and the reality of the Church’s remaining in Christ.”<sup>1190</sup> Christ’s presence in the Eucharist is really an ‘offer of grace, independent of the individual’s faith.’<sup>1191</sup> For Thomas Aquinas the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is a ‘supernatural presence.’ The real presence which is not a physical presence is beyond our physical eyes but could be perceived only by our mind. One is able to have an experience of the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist due to his ‘real presence in the sacrament.’<sup>1192</sup> According to Thomas the “presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is a presence ‘per modum substantiae’ ‘substantial presence’ which is essentially a spiritual presence.”<sup>1193</sup>

### 3.2.6.2 The Integral Presence of Christ

“The Council of Trent asserts not only the real presence of Christ’s Body and Blood. It declares that Jesus Christ true God and Man is present. According to the faith of the Church from the moment of the consecration, the true body of our Lord and his true blood are present, in union with his soul and divinity.”<sup>1194</sup> His complete ‘humanity is really united with his divinity.’ The Christ who is present in the species does not move locally.<sup>1195</sup> The ‘total and integral Christ’ is contained in both the species and in the particles of the species.<sup>1196</sup> The Council of Trent stated that the

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<sup>1189</sup> John Reumann, *The Supper of the Lord*, P.157.

<sup>1190</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, P.141.

<sup>1191</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, PP.142-143.

<sup>1192</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church*, PP.273-275.

<sup>1193</sup> ST, q.75, art.1 ad 1m and ad 4m.

<sup>1194</sup> DS, 1640, The soul and divinity of Jesus are present in the Eucharist. The whole Christ is present.

<sup>1195</sup> Paul J. Glenn, *A tour of the Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas*, PP.380-384.

<sup>1196</sup> DS,1641, DS,1653. Christ is present whole and entire in each species. The breaking of the bread does not divide Christ, see also, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 2003, P.267,art,3,no.1377. See also, J. Neuner and J.Dupuis,(eds), *The Christian faith*, theological publications in India, St. Peters seminary, Bangalore, 1991,P.457. See also, Francesco pio

whole of Christ was contained in every particle and in every drop of precious blood. Hence it is not absolutely necessary to receive both the bread and wine in order to receive Christ.<sup>1197</sup> Thomas Aquinas stresses that “Christ who is present in the sacramental celebration of the passion is the ‘whole Christ.’ This means that the Lord is present ‘body and blood, soul and in his divinity.”<sup>1198</sup>

### **3.2.7 The Reformation and the Eucharist<sup>1199</sup>**

The Reformation argued against the real presence of the Lord in the Eucharist and rejected the sacrificial character and nature of the Mass.<sup>1200</sup> The Reformers freely rejected the ‘traditional teachings’ of the Church on the Mass by the three ‘fold theological principle’ of the reformation: “man is saved by faith alone, grace alone and Scripture alone.”<sup>1201</sup> They rejected the work and functions of the Church and insisted on faith alone. By insisting on divine ‘grace alone’ they rejected the necessity for ‘repentance and conversion.’<sup>1202</sup> Hence according to Luther “trust in God alone was the unique principle of man’s justification.”<sup>1203</sup> Luther was of the opinion that one needs to have an attitude of humility and sense of confidence to partake in the sacrament of the Eucharist. It was the duty of the recipient to cultivate and practice a ‘sense of true humility and deep faith.’ This humility would enable God to grant to him the necessary faith. This humility is also necessary to confess ones sins and to have deep sorrow for ones sins.<sup>1204</sup> For Luther by confessing ones sins he is able have a clear ‘knowledge of himself.’ Confession opened the way to experience grace of

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Thamburrino, The mystery of Christ in the sacrament of the Eucharist: sacrifice, communion, presence; in: Rediscovering Eucharist, pontificium consilium pro Laicis, Libreria Editrice vaticana, 2005, P.62.

<sup>1197</sup>DS, 1641.

<sup>1198</sup> ST, q.76, art.1.

<sup>1199</sup> On the Reformation I have used mostly the secondary literature. See, Paul J. Glenn, A tour of the Summa of St.Thomas Aquinas, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 1993, PP.380-384, Joseph. M.Powers, Eucharistic theology, Burns and Oates, Herder and Herder, London, 1968, PP.31-32.

<sup>1200</sup> Joseph M. Powers, Eucharistic theology, P.31.

<sup>1201</sup> Joseph M. Powers, Eucharistic theology, P.32. Here the word ‘alone’ is used to indicate that there is no intermediary needed in the salvation of the sinner, particularly the mediation of the Church.

<sup>1202</sup> Joseph M.Powers, Eucharistic theology, PP.32-33.According to Reformers there is no use of repentance and preparation for conversion. God’s grace is sufficient for salvation.

<sup>1203</sup> Joseph M. Powers, Eucharistic theology, P.33.

<sup>1204</sup> Luther Wrote ‘ It is necessary that one confesses his sins which are grave and mortal. (primo necessarium est, ut omnia peccata manifeste mortalia confitearis atque doleas’, WA 1 :329). Weimarer Ausgabe: Martin Luther, D. Martin , Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, (Weimar; Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1883.)

God. It also functioned to remove 'self-confidence' which according to Luther was a major barrier to God's grace.<sup>1205</sup> Luther believed that "this sacrament, received in bread and wine, is nothing other than a sure sign of the community and incorporation with Christ and all the saints."<sup>1206</sup> According to Luther by celebrating the Eucharist together a kind of fraternal fellowship is born among the Christians which is able to strengthen them in their mutual need and also their love for each other.<sup>1207</sup> Luther believes that "Salvation and grace are given by God in the sacrament of the Eucharist. But according to Luther, they are given not in the sacramental elements but in the word. Hence for Luther the beginning of our salvation is our faith which clings to the word."<sup>1208</sup> For Luther there is close connection between the word of God and Christ's presence in the Eucharist. As soon as Jesus says 'this is my body', his body becomes present 'through the word and the power of the Holy Spirit.'<sup>1209</sup> Luther is clear that "it is not the human work that makes the bread and wine the Body and Blood of Christ."<sup>1210</sup> The reformation insisted that it is the faith of the believer which gives power to the sacraments. Hence they denied the 'objective mediating function of the sacraments.' Hence they emphasized the fact that the word of God has to be proclaimed and preached at every sacramental celebration so that the faith of the believer could be aroused and strengthened. In his theology of the Eucharist Luther insisted that the purpose of the Eucharist is to 'stimulate the faith of the believer' in the forgiveness of sin. He insisted that the real presence of Christ can be experienced on different occasions. For him Christ is present only at the moment of the consecration, when the passion is preached, commemorated and at the moment of 'communion' and when the

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<sup>1205</sup> Omnes hii iudicium sibi manducant et bibunt, quia hiis omnibus non fiunt digni neque puri, Immo per eam fiduciam puritates peius polluunt, WA 1 :331.

<sup>1206</sup> WA 2: 743.

<sup>1207</sup> Though there is an emphasis on the community aspect, the need for faith is not overlooked. It is necessary for the working of the sacraments. See , WA 2:742. It is the faith of the community of saints, not the individual, to which Luther referred. That seems to be the reason why Luther supported the Church's celebration of the Mass, WA 2 :743.

<sup>1208</sup> WA 6 :514.

<sup>1209</sup> WA 19: 491.

<sup>1210</sup> WA 30. 1: 24. 8.



‘death of the Lord is proclaimed and commemorated.’ The presence of Christ does not go beyond these moments. With regard to transubstantiation Luther thought that it was a ‘human ‘discovery and that it has no solid basis in the Scriptures. He denied the concept of Eucharist as a sacrifice because he thought that the sacrificial character of Mass would place a ‘mediator between God and sinner’ which is not accepted by Luther. According to him “all believers are priests and should communicate from the chalice.”<sup>1211</sup> For Luther to treat the Mass as sacrifice is ‘idolatry and impiety.’<sup>1212</sup> He thought there is a repetition in the Mass of the sacrifice of the cross and that Mass is purely the human work.<sup>1213</sup> For reformation the Mass is only a ‘banquet.’<sup>1214</sup> Zwingli and some of the Swiss reformers considered that the Eucharist is ‘bare commemoration’ that they could not believe in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Hence they thought that the Eucharistic bread is only ordinary bread which can be thrown out. Bread and wine are merely ‘signs.’<sup>1215</sup> For Zwingli the Eucharist just an ordinary celebration in which there is no bodily presence of Christ.<sup>1216</sup> Luther stressed that by preaching one can bring about same effect as the sacraments, that is the effect of forgiveness of sins and eternal life.<sup>1217</sup> He believed that Eucharist is a memorial of Christ’s sacrifice on Calvary. But, he wrote that “re-sacrificing is a most impious ‘re-crucifying.”<sup>1218</sup> For Luther Eucharist is a

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<sup>1211</sup> Joseph M. Powers, *Eucharistic theology*, PP.33- 34. Luther teaches that faith in God is sufficient and there is no need of a mediator. So Jesus as the mediator between God and the humanity is a question for Luther. Man can have a direct relationship with God without having access to a mediator. Calvin also rejected the sacrificial character of the Mass. But he affirmed the unity of the two sacrifices. See also, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, D.C,1995, P.269. For Luther Eucharist is not a sacrifice, it is only a testament or last will, see, Mathew Levering, *Sacrifice and community*, Blackwell publishing, Malden, 2005, P.12.

<sup>1212</sup> Lucien Deiss, *It is the Lord’s Supper, the Eucharist of Christians*, P.84.

<sup>1213</sup> Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, *A general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist*, Erasmo, Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M.Riley (ed), P.269.

<sup>1214</sup> Raymond Maloney, *The Eucharist*, P.153.

<sup>1215</sup> John Macquarrie, *A guide to the sacraments*, PP.124-126.

<sup>1216</sup> Euan Cameron, *The European Reformation*, Clarendon, Oxford, 1991, PP.163-166.

<sup>1217</sup> C.W. Dugmore, *Eucharistic theology then and now*, P.66.

<sup>1218</sup> C.W. Dugmore, *Eucharistic theology then and now*, P.62.

medicine for the soul not because of the real presence of Christ but because of the healing word of Christ which alone heals.<sup>1219</sup>

### 3.2.7.1 John Calvin

Calvin considers the sacramental symbol more as a 'thing' and thinks of it not as an 'expression of the mind and the deed of God.' When Calvin speaks of the real presence of the Lord he does not accept the word 'real' as the Catholics accept. His understanding of the symbol as a thing prevents him from accepting the literal and real understanding of the words of consecration in the Eucharist. This is very much clear when he asks "how can Christ be seated at the table under their eye and yet was contained invisible under the bread"<sup>1220</sup> Calvin thinks that Christ is not any more 'physically present' in this world and hence he is not also present in the Eucharist. As a result he finds extremely difficult to accept a connection of Christ's body in the material elements.<sup>1221</sup> "Calvin does not acknowledge any sacramental presence of the Lord in the Eucharist which the Catholics call the real presence. For Calvin the real presence is not essentially different from the general presence of God in the general sense of the word."<sup>1222</sup> Calvin rejected the 'concept of 'transubstantiation. "According to him this doctrine which is taught by the Catholics is a 'moral and doctrinal error because Christ is said to be contained in the element of bread."<sup>1223</sup> The concept of transubstantiation for Calvin is an error because by it

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<sup>1219</sup> LW 42:175 (WA 7: 695), Martin Luther, Luthers Works, Helmut T. Lehman and Jaroslav Pelikan, (eds), vol 55, St. Louis: Concordia, Philadelphia, 1955-1976.

<sup>1220</sup> John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian religion, Henry Beveridge (tran), Grand Rapids - Michigan, William B. Eerdmans publishing company, 1998, vol 4, P.576. Commenting that that the disciples were very feeble in their understanding of the things which Jesus told them, Calvin asks: Comment eussent-ils ete si prompts et aises a croire une chose repugnante a toute raison, a savoir que Jesus- Christ, qui etait assis a table devant leurs yeux fut aussi enclos invisiblement dessous le pain ?

<sup>1221</sup> John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian religion, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, PP.583-585.

<sup>1222</sup> Wim L. Boelens, Die Arnoldshainer Abendmahlsthesen: Die Suche nach einem Abendmahlkonsens in der evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland ,1947-1957 und eine würdigung aus Katholischer Sicht. Assen: Van Gorcum and Comp. N.V.--- Dr. H. Prakke and H.M.G. Prakke, 1959, P.288. Christus ist nur mit seinen überräumlichen und überzeitlichen Eigenschaften, d.h. mit seiner göttlichen, majestas et providentia' anwesend: deshalb steht Christus in Distanz zu den sakramentalen Elementen. Damit ist klar, das Calvin keine besondere sakramentale Gegenwart des Herrn beim Abendmahl anerkennt, welche man nach katholischem Verständnis Realpräsenz nennen könnte. Die Realpräsenz nach calvinischem Verständnis ist nicht wesentlich verschieden von der Allgegenwart Gottes im allgemeinen Sinne.

<sup>1223</sup> John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian religion, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, PP.564-565.

one restricts and limits the power of Christ to material element like bread which is like a 'mask covering the flesh.'<sup>1224</sup> According to Calvin in the Eucharist true bread represents the true body of Christ. But he taught that the basic 'essence' of the bread does not change but remains the same. According to him there is no 'substantial change' taking place in the bread.<sup>1225</sup> "Calvin asserts that under the symbol of bread and wine we are joined to Jesus."<sup>1226</sup> Calvin was very much convinced that the traditional practice of the Church that the body and blood of the Lord is physically and really present in the 'consecrated elements is completely opposed to the teachings of the Scripture.<sup>1227</sup> Calvin does not deny the fact that the faithful are able to receive the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. He is able to see that everything happens in the Eucharist because of 'God's wonderful doing and workings and that the mediums are all because of God's working and operations.<sup>1228</sup> "But Calvin believes that the Body of Christ is something real and natural which has only one place to reside which is in heaven."<sup>1229</sup>

### 3.2.8 The Trent on Eucharist

One cannot underestimate and deny the authority the Council of Trent (1546-1563) it had on the Catholic Church. The dogmas which the Council 'promulgated', had an enduring and permanent effect on the entire Christendom.<sup>1230</sup> The Council had to counter and challenge the prominent reformed theologians like Martin Luther, Huldreich Zwingli and John Calvin.<sup>1231</sup> In the light of the problems

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<sup>1224</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, PP. 565-566.

<sup>1225</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, PP. 566-569.

<sup>1226</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, P.570.

<sup>1227</sup> Christopher Elwood, *The body broken: the Calvinist doctrine of the Eucharist and the symbolization of power in sixteenth century France*, Oxford university press, New York, 1999, P.38.

<sup>1228</sup> Christopher Elwood, *The body broken: the Calvinist doctrine of the Eucharist and the symbolization of power in sixteenth century France*, P.193. Christopher Elwood emphasises the teachings of Calvin on the powerfulness of God, quotes him from the 1541 edition of the institutes IV , 22; 'Even the flesh of Christ takes its power from beyond itself.'

<sup>1229</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian religion*, Henry Beveridge (tran), vol 4, PP.583-585.

<sup>1230</sup> Wilhelm Dantine: *Das Dogma im Tridentinischen Katholizismus*; in: *Handbuch der Dogmen und Theologiegeschichte*. Bd.2: *Die Lehrentwicklung im Rahmen der Konfessionalität*/ Carl Andresen; Adolf Martin Ritter (hrsg). Unter Mitarbeit von Gustav Adolf Benrath, et.al.2; überarbeitete und ergänzte Aufl.Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1998, P.412.

<sup>1231</sup> Michael A. Mullett, *The Catholic Reformation*, Routledge Taylor and Francis group, London, 1999, PP.28-44.

posed by the Reformists the Council of Trent took up the problems faithfully and courageously for the consideration and discussion. The Decree on the Holy Eucharist is composed of eight chapters to which eleven Canons are attached.<sup>1232</sup> The first chapter deals with the real presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. The chapter makes three dogmatic points: “the first is the Council’s statement of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist simply and openly professing that our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true Man, is contained under the appearances of sensible realities after the consecration. The Decree uses three adverbs to qualify his presence: truly, really, and substantially.”<sup>1233</sup> The second point in the first chapter is the fact that the presence of Christ ‘can and does not’ exist in the ‘natural manner.’ The Council insists that “this type of presence cannot be described in human terms, but that it is possible for God.”<sup>1234</sup> As against the reformation the Council of Trent took a strong view and taught that that the Eucharist is not just ‘commemorating the passion of the Lord’ but it is a ‘continuation of the passion of Christ.’ The sacrifice of the mass is identical with the sacrifice of the cross. The Trent taught that the sacrifice of the Mass is a ‘true, real sacrifice’ and not only a meal instituted by Christ or a mere remembrance of the sacrifice of the cross.<sup>1235</sup>

### 3.2.9 St. Thomas Aquinas

The basic Christian attitude constitutes the background of Thomas Aquinas’ thought on the Eucharistic sacrifice. He has not written a special tract on the sacrifice of the Mass. His deep awareness and his intense knowledge of the sacrament does not permit him to make any differences between sacrifice and sacrament.<sup>1236</sup> It is

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<sup>1232</sup> Joseph M.Powers, Eucharistic theology, P.34. Zwingli denied the Catholic position that Christ is physically present in the Eucharist , see, Joseph Martos, Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic Church, doubleday and company,INC, garden city, New York, 1943, P.113.

<sup>1233</sup>DS, 1636.

<sup>1234</sup> Joseph M. Powers, Eucharistic theology, P.35. Christ’s presence in the Eucharist is a sacramental presence.

<sup>1235</sup>DS, 1751, 1753. This idea is also found in Aidan Nicholas, The holy Eucharist from the New Testament to Pope John Paul II , Oscott 6, veritas, Dublin-1, 1991, P.88.

<sup>1236</sup>Dom Anscar Vonier, The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist, PP.76 ff.

interesting to note that the one article in the Summa which Thomas devotes to the Eucharist as sacrifice is the opening article of the last question on the rite of the Eucharist.<sup>1237</sup> “According to Thomas the Eucharist is something more than a mere sign or image of Calvary. It has the power of actually communicating to us the effects of Christ’s passion.”<sup>1238</sup> Thomas taught that in the separate consecration of the species the ‘actual death of Jesus is symbolized.’<sup>1239</sup> Thomas Aquinas views that the Eucharist is the ‘perfect sign’ and ‘representative image’ of the passion and sufferings of the Lord.<sup>1240</sup> St. Thomas also writes that “In our pilgrimage Christ does not deprive us of his bodily presence, but unites us with himself in this sacrament through the truth of his body and blood, always seen in their sacrificial condition.”<sup>1241</sup> Thus as a sacrament of the Church the Eucharist is ‘placed within the ‘economy of salvation.’ It becomes a source of nourishment of the spiritual life of the people.<sup>1242</sup> Thomas Aquinas gives three reasons for the institution of the sacrament of the Eucharist: firstly Christ wished to remain with the Church in the ‘sacramentali specie’. The second reason for the Eucharist is that it was necessary to have faith in the passion of Christ in order to experience salvation and hence the passion is celebrated ‘sacramentally’ in the Eucharist.<sup>1243</sup> Thirdly, to remember the passion of Christ which creates in us a special affection, it is necessary to have the celebration of the Eucharist.<sup>1244</sup> According to Thomas through the Eucharist there is the application of the passion to the humanity which takes place and the grace and values of the passion are given to the faithful. Hence by participating in the Eucharist one is brought in closer contact and proximity to Christ’s passion.<sup>1245</sup> He makes a comparison of the Eucharist to the food that nourishes, sustains and strengthens the

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<sup>1237</sup> ST, iii, q. 83, a. 1.

<sup>1238</sup> ST, iii q.83, a. 1.

<sup>1239</sup> Thomas Aquinas, IV Sent., d. 11, q. 2, a. 1.

<sup>1240</sup> ST, iii, 75, 1, c.; ST 111, 83, art 1.

<sup>1241</sup> ST, iii, 75, 1, c.

<sup>1242</sup> ST, q. 73, art. 1.

<sup>1243</sup> ST, q. 73, art. 5.

<sup>1244</sup> David N. Power, *The Eucharistic mystery*, PP.217-218, see also P.238. Jesus always wanted to remain with his beloved children till the end of the world in the form of bread and wine in the Eucharist.

<sup>1245</sup> ST, iii, q. 79, a. 1.

body unto 'eternal life or final perfection.'<sup>1246</sup> He notes that the spiritual food is different from the material food. The material food, is consumed, and transformed into oneself whereas the 'spiritual food changes man into itself.'<sup>1247</sup> Thomas recognizes the Eucharist as the "most worthy sacrament,"<sup>1248</sup> the 'greatest sacrament.'<sup>1249</sup> The perfection of a sacrament is measured and valued by the 'presence of the humanity of Christ.' Because the Eucharist contains within itself the 'body of Christ' it is the most perfect sacrament. The other sacraments can be called perfect insofar as they 'participate something of this humanity.'<sup>1250</sup> "Sacramentally the presence of Christ in the Eucharist has a great value and effect. His total presence, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, is the 'overwhelming sign' of the total gift he makes of himself to his people. He comes in the fullness of his humanity."<sup>1251</sup>

In the sacrifice of the Eucharist the same 'love and intention of Christ that were present at the time of the sacrifice on the cross are present in the Eucharist. Christ is the one who bestows grace through the instrumentality of the minister and the signs. The grace is mediated through the signs of bread and wine. According to Thomas the instrumental cause is the 'Christ's passion.' Hence it is Christ who has caused the redemption through his sufferings is active in the sacraments as the 'primary cause.'<sup>1252</sup>

"Calvary is not brought to us in our history for at the altar a real shedding of his blood is impossible."<sup>1253</sup> Eucharist is not only for the profit of man but it is also for the glory of God. According to him the Eucharist is not mere external symbol, but it is the "carrier of spiritual realities."<sup>1254</sup> When the Eucharist is celebrated, one is able to enter into the mysteries of his body and blood.<sup>1255</sup>

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<sup>1246</sup> 3,q.65,a.1;q.65,a.2.

<sup>1247</sup> 3,q.73,a.3,ad 2.

<sup>1248</sup> Thomas Aquinas, IV Sent., d. 8, q. 1, a. 2,

<sup>1249</sup> Thomas Aquinas, IV Sent., d. 25, q. 1, a. 1, ad 4.

<sup>1250</sup> De Veritate, q.27, a. 4.

<sup>1251</sup> Thomas Aquinas, IV Sent., d. 12, q. 2, a. 1, q. 1.

<sup>1252</sup> ST, q. 78, art. 1, c; q.48. art. 6.

<sup>1253</sup> Mediator Dei, AAS 39 (1947), 548.

<sup>1254</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist, P.60.

<sup>1255</sup> Dom Anscar Vonier, The key to the doctrine of the Eucharist, P.120.

Thomas Aquinas calls the Eucharistic presence more miraculous and wonderful than the creation. Christ who comes into the Eucharist presides over the faithful assembly and speaks through the word of God.<sup>1256</sup> "Christ is not crucified in the Eucharist but the rite can be called to represent the passion and so the altar is said to represent the cross on which Christ was immolated."<sup>1257</sup> The Eucharist indicates the unity of the Church and it prefigures the 'beatific vision.'<sup>1258</sup> He looks at the Eucharist to be the "consummation' of the sacraments."<sup>1259</sup> The other sacraments enable us to worship God and so the Eucharist is the 'principal act of worship.'<sup>1260</sup> The Eucharist is considered as 'greater, perfect and more worthy' than all other sacraments because it has 'Christ within it.'<sup>1261</sup> This is also because it sanctifies both the soul and body.<sup>1262</sup> According to Thomas Aquinas the Eucharist transforms and changes human beings into Christ through love.<sup>1263</sup> For Thomas Aquinas "God's purpose in giving the Eucharist to the Church was not to make the bread and wine the object of worship but to give Christians a means of spiritual nourishment."<sup>1264</sup> For Thomas one actually experiences the effectiveness and power when he cooperates with the grace of God.<sup>1265</sup> "Thomas Aquinas taught that the whole mystery of our salvation is comprised in this sacrifice of Eucharist."<sup>1266</sup> He remarks in commentary on John as regards the Eucharist "whatever is an effect of our Lord's

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<sup>1256</sup> Donald Goergen, *The death and resurrection of Jesus*, PP.88-90, 254.

<sup>1257</sup> ST, iii.83.1 ad 2.

<sup>1258</sup> ST, iii.73.4.

<sup>1259</sup> ST, iii. 63.6.

<sup>1260</sup> ST, iii.63.6.

<sup>1261</sup> Thomas Aquinas in IV Sent; d.7,q.1,a.1,qla.3, resp. All other sacraments simply share in the power of the Christ's humanity but the Eucharist contains Christ substantially. The other sacraments contain Christ by participation.

<sup>1262</sup> James W. Kinn, *The pre-existence of the Eucharist among the sacraments according to Alexander of Hales, St. Albert the Great, St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas Aquinas*, *Dissertationes ad lauream*, 31, Saint Mary of the lake seminary, Mundelein, Illinois, 1960, P.105.

<sup>1263</sup> Thomas Aquinas in IV sent, d.12,q.2,a.2,ql a.3,sol.1.

<sup>1264</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to the sacraments in the Catholic Church*, P.273.

<sup>1265</sup> Joseph Martos, *Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to the sacraments in the Catholic Church*, PP.273-275.

<sup>1266</sup> ST,3,q.83,a.4.

passion is also an effect of this sacrament. For this sacrament is nothing other than the application of our Lord's passion to us."<sup>1267</sup>

### 3.2.10 The Effects of the Eucharist

According to Thomas Aquinas the attaining of glory is the effect of the Eucharist.<sup>1268</sup> For Thomas Aquinas an individual benefits from the effects of the passion of Christ which the Eucharist represents.<sup>1269</sup> The Eucharist enables us to live in the eternal wisdom. It inflames us with charity that we are able to give ourselves to God in Christ.<sup>1270</sup> Every holy Mass increases God's glory. The actual taking part in the Eucharist is a 'glory and honor to God.' Every Mass has an "expiatory and impetratory effect."<sup>1271</sup> "It is a dogma that the sacrifice of the Mass in truth is a sacrifice of expiation which brings to the faithful mercy, reconciliation and grace because the same Christ who offered himself once and for all in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is present and immolated in a bloodless manner."<sup>1272</sup> The Mass has infinite values and spiritual advantages because these values are the values of the sacrifice of the cross. Christ does nothing more in the Mass that is far superior to what he has already done on the cross. There are no new merit and no new values. It is also important to have a 'moral receptivity' and openness on the part of the participants in order to receive the effect of the Mass. In the Eucharist man turns in helplessness towards God and God looks upon him in love and compassion.<sup>1273</sup> Holy Eucharist is the richest source of grace.<sup>1274</sup> In the Eucharist we obtain the grace and the 'author of grace' who is Christ himself. Jesus is manifest in a real and concrete way. The Christian faithful grows spiritually and continues to be nourished with the

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<sup>1267</sup>Thomas Aquinas Commentary on the Gospel of St John, part 1, no.963, P. 382.

<sup>1268</sup> ST, iii,q.79,a.2.

<sup>1269</sup> ST, iii, q.79, a. 1.

<sup>1270</sup> Mathew Levering, Sacrifice and community, P.102.

<sup>1271</sup>Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, The celebration of the Eucharist, P. 38.

<sup>1272</sup>Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, The celebration of the Eucharist, P.39. The sacrifice of the Eucharist is effective in granting grace and mercy to the sinners because Christ himself is present in the Eucharist.

<sup>1273</sup>Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, The celebration of the Eucharist, PP.39-77.

<sup>1274</sup> Paul J.Glenn, A tour of Summa of St. Thomas Aquinas, P.385. It also preserves one from sins. The grace comes to the members through the Eucharist, see , Colman E. O' Neill, Meeting Christ in the sacraments, Alba house, New York, 1964, P.206. The grace is poured upon the people in the Eucharist, See, Lieven Boeve and John C.Ries (eds), The presence of transcendence, peters, Leuven, 2001, PP.144-148.



meal of the communion. The entire faithful are strengthened by the Eucharistic meal. The grace is given to the humanity freely but this grace is attained at a high price. At the Eucharist the very life of the Son of God is communicated to the people. "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life and I will raise them up on the last day" (John. 6. 54). "Verily verily, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you" (John. 6. 53). Christ is the only fountain of divine grace for humanity and the Eucharistic meal is the 'route par excellence' by which the grace is distributed.<sup>1275</sup> Christ has chosen the Eucharist in order to nourish and sustain the entire humanity with his own life and to transform it into divine life. "Every Eucharistic celebration contributes to the formation of the Church, to the development of its holiness, and to the reinforcement of its unity."<sup>1276</sup> Thus the effect proper to this sacrament is that men are converted into Christ. So that he no longer lives but 'Christ lives in him.' He can also restore the lost spiritual strength which he had lost by his sins.<sup>1277</sup>

The offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice benefits the departed and obtain their everlasting happiness.<sup>1278</sup> Christians become the conqueror of sins and evils. The Eucharist is able to 'erase the stain of sin' especially the original sin. The major effect of the Eucharist consists in loving God and loving men. The purifying role of the Eucharist is proclaimed by the 'Magisterium of the Church.'<sup>1279</sup> For Thomas Aquinas the "Eucharist possesses the power of remitting sins without exception."<sup>1280</sup> The

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<sup>1275</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of the divine life*, P.20.

<sup>1276</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of the divine life*, P.22. Through the celebration of the Eucharist the whole community is built upon the Eucharist.

<sup>1277</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Book IV of the sentences*, d,12,q,2,a.11.

<sup>1278</sup> Robert R. Barr, *The Eucharist gift of the divine life*, P.99. The Eucharist is offered both for the dead and for the living. By the sacrifice of the Mass the fruits of the sacrifice of the cross are received. The efficacy, the power and the fruits of the Mass are all derived from the sacrifice of the cross, see, Paul O' Dea, *The Mass and the passion*, Clonmore and Reynolds (ltd), Burns and Oates, London, 1965, P.24.

<sup>1279</sup> J.M.R. Tilard, *The Eucharist, pasch of God's people*, Alba house, Society of St. Paul, New York, 1967, P.193.

<sup>1280</sup> ST, iii, 79, 3. The Eucharist separates us from sin and preserves us from future sins, see also, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 2003, PP.270-271, art, 3, nos. 1391-1400. The Mass has the atoning character and it brings forgiveness of sins. The middle ages view the effects of the Eucharist as the abolishment of sins and consequences, increase of grace and providing the path to interior purification and illumination, see, Johann Auer and Joseph Ratzinger, A

passion of Christ purifies the human race with his 'precious blood' and prepares it to receive the grace of God. The Eucharist brings grace and brings the people in an 'intensive and intimate union with Christ.'<sup>1281</sup> The Lord said "he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and in him" (John. 6.56). The third canon of the 1562 session of the Council of Trent says that the spiritual benefits can overflow not only the recipient but to 'numerous people.'<sup>1282</sup> This is due to the fact that Mass is a sacrifice. St Ignatius of Antioch views the "Eucharist as having healing properties describing it as the 'medicine of immortality' and the antidote to dying."<sup>1283</sup> The persons can also receive the Eucharist and its fruits by desire by uniting themselves with the Church.

By the reception of the Eucharist there is a movement that takes place from the 'self to the ecclesial reality of the Church.' In other words one is able to become 'other centered' like Christ who offered himself for others. So Eucharist becomes a basis for the 'eschatological justice' for others. The presence of Christ in me makes me come out of myself and my selfishness in order to be responsible for others.<sup>1284</sup> "In the Eucharist we are transformed by being incorporated into a community of others who summon us and enable us to become for the other as Christ in his life, death and resurrection was for the other."<sup>1285</sup> Through this sacrament one is incorporated into Christ and to his life-giving love. In other words the Eucharist causes an 'outpouring of the virtue of the charity' through which one is united more closely to the mystical body of Christ.<sup>1286</sup>

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general doctrine of the sacraments and the mystery of the Eucharist, Erasmo Lieva Merikakis (tran), Hugh M. Riley (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, DC, 1995, P.322.

<sup>1281</sup>Herbert Vorgrimler, Sacramental theology, Linda M. Maloney (tran), liturgical press, Collegeville 1992, P. 188. See also, The Catechism of the Catholic Church, theological publications in India, Bangalore, 2003, PP.270-271, art,3, nos.1391-1400.

<sup>1282</sup>DS, 1740.

<sup>1283</sup> Paul F. Bradshaw, Eucharistic origins, An Alcuin club publication, Oxford university press, New York, 2004, P.87.

<sup>1284</sup> Lieven Boeve and John C. Ries (eds), The presence of transcendence, P.149.

<sup>1285</sup> Lieven Boeve and John C. Ries (eds), The presence of transcendence, PP.150-151.

<sup>1286</sup>Richard A. Nicholas, The Eucharist as the center of theology, a comparative study, P.284.

### **3.3 The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ**

In the New Testament the entire attention is oriented to the one sacrifice which is the sacrifice of Jesus. The Old Testament sacrifices were necessary on the part of God, because they were the means which he chose in order to belong to his people as their God. They were also needed for the people to express their hidden and interior desires. The New Testament views Jesus not merely 'as a sacrifice' but as 'the sacrifice' (Hebrew. 9. 25-26). Jesus in the New Testament completed and fulfilled all the Old Testament sacrifices. Therefore Jesus is the 'new and perfect holocaust, communion and expiation sacrifice.' The sacrificial death of Jesus is the means which the Father used to belong to his people and to make his people belong long to him.<sup>1287</sup> In the Old Testament there was an over 'emphasis on the 'ritualistic performance of the sacrifice.' The New Testament fulfilled the Old Testament and went beyond it. "Think not that I have come to abolish the Law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Mathew. 5. 17). Jesus always had a positive attitude to sacrifice. He favored and loved sacrifice provided that it had an interior and proper spirit.' One's relationship with the people is important (Mathew. 5. 23-24). Very often St. Paul presents Christ as a 'sin-offering.' Jesus came to this world assuming human nature in order to take away the sins of the world (1 John 3.5).

#### **3.3.1 Sacrifice as a Revelation of Love**

There is only one truth. The earthly life of Jesus was always spent to give witness to this 'supreme truth.' All that he did and spoke was directed to the great love of the Father. His food was to do the will of the Father (John 4.34). Jesus wished that we experience this supreme love of the Father. We discover this love being manifested on the cross. His death on the cross was a great sacrifice for the salvation of the world. Hence the cross is the revelation of the love of God. It is on the cross that he demonstrates to us the infinite mystery of God's love. The Love is expressed

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<sup>1287</sup> Xavier Paul B. Viagulamuthu, *Offering our bodies as a living sacrifice to God*, P.288.

by 'love and through love.' The mysteries of suffering, the crucifixion and death on the cross are the mysteries of the love of Jesus for his Father. These mysteries of Jesus are far beyond our understanding and comprehension. When these mysteries are looked at as the revelation of the love, then they have meaning. In the silent hours of sadness and sufferings Christ expressed his Father's love. For the human reason it is really a foolishness to go to such an extent to suffer for the others. But Jesus wanted to give a 'witness and proof' to the love of his Father. The death of Jesus has made manifest the love of God. In the Old Testament God has revealed himself to Moses on the Mount Horeb (Exodus. 3.14). Jesus has completed that revelation in the Old Testament. On the cross the Lord reveals himself in a new way. He gives himself in infinite love. The mystery of incarnation itself reveals the mystery of the love of God. The sacrifice of the cross reveals the 'quality, depth and force of his love.' "Death is the sign of the absolute and substantial primacy of God's love. His death bears witness that God is the only eternal and substantial love. Love is the heart of God which is revealed to us in the crucified Jesus."<sup>1288</sup> We can see the close connection between 'sacrificial death of Jesus and his love' for the whole humanity (Galatians. 2.20). According to St. Thomas Aquinas "the death of Jesus is an act where the love of both the Father and Jesus is seen."<sup>1289</sup> Christ's death was to reveal and manifest the love of the Father to the humanity. Giving one's life is the supreme demonstration of love (John. 15.13). St. Thomas Aquinas says "Christ has an intense desire for the salvation of the human race."<sup>1290</sup> For Aquinas Christ's words from the cross I 'thirst' (John 19.28), express this 'intense desire.' If God is love the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross is indeed 'wisdom', the great 'manifestation of love.'<sup>1291</sup>

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<sup>1288</sup> M.D. Philippe, *The worship of God*, PP.73-86.

<sup>1289</sup> ST, iii .q. 47, a.3.

<sup>1290</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*, no 2004, P.398.

<sup>1291</sup> M.D. Philippe, *The worship of God*, P.80.

### **3.3.1.1 Sacrifice of the Cross, a Revelation of the Mystery of Justice and Mercy**

The sacrifice of the cross reveals not only the substantial love of God, but it also reveals the 'mercy and justice.' This revelation of 'justice begins in the Scripture.' God punished Adam and Eve when they committed sin according to the gravity of their sin (Genesis.3.14-19). There is an 'act of judgment' which follows an 'act of justice.' So we can see Cain killing Abel and God judged him by punishing the slayer of his brother (Genesis.4.10-16). Throughout the Scripture the mystery of God's justice is manifested. He is also merciful. He manifested his mercy to Moses. He appeared to Moses and said "I have not been blind to the oppression which my people endure in Egypt. I have listened to their complaints about the cruelty of the men who are in charge of their work..... To take them away into a fruitful land, a land that is all milk and honey" (Exodus. 3. 7-8).The sacrifice of the cross is the supreme work and manifestation of the justice of God. The justice on the cross is something 'pure and strict.' The justice of God is revealed to Jesus who has willingly taken upon himself the burden of sins of the world out of mercy. Jesus suffered everything patiently in order to satisfy and fulfill the justice of God. His crucifixion on the cross is the 'sign of God's justice' which is the 'wisdom of God.' His death on the cross was a kind of 'defense of the justice of God.' The resurrection of Jesus is the 'supreme work of justice of the great judge', the God who gives to everybody what is due to him. God is a 'judge who gives to his creatures what is due to them.' The sacrifice on the cross is a 'supreme work of mercy' because this sacrifice is a means to liberate men from their sins. Justice is wholly directed towards mercy and mercy comes as the final end. 'Justice even in strictsense is at the service of mercy.' If Christ through his passion had not forgiven the sins of men the mercy of the Father would not have been showed to him immeasurably. God wished to grant to the sinners more love and divine life through the Eucharist. The mystery of the Christ

crucified on the cross and the gift of the Eucharistic sacrifice is purely the result of the fatherly love and mercy.<sup>1292</sup>

### **3.3.1.2 The Sacrifice of the Cross: the Revelation of the Fathers Omnipotence and of his Presence in all Things.**

God has the infinite power to create anything out of nothing. This is the power and omnipotence of God who is able to act on anything. In all the sacrifices of the Old Testament the omnipresence of God is acknowledged. The true sacrifice makes man nothing in the presence of the almighty mystery of God and his omnipotence. This awareness can lead man to realize the truth of God's omnipotence. This aspect of the omnipotence continues to exist in the New Testament. The sacrifice of Christ on the cross and his resurrection from the dead reveal to us the mystery of his omnipotence. Through the cross Jesus acknowledges that everything has to depend on God for its existence and nothing happens without his holy will and plan. His sacrifice on the cross was greater and superior than any other sacrifice. The sacrifice of the cross shows every 'aspect of the mystery of God's omnipotence and almighty power.' His sacrifice on the cross teaches the whole world that God has the right over all the life and the entire universe and that he has the omnipotence to rule it. Jesus put his trust in the omnipotence of the Father: "Father into your hands I commend my spirit" (Luke. 23. 46). This same omnipotence of God is being present in the Eucharist and is being experienced. God who is omnipotent performs the wonder of the transubstantiation.<sup>1293</sup>

### **3.3.2 The Sacrifice of the Cross**

The sacrifice of the cross was a sacrifice in the strict sense. It was a 'ritual and visible sacrifice.' In the sacrifice of the cross it is important to distinguish between the 'external actions' which consist of the 'external happenings' like 'shedding of blood', 'death' and the 'inner sacrificial attitude' which is his obedience and

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<sup>1292</sup>M.D.Philippe, The worship of God, PP.87-100. God shows no partiality to any creature. All are equal in front of him.

<sup>1293</sup> M.D Philippe, The worship of God, PP.100-110.

love.<sup>1294</sup>“Christ’s death is an external visible event which is the constitutive sign in which the inner intention and attitude of Christ is carried into effect and without which it would not be what it is.”<sup>1295</sup> In other words his ‘internal will’ to offer himself was externally and clearly expressed by his actual dying and by shedding of his blood on the cross.<sup>1296</sup> According to St. Thomas the death of Jesus can be considered in relation to two wills: firstly in relation to the ‘wills of those who killed him.’ Those who killed him did not offer a sacrifice. Secondly his death can be considered in relation to the ‘will of the suffering Christ’ who readily and willingly offered himself to the suffering and death. This was a real sacrifice.<sup>1297</sup> Jesus suffered out of charity and love. “The offering of Christ on the cross is the true sacrifice of the New Law, the perfect and efficacious sacrifice.”<sup>1298</sup> His sacrifice is the fulfillment of all the sacrifices of the Old Testament. Jesus is the one who fulfills the holocaust of Abraham (Romans. 8.32), he fulfills the sacrifice of expiation, (Hebrews. 7. 26-28). The tradition of the Church is that “Christ is the fulfillment of the sacrifices of the first fruits: Christ is offered to the Father as the first-born, the beginning of the new creation.”<sup>1299</sup> The offering of Christ’s sacrifice is the most perfect and superior to all other sacrifices because he is the ‘only begotten son of God’ and because he has abandoned himself to the Father which is expressed by his sacrifice and love. It is a perfect sacrifice because by it he has expiated the sins of the world once and for all (Hebrews. 7.27; 9.12). Christ, having fulfilled the Old Testament sacrifices goes beyond the ‘limitations and imperfections’ of the animal sacrifices by offering his own very self in ‘perfect charity and love.’<sup>1300</sup> Thomas Aquinas observes that “the

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<sup>1294</sup>Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, PP.164-172.

<sup>1295</sup>Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, P.15. In the death of Jesus the interior intention is expressed.

<sup>1296</sup>Paul O’Dea, *The Mass and the passion*, P.71. This expression of the internal desire in external action is an important characteristics of sacrifice.

<sup>1297</sup> ST, p.iii, q. 22, a. 2, ad. 2. The internal act of offering by the will is not enough for a sacrificial offering. Something must be done which symbolizes and externally expresses the offering. The external offering is the essential act as an act of worship.

<sup>1298</sup> Aime Georges Martimort, *The signs of the new covenant*, PP.191-192.

<sup>1299</sup> Aime Georges Martimort, *The signs of the new Covenant*, P.192.

<sup>1300</sup> Roch Kereszty (ed), *The Eucharist of the Church and the offering of Christ*, in *rediscovering the Eucharist: Ecumenical conversations*, O.cist, Paulist press, New York, 2003, PP.240-260.

reason why Christ shed his blood' is the Holy Spirit through whose movement and instinct namely by the love of God and neighbor Christ in his humanity was moved to offer himself on the cross."<sup>1301</sup> Origen commented that Christ being a priest and a victim 'eats' the sins of the people. 'God is consuming fire.' He 'consumes human sins', 'devours and purges them.' "Christ took up on himself our sins and like a fire, he ate and assumed them himself."<sup>1302</sup> The Father had an active role in the sacrifice of Jesus, his Son. God put forward Jesus as a 'sacrifice of atonement' (Romans. 3. 25). The meaning 'put forward' is open to different meanings and interpretations. One meaning is that the "Father proposed Jesus to himself or intended him as an expiatory or the other meaning is that the Father put Jesus forward publicly as an expiatory or exposed him publicly. In these cases the active role of the Father is very much clear."<sup>1303</sup> Commenting on (Romans. 8-32,) St. Thomas Aquinas says that God the Father delivered Jesus for our sake in three ways: "by an 'eternal will' ordaining our Lord's passion in advance, by 'inspiring' in Jesus the will to suffer by fulfilling him with charity, and by not shielding him from the passion."<sup>1304</sup>

Jesus himself is very active in the redemption of the world. His involvement and his engagement in the work of redemption is 'voluntary', 'whole hearted' and 'active' in accordance with the will of the Father. Jesus is the one who gave himself for our sins to liberate us free from the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father (Galatians. 1.4; 2. 20). Paul stresses the active role of Jesus in the sacrifice saying "And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians. 2.20). There is a 'relationship between sacrifice and the obedience' which is well developed by (Hebrews 10. 5-10). "He humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death- even death on cross" (Philippians .2.8-18). The love of Jesus for his Father and for the world and his

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<sup>1301</sup> Thomas Aquinas Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 9, lect.3, no. 444, unpublished.

<sup>1302</sup> Origen, Hom. Levi. 5.3; quoted from Frances M. Young, The use of sacrificial ideas in Greek Christian writers from the New Testament to John Chrysostom, Cambridge, 1979, P.180.

<sup>1303</sup> J.A. Fitzmyer, Romans, A new translation with introduction and commentary, AncB 33, New York, London, 1993, P.349.

<sup>1304</sup> ST, iii.q.47,a.3.



'self- sacrifice and obedience' to the Fathers will be linked together. S. Lyonnet so rightly affirms that "in giving himself up to death for us, Jesus does not so much give us a proof of his love but actually does love us in fact: Moreover, in the case of Christ, death and love are so intimately linked together that the term 'proof' is insufficient. By his death, Christ has not merely proved that he loved us as no man ever loved, for there is no greater love than to die for those one loves"<sup>1305</sup>(John. 15. 13).

The sacrifice has a 'moral significance' only if it springs from an 'interior sacrificial attitude.' In the sacrifice of the cross there is not merely 'physical and external sufferings' which were carried out by Christ in absolute obedience to the Father. The interior sacrificial attitude of Jesus is expressed in an outward sacrificial action of Christ which constitutes the sacrifice. Christ's sacrificial actions were present externally. Hence the sacrifice was in strict sense a sacrifice. What makes the cross of Christ a real visible sacrifice and what constitutes it as a sacrifice is not because of the interior sacrificial disposition alone but because of the 'external happenings of the cross', that is, due to sacrificial actions. This sacrificial action would involve undergoing the terrible death and his external manifestation of his priesthood and sacrificial attitude.<sup>1306</sup> The self-offering of Jesus is his perfect 'obedience to the Father's will.' But his obedience is a 'representative obedience'. This would mean that it is the obedience of the people which they 'ought' to offer. Jesus' offering is a 'perfect submission to the judgment of God' upon the sins of the world. His self-offering would also mean that he does perfect penitence for the sins of the world.<sup>1307</sup>

A sacrifice if it is to be 'complete', it has to have the 'external action', 'interior disposition' and the 'acceptance of it by God.' Jesus' resurrection on the Easter

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<sup>1305</sup> S. Lyonnet, *Pauline Soteriology*; in: *Introduction to the New Testament*, A. Robert- A. Feuillet, (ed), New York, 1965, PP.857-858.

<sup>1306</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, PP.15-16. Christ's obedience to the Father is his sacrifice, see, Richard A. Nicholas, *The Eucharist as the center of theology, a comparative study*, Peter Lang publishing Inc, New York, 2005, P.58.

<sup>1307</sup> Vincent Taylor, *Jesus and his sacrifice, a study of the passion- sayings in the Gospels*, PP.307-309.

Sunday was the sign that he was well accepted by his father. The resurrection was a guarantee and assurance from his Father that his sacrifice was pleasing and acceptable to the Father. In his sacrifice the victim was identical with the offerer. The 'resurrection of Jesus' is an indispensable part of the sacrifice of Jesus. The fruit of this sacrifice of Jesus was that he was accepted into the realm of Father's life.<sup>1308</sup> According to Raymond Panikkar "the cross of Christ symbolizes the total and complete immolation, giving up and emptying so that the other may be."<sup>1309</sup> God suffers as an expression of his boundless love for the world. This suffering is something useful and beneficial that the other 'may be'.<sup>1310</sup> "The death of Jesus on the cross was a sacrifice because he 'freely and intentionally surrendered' himself to it as a 'propitiation' for the sins of the whole world. Through his death Jesus was able to restore men to God and destroy the barrier of sins that blocked the inflow of grace in the hearts of men. Hence his death on the cross was an offering of himself to atone for our sins."<sup>1311</sup> The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was more than sufficient to redeem every sinner who comes to Jesus for salvation, because the sacrifice on the cross itself was perfect, superior and complete which was able to wipe away and erase the sins of the world. For Augustine the only true and perfect sacrifice made to God is the sacrifice of the cross which is being mediated now through the Eucharistic sacrifice.<sup>1312</sup> "The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is the 'great mercy' (*magnam misericordiam*) of God that 'purifies us from our sins' and brings us to cling to God as end."<sup>1313</sup>

The Old Testament sacrifices were symbolical sacrifices of animals like goats and sheep. In the New Testament the sacrifice of Jesus was a "real sacrifice of his

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<sup>1308</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelus Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, P.17

<sup>1309</sup> Jacob Parapally, *Emerging trends in Indian Christology*, Indian institution of spirituality publication, Bangalore, 1995, P.161.

<sup>1310</sup> Jacob Parapally, *Emerging trends in Indian Christology*, P.161.

<sup>1311</sup> Paul O'Dea, *The Mass and the passion*, PP.68-71.

<sup>1312</sup> Augustine, *Confessions*. 9.12.32., Maria Boulding (tran), CCL 27. Turnhout: Brepols, New York, 1981.

<sup>1313</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 10.22, *The Fathers of the Church*, vol XIV, Hermigild Dressler (ed), the Catholic university of America press, Washington, 1952.

own life, of his body and blood, of himself in the death of the cross."<sup>1314</sup> His sacrifice on the cross was a better sacrifice than the Old Testament sacrifices because it opened the way to 'heavenly sanctuary. 'His sacrifice was superior. The superiority comes from the 'effectiveness' and from the 'nature of the victim.' The author of the Hebrews saw the sacrifice of Jesus as the fulfillment of the prophecy (Malachi. 1.11).<sup>1315</sup> The Christians have an easy access to the Father through the means of the sacrifice of the cross. The sacrifice of the cross brings people into a close connection with God.<sup>1316</sup> The single and unique sacrifice of Christ is more advantageous and profitable to the world than thousands of animals. What the animal sacrifice could not accomplish Christ was able to achieve for us through his self-sacrifice. Christ's sacrifice unites and reconciles the whole world to God. Hence one can say that the purpose of sacrifice of Christ is fulfilled in his sacrifice.<sup>1317</sup>

Paul boldly asserts "for our sake God made the sinless one into sin", that is, the victim for our sin (2 Corinthians. 5.21). Jesus became a victim for the sins of the world. And John says "he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away" (1 John 2.2). St. Paul states that "Christ gave himself up in our place as a fragrant offering and a sacrifice to God" (Ephesians. 5. 2 ). Christ offered himself as a sacrifice. Paul says "God put him forward as a propitiatory through faith by his blood" (Romans. 3. 24-25). Paul presents Jesus as the 'new propitiation.' Christ is both priest and oblation<sup>1318</sup> the one who offers and is himself the offering so that the "remission of sins may be effected through the mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2.5) through whom we are purified from sins and reconciled to God."<sup>1319</sup>

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<sup>1314</sup>Paul O'Dea, *The Mass and the passion*, PP.79-80.

<sup>1315</sup> Irenaeus saw the Last Supper of the Lord as fulfilling the prophecy of Malachi. 1. 10-11.

<sup>1316</sup> S.W.Sykes (ed), *Sacrifice and redemption*, Cambridge university press, New York, 1991, PP.291-293.

<sup>1317</sup>Matthew Levering, *Sacrifice and community*, P.60.

<sup>1318</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 10. 20.

<sup>1319</sup> Augustine, *De Civitate Dei* 10. 22.

### 3.3.2.1 The Death of Jesus as a Sacrifice

Paul uses sacrificial terminologies in his letters. His life was poured forth in sacrifice for the sinners. The good 'shepherd laid down his life for the sheep.' Jesus is presented as the lamb who takes away the sins of the world. Jesus himself is the expiation in the eyes of God. His blood cleanses us from sins (1. John 1.7). "Paul understood the death of Jesus as that act by means of which Jesus' forgiveness and reconciliation became available to all human beings."<sup>1320</sup> Paul and John find a 'representative function' in the mystery of Christ. Christ represents the people before the Father is a truth of the New Testament. This idea of representation of Jesus is the 'act of obedience.' His ministry for the people was a clear and concrete expression of his humble obedience to his Father and a sign of his 'self-identification with the sinners' and the marginalized. He fulfills this obedience and his sufferings' not an ordinary person but as the 'incarnate son of God.'<sup>1321</sup> "Jesus accepted his death not as a 'crime' of the people but as something that required by a deeper mystery that he alone comprehended and which concerned the redemption of all men and the glory of his Father."<sup>1322</sup> God's eternal plan for salvation is materialized in his son Jesus. Vincent Taylor rightly observes: "It was the death upon Calvary, as the Last Supper interprets it and gives the clue to its meaning, which constitutes our Lord's sacrifice."<sup>1323</sup> The Christians experience of salvation is certainly the unique experience of the death of Jesus itself. The salvation experience of the Christians cannot be separated and distinguished from Christ's death or Christ's death from their salvation. His death is an essential aspect of the life of every Christian. The death of Jesus is not just a 'historical fact but it is a 'soteriological event.'<sup>1324</sup> His death was a perfect remedy and response for the redemption of the

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<sup>1320</sup>S.Scott Bartchy, "Table fellowship", Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels, Intervarsity press, Illinois, 1992, P.56.

<sup>1321</sup> Vincent Taylor, The atonement in New Testament, PP.173-176.

<sup>1322</sup> H.M .Feret, The Eucharist today, Paulist press, dues books, New York, 1966, P.55.

<sup>1323</sup> Vincent Taylor, The Gospel according to St. Mark, Macmillan press, London, 1966, P.547.

<sup>1324</sup> I.U .Dalferth, Christ died for us: reflection on the sacrificial language of salvation; in: Sacrifice and redemption, S.W.Sykes (ed), Cambridge university press, New York, 1991, PP.313-314. Soteriology is

whole world."The most important idea behind the sufferings of Christ is the 'steadfast belief' and conviction of Jesus that the purpose and experiences of his passion lay deep in the 'providence of God.'<sup>1325</sup>Jesus did not look at his suffering as a 'tragedy' or a 'chance.'But the experiences were in the 'counsels of God.' Jesus was very much convinced of the 'divine purpose of his sufferings and betrayal.'Hence we can see the unity of 'will in both Father and the son.' Jesus interpreted his sufferings, death and even resurrection as the important 'elements of his 'messianic vocation.' Jesus looked at his passion as the 'task' and responsibility laid upon him to be accomplished for people. Jesus says "I have a baptism to be baptized with and how I am straightened till it be accomplished"(Luke 12. 50). Jesus has a specific end to fulfill through his sufferings and death.He wanted to give 'definitive blessings' to people by his death. His death brought spiritual freedom for many from their sins and slavery. His passion was an achievement to which he dedicated himself. Jesus thought of his suffering and death as something necessary to establish the divine rule and his Kingdom.<sup>1326</sup> Christ's sacrificial death is 'expiation' (Romans. 3. 25) and we are justified by his blood (Romans. 5. 9). "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Romans. 6.5). One needs to go through the experience of suffering in order to share in the 'reconciliation' which he has achieved for us. Karl Rahner writes "this event of his redeeming death accepted at the Last Supper embraces our life always and everywhere. We are always those who have been redeemed, absolved by God, our life is always grounded up on this event. And therefore the enduring event, accomplished once and for all, is forever valid, and remains the enduring law of our life for our salvation."<sup>1327</sup>

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not a theory of salvation but an application of Christ's story to our individual stories. Soteriological event is the God's saving action in and through Jesus Christ for us. In Jesus is the salvation achieved for us.

<sup>1325</sup>Vincent Taylor, Jesus and his sacrifice, a study of the passion-sayings in the Gospels, P.255.

<sup>1326</sup> Vincent Taylor,Jesus and his sacrifice, a study of the passion- sayings in the Gospels, PP.255-260.

<sup>1327</sup> Karl Rahner,Meditations on the sacraments, Burns and Oates, London, 1977, P.33.

According to Karl Rahner Christ's suffering has universal validity and acceptance. It was through his 'suffering, and 'active renunciation' that God willed to save the world.<sup>1328</sup> Joseph Healey and Donald Sybertz note the 'uniqueness and universality of the suffering of Christ.' Their words express "the challenging message (of Christianity) is that in Christ God does not save human beings from suffering, but in and through suffering. The broken Christ is the one who heals a broken world."<sup>1329</sup>

### **3.3.2.2 Sacrifice of Atonement**

The English word atonement means bringing together. The Hebrew word for atonement is 'kapper' which means to cover. Theologically it has the idea of 'expiation and reconciliation' of man with God.<sup>1330</sup> The atonement is the divine work of God in bringing the sinners back to the fellowship with God and establishing his Kingdom on earth. It is the reconciliation of man and of the world to God. The atonement is accomplished through the work of Christ through his suffering which is 'vicarious, representative and sacrificial.' By the representative character, in the greatness of his love for men Jesus identified himself with the sinners.<sup>1331</sup> The barrier to reconciliation and communion is sin. The bondage of sin makes the 'fellowship and reconciliation with God impossible. The sin prevents us from entering into relationship with God and with one another. God takes the initiative in reconciling us to himself. In this reconciliation there are two movements: firstly the Omnipotent God discloses his redeeming love and compassion and secondly man responds in obedient faith to such a love of God. God discloses his redeeming love to men at the incarnation and this love of God reaches its full expression on the cross and resurrection.<sup>1332</sup> Paul affirms that Jesus is the atonement sacrifice: "They are now

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<sup>1328</sup> Karl Rahner, 'The Eucharist and suffering; in: Abstracts of Karl Rahners theological investigations, P.74.

<sup>1329</sup> Joseph Healey and Donald Sybertz, *Towards an African narrative theology*, Nairobi-Kenya, 1997, P.222.

<sup>1330</sup> T.M. Manickam, *Dharma according to Manu and Moses*, PP.301-302.

<sup>1331</sup> Vincent Taylor, *The atonement in the New Testament*, P.182.

<sup>1332</sup> Vincent Taylor, *The atonement in the New Testament*, PP.191-194.

justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement, by his blood, effective through faith” (Romans. 3. 24-25).

## CHAPTER 4

### THE COMPARATIVE STUDY

#### 4.1 Comparative Method

The method that is used in this study is something 'comparative and dialogical method.' We exist in a world where there are religious diversities which affect us negatively and change everything around us. Even religious communities are not spared from the pressures of differences and diversities. "if we are trying to make sense of our situation amidst diversity and likewise keep our faith, some version of comparative theological reflection is required."<sup>1333</sup> If we are going to take this reality of religious diversity and our religious commitment seriously then there is a need to study comparative theology which would be in the long run useful for interreligious learning. This religious diversity is not something new in the society. It is part of our life. Today there are more opportunities and possibilities for us to study about different religions. There are much literature which are available about religions. Our time forces upon us to be engaged in interreligious learning. Such learning enables us to evaluate ourselves in the light of what we find in the world around us.<sup>1334</sup> It does not justify us not studying other traditions. In the fourth chapter we are trying to find some converging models which are 'homologous' with regard to the two traditions. These could be a point of departure for further investigations in developing a dialogical theology of sacrifice. In this work and study I am trying to put forward the aspect of sacrifice in Christianity and some aspect of the sacrifice in Hinduism in order to arrive at some similar thoughts and ideas which can be a starting point for a more intensive dialogue with the Hindu traditions. In this work I am following a method of comparative study. In this method of comparison the intention is not to indicate one by one the differences between the two religious traditions. The Christianity and Hinduism are two diverse religious

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<sup>1333</sup> Francis X. Clooney, *Comparative theology*, Wiley- Blackwell, United Kingdon, 2010, P.3.

<sup>1334</sup> Francis X. Clooney, *Comparative theology*, PP.3-6.



traditions and the diversity is around us and within us. Our own attentiveness to this diversity of religions affects us, our way of thinking and the practice of our own religions. In the midst of these diversities one needs to make intelligent choices about where we belong. But God can be experienced and worshipped in such a religiously diverse world. This choice means also that we must be able to defend faith and its relevance of our community even along with other religious faiths that are flourishing in the society. One needs to learn from the possibilities of other faiths. But there is a tension today between the 'open-mindedness and faith' and diversity and 'traditional commitment.' Hence we can say that the diversity is the 'objective feature of the world around us and one needs to be intellectually engaged in studying the diversity.'<sup>1335</sup>

"Comparative theology is a manner of learning that takes seriously diversity and tradition, openness and truth, allowing neither to decide the meaning of our religious situation without recourse to the other."<sup>1336</sup> The comparative theology shows a hope for the value of learning. It enables us to respect the 'tradition and diversity', helps us to study the 'diverse traditions' not for accusing one another and for comparison but in order to discover the truth and 'to know God in a better way.' This is the core of comparative theology. The comparative theology stresses 'faith seeking understanding' which are basically rooted in the religious traditions. This faith seeking initiates itself into deep learning of different traditions. This learning helps us to have a theological insights and knowledge. Hence comparative theology is a combination of the 'tradition-rooted theological concerns with that of another tradition.' Comparative study is not merely an 'evaluation' in order to determine the extent of similarities and differences. It is not a 'scientific analysis' by which to know the essence of the traditions.<sup>1337</sup> "Comparison is a reflective and contemplative endeavour by which we see the other in light of our own and our own in light of the

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<sup>1335</sup> Francis X. Clooney, *Comparative theology*, PP.6-8.

<sup>1336</sup> Francis X. Clooney, *Comparative theology*, P.8.

<sup>1337</sup> Francis X. Clooney, *Comparative theology*, PP.8-10.

other.”<sup>1338</sup> The comparative study is a theological discipline which is open to seek fresh and novel understanding of other traditions by being faithful to one’s own religious traditions and convictions. The study that I have undertaken can be said to be the comparative theology of the Christian sacrifice with that of the theology of the sacrifice of the Hinduism rather than mere comparison between two different religions. The faith aspect is very much stressed in both Hinduism and in Christianity. The theology of the religions linked to the basic truth claims such as for the Christian, ‘a confession of the uniqueness of Christ and universality of salvation’ in Christ. The comparative learning should be concerned about the ‘matters of truth.’ “Comparative religion is not primarily about which religion is the true one, but about learning across religious borders in a way that discloses the truth of my faith, in the light of their faith.”<sup>1339</sup> India is a country with diverse religious traditions and cultures. The study of comparative theology can be a response to this religious diversity that is existing. This comparative theology is also a process of making prudent choices regarding what is to be learnt and assimilated of other traditions. By way of study one is able to intensify his knowledge of God. It concerns itself with the truth that is God himself who can be apprehended by a faith that seeks understanding.’ This type of comparative learning brings us ‘fresh insights about the truths’ by banishing the misunderstanding of the truths of the other traditions.<sup>1340</sup>

## **4.2 Forgiveness of sins**

In this section I like to present a study as a whole bringing to focus the complementary character of yajna and Eucharist. In Vedic religion and in Christianity the sacrifice was considered as a fitting means and remedy to remit sins. In Rig-Veda we come across several passages where Varuna is besought to loose the sinner from sin and its penalty. “Loose me from sin as from a bond that binds me: may we swell, Varuna, thy spring of order. Let not my thread, while I weave song,

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<sup>1338</sup> Francis X.Clooney, Comparative theology, P.11.

<sup>1339</sup> Francis X. Clooney, Comparative theology, PP.15-16.

<sup>1340</sup> Francis X.Clooney, Comparative theology, PP.111-112.

be served, not my work's sum, before the time, be shattered."<sup>1341</sup> Varuna is the Lord of the life and death. He has weapons to strike the evil doer. He is able to heal and restore the penitent. "If we have sinned against the man who loves us, have ever wronged a brother, friend or comrade, the neighbour ever with us, or stranger, o Varuna, remove from us the trespass. If we, as gamesters cheat at play, have cheated, done wrong unwittingly or sinned of purpose, cast all these sins away like loosened fetters and, Varuna let us be thine own beloved."<sup>1342</sup> In the Taittiriya Samhita there is an offering made to Agni Vaisvanara to appease him.<sup>1343</sup> In Vedic sacrifice there was an efficacy and power attributed to forgive sins. It was also offered for the forgiveness and erasing of sins. The Katyayana Shrautasutra has a complete section on expiatory rites that cover any mistake in the performance of the sacrifice 'from too little done to too much done.'<sup>1344</sup> "It is said that the sacrifice could free one from 'papam' (evil) and to atone for ritual errors and mistakes."<sup>1345</sup> The Vedic sacrifice was mainly offered in order to bring about an order and harmony in the universe or 'rta' in the universe. Sin is the one that causes disorder in one's life. Sin breaks up the harmony in oneself and the relationship with others. In Vedic tradition sin was also considered a 'transgression of the heavenly law of order.' Hence sacrifice was made as a means to bring back the universal order and harmony.<sup>1346</sup> 'God's forgiveness through Christ's sacrifice restored fellowship and a renewed relationship with the sinner. Christ's sacrifice on the cross purified, cleansed, removed and forgave sins of the world and thus consecrated, sanctified man and saved human beings for eternal fellowship with God.' The principal goal of the Vedic religion and its sacrifices has been the removal of sins or the forgiveness of sins. One performed sacrifice to maintain the 'universal order'. The Vedic sacrifice cleansed one's sins and removed

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<sup>1341</sup>Rig-Veda, ll. 28.5 . Varuna is the Lord of the earth and heavens in the Vedic period. He is the god of of sky and of water.

<sup>1342</sup>Rig-Veda, V. 85. 7-8.

<sup>1343</sup> Taittiriya Samhita, part i, A.B. Keith (tran), ll. 2. 6. 2 ,motilal Benarsidass, Varanasi, 1967, P.152.

<sup>1344</sup> KatyayanaShrautasutra, XXV.

<sup>1345</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, Peter Lang, New York, 1995, P.79.

<sup>1346</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, Universita Gregoriana, Roma, 1982, PP.167-169.

the impurities.<sup>1347</sup> One had to sacrifice constantly to keep the order and equilibrium in the universe. The sacrifice in Vedic times was mainly a symbol of movement from the profane world to the sacred to be united with the divine power. Hence sacrifice was a means to rise above the material world to belong to the sacred divine world. The sacrifice also transformed the moral condition of the sacrificer.<sup>1348</sup> Speaking about the concept of sacrifice in Christianity it was Christ who brought about forgiveness of sins and the redemptive order in the world by his sacrifice on the cross. The sacrifice of the cross expiated the sins of the world. Every Eucharist which is the liturgical presentation of the sacrifice on the cross has an expiatory effect.<sup>1349</sup> The Sacrifice of Jesus on the cross brought redemption and liberation to the whole world once and for all. The Eucharist has the values, merits and benefits of the sacrifice of the cross.<sup>1350</sup> Hence the Eucharistic celebration remits sins and leads us to have communion with the divine Lord. By the sufferings, death and resurrection Christ destroyed the evils and sins that ruined the order of the universe and brought about a new order, harmony and unity in the creation and in the life of the human beings (Colossians. 1.20). The disorder in human beings was caused by the sin that existed in them. For Thomas Aquinas the Eucharist possesses the power of remitting sins.<sup>1351</sup> According to Christian teachings sin destroys the fellowship and relationship with God. For a Vedic worshipper sin was something that destroyed personal relationship and fellowship with God in the absence of the Vedic sacrifices.<sup>1352</sup>

In both Eucharist and yajna there is the idea of 're-integration' or 'recapitulation'. In yajna it is conceived as 'assembling' or 're-constituting' the dismembered body of Prajapati.<sup>1353</sup> This is symbolized by the rite of 'agnicayana'

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<sup>1347</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, PP.315-316.

<sup>1348</sup> Maria Susai Dhavamony, Classical Hinduism, P.186.

<sup>1349</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, The celebration of the Eucharist, Burns and Oates, New York, 1968 P.38.

<sup>1350</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, The celebration of the Eucharist, PP.39-70.

<sup>1351</sup> See chapter three, (footnote no. 1431).

<sup>1352</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.316.

<sup>1353</sup> Taittiriya Brahmana, 1, 2, 6, 1; Gopatha Brahmana 2, 4, 12.

(building up of the fireplace). In the Eucharist it is spoken of as 'the building up of the body of Christ' which is symbolized in every celebration of the Eucharist by the rite of 'offering and communion.' In the rite of offering the Christians offer to God the gifts in the creation, and themselves as gifts, not because God needs them for his satisfaction. But this is an expression and manifestation of the creature's deep gratitude and thanksgiving to God. The rite of communion in which the Christians partake, expresses the unity of all the members in Jesus Christ. The believers have a share and participation in the one body of Christ.<sup>1354</sup> Any action which is productive is a sacrifice and such an action can be a sacred action. Any productive action is a cultic action. The productive action is something divine; otherwise it is no action at all: it will be something destructive; non-divine and so devilish. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross 'kenosis' is a 'selfless action par excellence.' The Eucharist is the sacred action par excellence which commemorates and celebrates the 'paschal mystery'<sup>1355</sup> and the kenosis of Jesus Christ.

#### **4.2.1 Immortality**

According to Brahmanas the gods were originally mortal and they became immortal (amrta) by offering sacrifice. The gods had to struggle to attain immortality. Sacrifice was the way to attain immortality because it was the 'original act.'<sup>1356</sup> In other words in Vedic times the people experienced life and happiness through the means of sacrifice. In the teachings of St. John, it is seen that the Eucharistic bread gives life to the whole world. Those who eat of the bread that came down from heaven will experience abundance of life. The Eucharist provides one with blessings of immortality. One who eats of the living bread will never die. "I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world" (John.6.51). Hence the Eucharist grants immortality and life in abundance to those

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<sup>1354</sup> Louis Malieckal, Yajna and Eucharist, Dharmaram publications, Bangalore, 1989, P.329.

<sup>1355</sup> Louis Malieckal, Yajna and Eucharist, PP.326ff.

<sup>1356</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, mantramanjari, Darton Longmann, London, 1977 P.380.

who approach it in faith. The Eucharist is a supreme means initiated by Jesus to communicate eternal life. St. Ignatius of Antioch has also considered the Eucharist as the 'medicine of immortality.'<sup>1357</sup> Those who eat of the flesh and drink of the blood of the Lord are able to live in him eternally and be able to experience life in abundance. This experience of life in Jesus makes one immortal (John .6. 56). "The soma sacrifice is considered by some to have inner relationship with the Eucharistic sacrifice."<sup>1358</sup> Soma is a 'sacred drink' and by drinking it one is able to attain immortality.<sup>1359</sup> Christ is the one who ultimately grants immortality. Those who believe in him will never die.

From the Vedic perspective man is said to reach the 'naval of the world by performing sacrifice'<sup>1360</sup> "Sacrifice helps man to overcome his earthly and worldly conditions."<sup>1361</sup> By means of sacrifice both gods and men acquire immortality.<sup>1362</sup> It is through sacrifice man reaches heaven,<sup>1363</sup> obtains freedom<sup>1364</sup> happiness.<sup>1365</sup> "From the Vedic point of view sacrifice is the highest action because through it, man collaborates with the world and gods to sustain the entire universe."<sup>1366</sup> The sacrifice is an act by which the universe comes into existence and by which it is maintained and preserved. The sacrifice reaches beyond the present time to the past and to the future. The sacrifice liberates man from the 'time limit.'<sup>1367</sup>

#### 4.2.2 The Centre

The Vedic sacrifice was considered to be the 'pillar', centre, the 'supreme principle' and heart of Vedic religious traditions. The Vedic life of the people revolved around this supreme principle of sacrifice. They obtained everything in

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<sup>1357</sup> Owen F. Cummings, Eucharistic doctors a theological history, Paulist press, America, 2005, P.16.

<sup>1358</sup> Raymundo Panikkar (ed), The Vedic experience, P.366.

<sup>1359</sup> See chapter one (footnote nos. 498,499).

<sup>1360</sup> Rig-Veda, 1. 164. 35.

<sup>1361</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, IX .4. 4. 15.

<sup>1362</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, 11. 2. 2. 8-14 and also IV . 6. 9. 12.

<sup>1363</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, VIII. 6. 1. 10.

<sup>1364</sup> Satapatha Brahmana, XI. 1. 8. 5.; Chandogya Upanishad. II .24. 12.

<sup>1365</sup> Jaiminiya – Brahmana, 11. 140.

<sup>1366</sup> Bhagavad-Gita III, 10- 16, 20.

<sup>1367</sup> Raymundo Panikkar, The study of time, springer-verlag, New York, 1978, PP.695-696.

their life by means of the sacrifice. They felt very much the need of the sacrifice in order to relate and associate themselves with God and to elevate their minds and heart to the sacred and finally to depend on him for everything.<sup>1368</sup> In the holistic view of the Vedas yajna constitutes the central and all inclusive point. It enters and functions everywhere as pointed out by a Vedic passage which reads “unless the priest offers the morning sacrifice (agnihotra) that day the sun will not rise.”<sup>1369</sup> Sacrifice is the soul of all creatures and of all Gods.<sup>1370</sup> Yajna consists of three components-‘karman, rita, and tapas.’ As concrete action yajna is ‘creative and redemptive.’ This similar idea can be found in the Christian concept of sacrifice. For the Catholics the Eucharistic sacrifice is believed to be the heart of the Christian life. It is considered as the climax of all the Christian worships. The Eucharist is the centre of the Christian community and the community of believers draws strength and vitality from the Eucharist in which Christ himself is really and truly present. This is because when the Eucharist is being celebrated the central event of salvation and the essential Christian mysteries of our redemption are being present in the Eucharist which are accessible to the faithful. It is in the Eucharist that the whole Christian mysteries are celebrated, remembered and Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is being celebrated. The Eucharist is the “source and summit of the Christian life.”<sup>1371</sup> The Eucharist is a sacred action which is ‘creative and redemptive’ and in Eucharist there is a ‘divinizing operation’ and the redemptive action of God is experienced. As yajna is the essence of the Vedic religion, the Eucharistic sacrifice too is an essential sacrament and sacrifice in which our redemption is celebrated. In this concrete vedic ritual sacrifice there is a rite of building ‘fire altar’ (agnicayajna) performed. In the Eucharistic sacrifice too there is the altar of sacrifice.

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<sup>1368</sup> See chapter one (footnote nos.87, 88).

<sup>1369</sup> Sathapatha Brahmana, 11, 3, 1, 5.

<sup>1370</sup> Sarvesam va esa bhutanam sarvesam devanam atma yad yajnah. Sathapatha Brahmana, XI, 3, 2, 1.

<sup>1371</sup> Lumen Gentium, 11.

### 4.2.3 The Birth

In the Vedic sacrifice a person experiences re-birth by way of sacrificing. New birth comes about through sacrifice in Vedic tradition.<sup>1372</sup> This is true of the Eucharistic sacrifice. A believer or a Christian is transformed and renewed by his participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice. He has been transformed by receiving the Body and Blood of Christ. This is a spiritual birth which a believer experiences in the Eucharistic sacrifice. The Eucharist is able to transform one into Christ.<sup>1373</sup> The person becomes spiritually renewed. One experiences spiritual life when he or she is related to Christ in a deeper way. A Christian experiences a new birth when he receives Christ into his life, lives in Christ and lives according to the teachings and commandments of Christ.

### 4.2.4 The Correct Performance

During the performance of the Vedic sacrifice it was extremely important to pronounce the mantras correctly and to follow the exact execution of the prescribed ceremony for the efficacy of the sacrifice. The efficacy of the sacrifice greatly depended on such a careful and meticulous performance and execution of the sacrifice. The ritual had to be carried out without mistakes.<sup>1374</sup> The effect of the sacrifice depends on the 'correct pronunciation of mantras which means the words had to be distinctly and clearly pronounced, and effect depended on the precision of the rituals in the Vedic sacrifice.<sup>1375</sup> This is also applicable in the Eucharistic celebration. The priest, who celebrates the Eucharist, is expected to pronounce the words of consecration correctly and distinctly and to carry out the rituals as officially prescribed and formulated by the Church. Here the priest has to have the intention and will of the Church in carrying out the celebration of the sacraments. He performs rituals according to the expectation and will of the Church and not

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<sup>1372</sup> See chapter one (footnote nos. 96, 97).

<sup>1373</sup> See chapter three (footnote no. 1442).

<sup>1374</sup> Klaus K. Klostermaier, *Hinduism, one world publications, munshiram manoharlal publishers, Benaras, 1933* PP.42-44.

<sup>1375</sup> See chapter one (footnote nos. 205, 224).



according to his own. It is not his own personal intention. In the Vedic rituals the sacred word was very important along with the ritual action. In the Eucharistic sacrifice too the words of consecration are very important along with the ritual actions. The words are the word of Jesus himself and these words are powerful to transform the sacramental elements into the body and blood of Christ. The priest is obliged to relate the sign and the meaning. If the Eucharist sacrifice has to be valid it has to be carried out by a ministerial priest.<sup>1376</sup>

#### **4.2.5 The Sacraments**

The samsakars or the sacraments are also part of the sacrifice in Hindu religion. The samskaras are the 'domestic sacrifices.' In Hinduism the sacraments are the 'visible signs' of the inward and spiritual grace. This similar idea is also found in Christianity. We have seen in the chapter on sacraments that the sacraments in Christianity are the visible signs of the invisible grace of God. The sacraments communicate the divine grace to the believers. The fire is kindled at every samsakars of the Hindus. The fire plays a great role of being a mediator between God and man. The fire is also a symbol of the presence of God. In Christianity too one is able to see the importance of fire which is being kindled at the time of the celebration of every sacrament. Light is symbolic of the presence of God. The symbolism has a very significance in Hindu sacraments as it has in the Catholic sacraments. In both the traditions material elements are used in the sacraments in order to communicate spiritual meanings. The water is used in Hinduism against the 'evil influences' and as a symbol of spiritual purity and cleanliness. The water has also a very important meaning of purification in Christianity. The holy water is sprinkled as sign of purification and to banish the evil influences from one's life. The Water played an important role in purification in India.<sup>1377</sup> In Hinduism marriage is a sacrament which is a permanent contract of love between the couple. It is an unbreakable

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<sup>1376</sup> See chapter three (footnote nos. 1260,1261).

<sup>1377</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.80.

covenantal union of love. Besides the couple there is also a third person invisibly involved and present in the Hindu marriage: God. These ideas are similarly present in the Catholic teaching on marriage. In the teaching of the Church the marriage bond is established by God himself and the validly contracted marriage cannot be dissolved except by death.<sup>1378</sup> Marriage is a sacrifice according to the Hindu teaching. In Christian understanding too it can be interpreted as a sacrifice in the sense of offering themselves, with all their joys and sorrows and offering their life itself to the God who is the source of everything. A sacrifice is effected when something is offered to God. In baptism there is an offering and surrender of the whole self to God. The samskaras sanctify the Hindus. The Christians are sanctified by reception of the sacraments. In the Christian sacraments the sanctification of man is made possible.<sup>1379</sup> In both the traditions the rituals are used which communicate spiritual meanings and values. The symbolic acts, elements, and words involved in the different forms and formulas of the Eucharist bring to one's mind Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The sacrificial 'symbolism of the Eucharist invoked the notion of encounter between sinful humans and a holy God.'<sup>1380</sup>

In Hinduism there is arti which is the waving of lights in front of the deities. This is to show respect, devotion and love. In Christianity too this incensing is used during the celebration of the Eucharist. The incensing is done in order to express our adoration, prayers and love. The incense rises to the height as a symbolism of our own prayers rising from our hearts to the almighty God. In the Hindu puja the deep bow is done to the deity. This profound bow to the deity in Hinduism symbolises a 'whole offering of one's self and one's whole existence.' This has been adopted by the Indian Church to give deep and profound bow in front of the Blessed Sacrament. This indicates a deep respect and adoration to God who is present.

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<sup>1378</sup>Canon Law, 1141.

<sup>1379</sup>See chapter two (footnote no.691).

<sup>1380</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.187.

The five important sacrifices (mahayajnas) in Hinduism have a very important similarity to the teachings of Christ and especially to the teachings of the Church on the seven 'corporal works of mercy': visit the imprisoned, feed the hungry, shelter the homeless etc.<sup>1381</sup> These corporal works of mercy are productive and sacred actions. Hence they are ritual actions.<sup>1382</sup> In Hinduism the mahayajnas are the daily sacrifices of a Hindu. Hospitality and service is sacrifice to many, offering a portion of one's daily meal to the creatures is a sacrifice to them (bhutayajna). The Mahayajnas relate a man's life and relationship to all other human beings, to all plants, animals and to God himself. "Work, other than those done as a selfless service (seva) binds human beings. Therefore becoming free from selfish attachment to the fruits of work, do your duty efficiently as a service to me"<sup>1383</sup> In Hinduism the selfless service and work is a sacrifice. The mahayajnas are the good works and the sacred actions done for the humanity. The seven corporal works of mercy are also expressions of love and service for the suffering humanity. Hence they are sacred actions and thus they can be considered as sacrifice. In Hinduism the selfless service is reflected in the service of the humanity. Jesus too came to the world to serve and not be served (Mathew. 20. 28). He served by washing the feet of his disciples at the Last Supper (John. 13. 1-17). But his service and love towards the humanity was expressed ultimately in great measure by his sacrifice on the cross (John. 15.13). His love for the whole world reaches its climax on the cross when he sacrificed himself. All the corporal works of mercy reach their height on the cross of Christ. Hence in both Christianity and in Hinduism this aspect of selfless service and works of mercy can be considered a sacrifice. In Both Christianity and in Hinduism the element of service is related to the element of sacrifice.

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<sup>1381</sup> Works of mercy, Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2 edition, United States catholic conference, Inc, 1997, Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2447.

<sup>1382</sup> Louis Malieckal, Yajna and Eucharist, PP.330-331.

<sup>1383</sup> Bhagavad-Gita, 3.9. "Yajnarthat karmano nyatra loko yam karma-bandhanah tad-artham karma kaunteya mukta-sangah samacara."

### 4.3 Similarity Based on the Aim

In the Vedic sacrifice there were positive and negative goals of the sacrifice. The positive goal was to 'actualize the divine life' among the men and the negative goal was to 'harm the enemies.' The most common way in which the relationship between men and the offering is made visible is through a meal.<sup>1384</sup> Both the Hindu and Christian traditions the sacrifice has the goal of attainment of the sacred. In both the traditions the rituals are ways and means to reach out to the divine.<sup>1385</sup> The sacred material objects in the rituals enable the people to be in touch with the divine Being. In both the 'traditions there is the idea of self-giving, abandoning self-interest.'<sup>1386</sup> This 'aspect of establishing a communication with the divine world' is seen as a goal both in Christianity and in Hinduism. Both Hinduism and Christianity understood the rituals or sacrifice as bringing the two worlds, sacred and profane, together. In Both the traditions the presence of God or deity is central which mystically united the humans with the divine. The Indian text says "he who offers horse sacrifice and who thus knows it obtains intimate union with all these deities."<sup>1387</sup> The Christians who participate in the Eucharistic sacrifice can ponder on the verse "I am the living bread that has come down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread he shall live forever and the bread that I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.... the one eating my flesh and drinking my blood abides in me and I in him" (John. 6. 51, 56). Hence we can say that sacrifice provided basis for human beings union with God in both the cases. In both the traditions the rituals symbolism had 'common features.' Both manifest the difference and distance between the 'sacred and profane world' as 'part of the absolute difference between human sinfulness and God's holiness.'<sup>1388</sup> In both religious experiences the gestures are used,

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<sup>1384</sup> Robertson Smith, *The religions of the semites*, London, 1894, PP.353-387.

<sup>1385</sup> See chapter one (footnote, nos.93,94).

<sup>1386</sup> Noel Sheth, *Hindu sacrifice and Christian Eucharist*; in: *Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church*, Francis Gonsalves (ed), Vidyajyoti Publishing, Delhi, 2000, P.72.

<sup>1387</sup> *Taittiriya Brahmana*, 3. 9. 20.

<sup>1388</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, *Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity*, P.317.

gestures like raising eyes to heaven, 'folding the hands in devotion,' 'sacrificial elements,' 'voices raising towards heaven' clapping which symbolized the temporary union between both the worlds. The sacrifice in both the traditions involves 'bringing two worlds together and the 'consecration or transformation of the profane.' In both the cases God comes to the human beings through the offerings that have been consecrated.<sup>1389</sup> In both cases there is a 'religious experience' of the ultimate sacred reality which is most intensive. The religious experience is the "response of the total being to what is apprehended as ultimate reality."<sup>1390</sup> In both religious traditions man responds to God in humble and surrendering obedience to God. In other words there are elements of preparation or consecration of the profane and transformation of the profane during the 'encounter between God and human beings.'<sup>1391</sup>

Both in the Vedic and Christian sacrifice the sacrificial meal is an essential part. The Jews treated the sacrificial meal as something sacred, in which man is able to share on the condition that he observes the ritual laws (Leviticus. 7. 15-20). This idea is found in the peace-offering in which a part of the sacrificial animal is burnt on the altar and the other part is eaten by the offerer, his friends and the relatives in a meal (1 Samuel. 1.4; Leviticus. 3). This peace -offering was an occasion of a common meal which signified union with God in a sacrificial context. Similarly the celebration of the Supper effects a fellowship in Christ. As St. Paul points out this communion with Christ is expressed in many ways: living with Christ (Romans.8.17), suffering and being crucified with him (Romans. 6.6; Galatians. 2. 19), dying and being buried with him and being raised with him (Colossians. 2. 12; 3.1, Ephesians. 2. 6). The Eucharist is a meal sacrifice in which the participants experience spiritual 'communion and fellowship' with the Lord. As a religious meal

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<sup>1389</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.318.

<sup>1390</sup> Joachim Wach, Typse of religious experience Christian and Non-Christian, University of Chicago press, Chicago, 1951, PP.32-33.

<sup>1391</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.317.

the Eucharist used variety of symbols to communicate 'transcendental realities' to the profane world. Sacred materials, acts, and words of the Eucharist symbolized 'the mysterious union' attained between the participants and Jesus Christ.<sup>1392</sup> In other words the Eucharistic celebration and the sacrifice in Hinduism enable the faithful to have an intimate experience of communion with their own God.<sup>1393</sup> In many of the Vedic sacrifices and in the case of pujas the worshippers can participate in the offerings just as in the case of the Eucharist. In some sacrifices and pujas the deities consume the food and leave some for the worshipper. In both Hinduism and Christianity the worshippers enter into communion with the divine and participate in the divine life by receiving the prasada and Holy Communion respectively.<sup>1394</sup> The believers in both religions express and crave for reaching out to the divine.<sup>1395</sup> Through the sacraments in Christianity and through the various sacrifices in Hinduism man builds up the contact and communion with the divine world. The rituals in both the traditions help people to transcend 'profane world and space and thus enter into the realm of the sacred.'<sup>1396</sup>

#### **4.3.1The OM**

"OM' (Aum) is the most 'universal', 'non-personal holy sound-symbol.' It is a unique sound and regular repetition of the word which has a positive effect on the body and mind. OM can be interpreted as the Logos of the writer of the fourth Gospel. Logos, the Word, which has made flesh, is a medium between God and man. The repetition of the word OM brings presence of God. OM and eternal word

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<sup>1392</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.259.

<sup>1393</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.75.

<sup>1394</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.71.

<sup>1395</sup> This idea of 'reaching out to the divine' already mentioned and described under the title 'concept of sacrifice in the Vedic traditions. This yearning for the beyond is very much visible in both the religions. The rituals in both the traditions have this ultimate goal to possess and experience the divine in one's life. See chapter one,(footnote nos. 93,94).

<sup>1396</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves(ed), P.72.

are inseparable.”<sup>1397</sup> John in the Gospel says “in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God” (John. 1. 1). This idea of John is almost similar to the verses in the Vedas: “In the beginning was prajapati- Brahman (prajapatir vai idam asit), with whom was the Word (Tasya vag dvitiya asit), and the Word was verily Brahman (vag vai paramam Brahma).”<sup>1398</sup> OM is a sacred and powerful word for the Hindus. As we have seen, it is the ‘eternal word.’ When it is repeated, it is able to bring power and the presence of God. “I am the ritual, I am the sacrifice, I am the offering, I am the herb, I am the mantra, I am the clarified butter, I am the fire, I am the oblation..... I am the object of the knowledge, the sacred syllable OM.”<sup>1399</sup> Lord Krishna himself is the offering and he himself is the eternal OM, the sacred Word in Hinduism.<sup>1400</sup> For the Christians too the sacred Word made flesh is Christ himself. He is the most powerful Word of God which is made flesh at the incarnation. The name ‘Jesus’ is a sacred and powerful word for the Christians. The repetition of the word ‘Jesus’ brings power and the presence of God. In Vedic sacrifice the sacred word is a constant companion which directs the ritual action.<sup>1401</sup> In the Eucharistic sacrifice the Word of God is important and it is the Word of God which transforms the Eucharistic elements into the Body and Blood of Christ.

### 4.3.2 Gift Aspect

In the New Testament (Mark. 10.45) Christ offered himself to the Father for the sake of the whole world. It was the sacrifice unto death. In the New Testament sacrifice was a ‘self-offering to God.’ In the Vedic sacrifice too we can find this similar idea that the primordial man, the purusa, who is the prajapati, sacrificed himself and hence the beings came into existence. According to Aurobindo the

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<sup>1397</sup>Cherian Puthenpura, Yoga spirituality, a Christian pastoral understanding, Camillain publications, Bangalore, 1997, P.140. It is out of this holiest of all holy words, the mother of all names and forms, the eternal OM, that the whole universe may be supposed to have been created.

<sup>1398</sup> Cherian Puthenpura, Yoga spirituality, a Christian pastoral understanding, P.140.

<sup>1399</sup> Bhagavad-Gita, 9, 16-18.

<sup>1400</sup> Bhagavad –Gita, 9. 16-18. “Aham kratur aham yajnah svadhaham aham ausadham, mantro ham aham evajyam aham agnir aham hutam, pitaham asya jagato mata dhata pitamahah, vedyam pavitram omkara rk sama yajur eva ca.” Krishna is the supreme God. He is the personal deity. Krishna is the supreme truth, see Bhagavad –Gita 3.

<sup>1401</sup>See chapter one (footnote no.386).

essential thing of a sacrifice is "the self-giving."<sup>1402</sup> In both Christian and in Vedic traditions the sacrifice is treated as self-giving. The real sacrifice in Hinduism takes place 'within one self.' The inner participation and internal attitude is important when offering sacrifice. In the 'sacrifice of Jesus too there was an internal sacrificial attitude which expressed itself in external actions.'<sup>1403</sup>

The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross which gives life to the whole world is the central point of the Christian concept of sacrifice. The Christian, when he celebrates the Eucharistic sacrifice, enters into contact with the sacrifice on the cross which has redeemed the whole world and which has forgiven the sins of the world. Hence the sacrifice of the Eucharist forgives sins<sup>1404</sup> and its fruits, grace can reach out to both the living and the dead.<sup>1405</sup> The characteristic of Christ's sacrifice is that it transcends the 'space and time' because by his sacrifice the 'past sins are forgiven and the future grace treasured.' This act of Christ's sacrifice is that which connects us with the inception of the world and it has an 'eschatological repercussions.' 'Man is the 'prisoner of time' and he is able to overcome his 'temporal limitations' by taking part in this act of the original sacrifice. By celebrating and participating in the ritual Eucharist man is able to overcome his temporality.<sup>1406</sup> When a Christian participates in the Eucharistic sacrifice he too rises above the 'time limitations' and is united with the original supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross through the Eucharistic celebrations. He is able to experience the fruits and graces of the cross through the sacrament of the Eucharist. Through the sacrifice of the Eucharist the whole world is united to the sacrifice of the cross which happened two thousand years ago. The sacrifice of Christ is always present and alive to us through the sacrifice of Eucharist.

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<sup>1402</sup> George Nedomplakunnel, Realization of God according to Sri Aurobindo, a study of a neo-Hindu vision on the divinization of man, Clarition publication, Bangalore, 1979, PP.116-121.

<sup>1403</sup> See chapter three (footnote no.1467).

<sup>1404</sup> DS, 1740.

<sup>1405</sup> DS, 1743.

<sup>1406</sup> Raymundo Panikkar, The study of time, P.722.



In the Vedic sacrifice the deity is welcomed like a guest. This is seen more in the later Hindu sacrifices, especially in the case of puja.<sup>1407</sup> In the Eucharist too the believers welcome Jesus into their hearts at Holy Communion. Jesus comes to the hearts of the believers as a guest. Jesus is also a host at the Eucharistic celebration who unites the faithful in his love.

The 'consecration ceremony' of the image of a deity is very much present in the Hinduism. Before an artificial image is worshipped by the faithful it is consecrated. Through this ceremony the deity enters into the image and dwells in it until it is desecrated. The usual method of desecrating an image is by immersing it in water or in a river. This similar ceremony and idea is found in Catholic thinking. The ritual leftovers that had come into contact with the sacred fire in Vedic religion and the holy remains of the sacramental bread and wine on the altar are disposed of in a proper ritual manner. Before the statue or image of a saint is placed in a place for public reverence and honour, it is blessed and consecrated by the priest. It is sprinkled over with the holy water.

In Vedic period Agni was considered the "high-priest."<sup>1408</sup> Agni is often presented as the 'mediator and judge.'<sup>1409</sup> Agni is the conveyer of the sacrifices of men to the God. For the Christians the Agni or the fire is the symbol of Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the mediator and intercedes for the people with groaning that cannot be expressed in words (Romans.8.26). He is the one who intercedes between God and people. In this sense we can find some similarities between the Agni and the Holy Spirit. So far we have considered some of the similarities that exist between the Vedic sacrifice and the Eucharistic sacrifice. In Hinduism the Lord Krishna himself is the fire (Agni). In the Bible this idea is present where God's Word is like fire (Jeremiah. 23.29) and in the New Testament Jesus presents himself as the 'fire and light of the world' (John 8.12). According to Raymundo Panikkar "Christ is

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<sup>1407</sup>See chapter one (footnote no.343).

<sup>1408</sup>Rig-Veda, ll. 1.2; 1.1.1.

<sup>1409</sup>Rig-Veda, IV. 2. 1, 3, 4, 5.

already there in Hinduism in so far as Hinduism is a true religion. Christ is at work in any Hindu prayer as far as it is really prayer; Christ is behind any form of worship in as much as it is an adoration made to God."<sup>1410</sup>

#### 4.4 Differences

The differences that we point out between the two sacrifices may not be absolute differences. There are still a few differences between the two sacrifices which do not distance us from the other, but bring them closer to each other. In Vedic Hinduism sacrifice is the supreme principle and the deities are subordinate to sacrifice. The sacrifice is higher than the deities. It is considered to be the source and "origin of deities and men."<sup>1411</sup> In the later Vedic developments the sacrifice and puja become subordinate to the supreme personal deity. According to the teachings of the Bible it is the God Almighty who created the entire world. According to the creation theory the God is the superior power who brought everything into existence. All things have their source in God. God spoke and the world came into existence (Genesis.2.4), (Psalm. 33.6, 33.9), (Genesis .1.3). The Vedic sacrifice is not ordered to a higher goal. It is not a means to a higher end. In this sense God is not someone who comes from outside for bestowing gifts and graces on the sacrificer in return for his offerings, whereas the Eucharistic communion is the anticipation of the heavenly banquet. It is the foretaste of what is to come in the heavenly life.<sup>1412</sup> Hence we can say that the Eucharistic meal is ordained to a heavenly meal. Eucharist sacrifice is certainly a way and means for the Christians to experience the grace and the blessings of God and to experience the foretaste of the heavenly banquet. In the Christian concept of sacrifice God is the highest and supreme principle. He allows men to offer him gifts though he does not need any gift from them.<sup>1413</sup> There is no power higher than God himself. God does not depend on the sacrifice for his

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<sup>1410</sup>Raymundo Panikkar, *The unknown Christ of Hinduism*, Darton Longman and Todd, London, 1964, P.17.

<sup>1411</sup> Noel Sheth, *Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist*; in: *Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church*, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.77.

<sup>1412</sup>See chapter three(footnote no. 1179).

<sup>1413</sup>Otto Semmelroth, *Sacramentum mundi*, vol. 5, Bangalore, 1975, P.388.

strength and nourishment. 'Sacrifice is only an 'intermediary between God and man'- an 'external manifestation' of his self- surrender to God.'<sup>1414</sup> In Hinduism there are 'major gods and minor gods' who are worshipped (polytheistic). According to the devotional Hindus, only the major gods are able to grant salvation. The Christian dogma teaches that there is only 'one God and that there are three persons in God.' In Christianity there is a well defined theology of the Trinity and dogma. In the concrete form of yajna the 'sacrificial dismemberment' of purusa-prajapati is realized only mythically, whereas in the Eucharistic sacrifice the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross is really made present and celebrated.

#### **4.4.1 The Prasada** <sup>1415</sup>

Prasada is something holy for a Hindu because it is blessed by the deity and it 'communicates the power and qualities' of the deity to those who partake of it. But the deity does not dwell in it. Hence there is no kind of adoration of it unlike that of the Catholic faith. However the deity is present in the consecrated images and so the Hindus visit the temples for a 'ritual viewing' (darsana) of a deity's image and the deity is taken in procession.<sup>1416</sup> But a Hindu, after having received prasada from the temple, is allowed to distribute it to other people belonging to any religion.<sup>1417</sup> For Catholics the Holy Communion is something holy because of Christ's really and truly present in the Eucharistic bread. As a result they are not permitted to distribute it to non-Christians. The Christians are not allowed to do so even to some Christian denominations. The Eucharist is the Lord himself for the Catholics and the left over Holy Eucharist is always preserved in the Tabernacle. But since the deity does not dwell in the prasada, there is no tradition like the Catholics to preserve it in such a thing as Tabernacle and hence they are allowed to share it with others. However for

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<sup>1414</sup> J.M.Barton, *Semitic religions, studies in comparative religion*, Catholic truth society, London, 1952, PP.22-23.

<sup>1415</sup> The Word prasada is already described in the first chapter. It is an offering to the deity. But the food that is offered to the deity is blessed by the deity.

<sup>1416</sup> Noel Sheth, *Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist*; in: *Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church*, Francis Gonsalves (ed), PP.78-79.

<sup>1417</sup> Noel Sheth, *Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist*; in: *Body, bread, blood, Eucharist perspective from the Indian Church*, Francis Gonsalves(ed), P.80.

Hindus the image of deities is something consecrated and so deity is present in the image and not in the prasada. Hence the image of a deity for a Hindu is like a tabernacle. The consecrated image is considered to be an abode of the deity in Hinduism. Hence the Hindus visit the temples and sit at the feet of the image, to have a 'darsan.' For the Catholics the Lord is present in the consecrated Host which is the Eucharistic meal and not in his images. In Hinduism the image in which the deity is present, does not undergo transubstantiation. The image remains still the material stuff. It is alive only because the deity is present in it. The Hindus, when they offer any element to the deity, that element becomes holy and it has to be disposed with utmost care and attention.<sup>1418</sup> In the Eucharist all the offerings (such as flowers, fruits, etc.) apart from the consecrated bread and wine, do not have any special sanctity attached to them, when they are offered, and so are consumed or disposed without much care.<sup>1419</sup>

#### **4.4.2 The Concept of sin**

The concept of sin differed between Vedic religion and Christianity. According to the Vedic concept sin was more specifically connected to the 'improper performance of sacrifice.' The 'ultimate sin in Vedic religion was simply not to sacrifice or the absence of sacrifice. "Those who held to the Rita are considered righteous "the wicked travel not the path of Rita."<sup>1420</sup> The gods follow the ordinances of Rita. "The gods are sinless because they are faithful to the Rita, whereas the humans, through their wickedness, passion, act contrary to the Rita."<sup>1421</sup> Hence in Vedic religion the sin was a breach of the Rita or acting against Rita. In Vedic religion people had a variety of sins like arrogance, 'trickery, adultery; murder' etc. But "the most offensive and critical trespass was simply not to sacrifice at all."<sup>1422</sup> As

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<sup>1418</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), PP.78-79.

<sup>1419</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.80.

<sup>1420</sup> Rig-Veda, V. 67. 4; 1X. 73. 6.

<sup>1421</sup> H. Lefever, The Vedic idea of sin, London missionary press, Nagercoil, 1935, P.22.

<sup>1422</sup> Rig-Veda, 1. 147.. 4; 1.150.. 2.

a result this destroyed the 'universal order and harmony.' The next most serious sin resulted from ritual mistakes. Lefever noted that the "majority of the offences are incurred in the ritual."<sup>1423</sup> In Christianity sin is something that separates humans from a holy God who 'seeks fellowship with fallen humanity.'<sup>1424</sup> Sin in Christianity is a refusal to love God. 'Christianity saw sin primarily as a theological and interpersonal problem and only secondarily as a liturgical mistake or dilemma.' We can see that Jesus, through his sacrifice redeemed human beings from their sins and restored the eternal fellowship with God.

#### **4.4.3 The Number**

As we saw from the chapter one on the sacrifice on Hinduism that there is not only one but there are many sacrifices in Hinduism which are offered on different occasions for different purposes and intentions of the people. In these different sacrifices, the elements and the materials used are completely different. In the Vedic traditions there are sacrifices which are related to the course of the day, the month, and the year. The animal sacrifices were celebrated at the beginning of the three seasons. The daily rites took place in the morning and in the evening. They consisted of the fire-offerings, for example, the agnihotra. The householder has to perform this rite twice a day. The monthly sacrifice is celebrated at new and full moon. The seasonal sacrifices were also offered every four months, at the beginning of spring, of the rainy season and winter. There were varieties of sacrifices celebrated in Vedic traditions according to the occasions. Each sacrifice has its own form, and method and results and benefits of offering. Every act in Hinduism is a sacrifice.

But in Christianity the Eucharist is the only and central act of sacrifice which makes present the 'definitive' unique and single sacrifice of Christ on the cross.<sup>1425</sup> In

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<sup>1423</sup> H. Lefever, *The Vedic idea of sin*, P.66.

<sup>1424</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, *Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity*, P.316.

<sup>1425</sup> This idea is explained in the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter where the Eucharist is presented as the sacrifice which presents the only sacrifice in Christianity which is the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The idea that in Hinduism there are many sacrifices and in Christianity there is only one sacrifice which is the sacrifice of Christ, is also mentioned by Jose Thachil, *The Vedic and the Christian concept of sacrifice*, pontifical institute of theology and philosophy, Always, 1985, PP.343- 345.

the Eucharist there are only two definite materials which are used: the bread and wine. Many Hindu sacrifices just 're-enact a mythical event'. But the Eucharistic sacrifice is a real memorial and re-enactment of the historical Christ event that took place in the past. The Christ event is not a mythical narration of someone. The Eucharistic sacrifice can never be validly offered for the purpose of harming somebody like in Vedic sacrifice. The Vedic sacrifice can be offered also for harming someone.

The flowers, the leaves and the prasada which are offered to the deity, are filled with the presence of the deity. But the deity himself is not said to be present in these elements. In the Eucharist the bread and wine are the material elements which after being consecrated contain Jesus himself in other words in such a consecrated bread and wine the Lord Jesus is truly, really and substantially present.

#### **4.4.4 Motivation**

The Vedic sacrifice mainly aims at obtaining some favours both material benefits like wealth, food and shelter and spiritual benefits, like communion with the sacred and the divine.<sup>1426</sup> It has also the motivation of obtaining blessings from the deity and to remain happy in this world. The ultimate motivation is to rise above the earthly desires and move towards the realm of heaven. There is a longing in man to conquer the earthly desire and to attain the sacred world which is swarga or heaven.<sup>1427</sup> With regard to the Christian sacrifice there were four objectives considered in the context of Eucharistic sacrifice: Firstly "It serves to glorify the divine majesty, secondly it helps to thank God for the benefits received, thirdly to petition for new favours and finally to satisfy for sin and their punishment."<sup>1428</sup> In Christianity the Eucharist is the supreme act of worship which one can render to God. The Eucharistic sacrifice is offered daily not merely for the intention of getting something out of God. When the sacrifice of the Eucharist is offered, surely there are

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<sup>1426</sup>Rig-Veda, 1. 73. 5; VII. 8. 7; VIII. 24. 6; For wealth: Rig-Veda. 1; 77.4, 124.10; VI. 10.5; VII. 5. 9.

<sup>1427</sup>Atharva Veda Samhita, 18. 1. 61.

<sup>1428</sup>Zacharias, Christianity and Indian mentality, Always, 1952, PP.76-77.

different kinds of graces and favours which flow from the sacrifice. The word Eucharist means thanksgiving to the Father for the 'redemption and sanctification.'<sup>1429</sup> When the Church celebrates the Holy Eucharist, she gives thanks to God through Jesus Christ who is the sole model and mediator (Romans. 1.8; 7. 25; 1 Thessalonians. 5. 18). Hence in the Christian Eucharistic sacrifice there are the motivations of adoration and thanksgiving. Through the worship that is rendered, the faithful obtain and appropriate the spiritual graces and effects from such worship, such as joy, happiness, peace and of course the forgiveness of one's sins. But in Hinduism these goals are not seen and not very much clear. In the Vedic ritual the main motive of the sacrifice was to attain the objects and benefits of ordinary life of the people like children, cattle, and so on<sup>1430</sup> or it can be for getting one's enemy out of the way. Occasionally the sacrifice was offered in Hinduism as a thanksgiving for the favours received from gods.<sup>1431</sup> The direct goal of the Eucharistic sacrifice is not to get favours and advantages but 'adoration and worship of God.'<sup>1432</sup>

#### 4.4.5 Priest

In the Vedic tradition, the sacrifices are performed by many priests, the priests like 'Hotr', 'Adhvaryu' priest, 'udgata' priest and so on. From the Vedic perspective, the domestic sacrifices were performed by the head of the families. But the Sruta sacrifices required the services of several priests who were expert in the ritual matters. The Rig-Veda contains a list of seven kinds of sacrificial priests.<sup>1433</sup> The Taittiriya Brahmana has explained in detail the number of priests required for particular sacrifices.<sup>1434</sup> The number of priests required in soma sacrifice is sixteen.<sup>1435</sup> The Hindu priests are paid 'daksina' for performing sacrifice. This paying of

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<sup>1429</sup> John Reumann, *The Supper of the Lord*, fortress press, Philadelphia, 1985, P.153.

<sup>1430</sup> Rig-Veda, 1. 54. 9; VII . 32. 5; IX. 49. 1.

<sup>1431</sup> Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian philosophy*, George Allen and Unwin, India, Bombay, 1973, P.35.

<sup>1432</sup> Karl Rahner and Angelius Häussling, *The celebration of the Eucharist*, P.38.

<sup>1433</sup> A.A. Macdonell, *Vedic religion*, T and T Clark, New York, 1974, P.613.

<sup>1434</sup> Taittiriya Brahmana, ll. 3. 6. 1-4.

<sup>1435</sup> Gopatha Brahmana, l. 5. 24.

daksina to the Hindu priests is an integral part of the ritual.<sup>1436</sup> But this is not the case with the Eucharist where the stipends are paid on the occasion of the Eucharist for a 'special intention.' This paying of stipend is not part of the ritual in Catholicism.

In Hinduism any male Brahmin priest is permitted to perform higher forms of sacrifices and pujas and in the villages the rituals can be celebrated by any male belonging to any castes. There are different kinds of priests in Hinduism who have different functions to perform. Some of them had the duty of chanting the hymns; some had to look after the performance of the rituals. The priests in Hinduism are different in 'hierarchy and in function.'<sup>1437</sup> In Catholicism only the validly ordained priests are allowed to officiate the Eucharistic sacrifice and there is mainly and primarily one single function for the priests: to offer sacrifice and administer sacraments. In the Eucharist a single priest is sufficient to celebrate the sacrament. The concelebrants have an equal status even if only one is presiding over the service. Those persons who are not validly ordained cannot offer the Eucharistic sacrifice. The garments worn by the Hindu priests are very simple in comparing to the garments of the Catholic priests. The garments of the Catholic priests are elaborate because his function is different from that of the lay people. The religious clothing of the Hindu priests is ritually pure. But the sacred vestments are not used for secular purposes.<sup>1438</sup>

In the Christian concept of sacrifice Christ is the head priest who offers the sacrifice. He offered his sacrifice on the altar of the cross and continues to offer the sacrifice in the Eucharist through validly ordained priest. The ordained priests, who celebrate the Eucharist, are mere representatives of Christ who is the eternal priest. The priests are the instruments in the hands of God. It is Christ who offers the sacrifice through the Church and in the name of the Church. The Church and the

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<sup>1436</sup> Jose Thachil, *The Vedic and Christian concept of sacrifice*, pontifical institute of philosophy and theology, Alwaye, India, 1985, PP.187-188.

<sup>1437</sup> Noel Sheth, *Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist*; In: *Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church*, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.76.

<sup>1438</sup> Noel Sheth, *Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist*; in: *Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church*, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.76. The Hindus wear the saffron especially the Hindu priests (pujari).



priest act in his name. God uses the priest as an instrument to produce the effect in the Eucharist. Hence in Christian sacrifice Christ himself is the principal offerer. The celebrating priests just represent Christ to make the paschal mystery present in the Eucharistic celebration. In Hinduism the low casts priests and the women are not allowed to perform the higher forms of sacrifices and puja. In Catholicism the women are not allowed to offer the Eucharist not because of the reasons of 'ritual purity.' In Hinduism the women are not allowed to perform sacrifice for the reason of ritual purity.

In the Vedic traditions the gods had to depend on the sacrifice. The sacrifice was more powerful than the gods themselves. The sacrifice was 'nourishment and food to the gods. It is from the offerings that the gods derived their strength.'<sup>1439</sup> The gods looked for offerings from the people. But in Christianity this idea is not found. Christianity understands that God does not live on the offerings of the people and he does not need the sacrifice and offerings of the people to survive. He is presented as a powerful and generous God. God is presented as someone who constantly bestows grace to the people and God is generous enough to grant everything to the people without expecting anything in return. That is the reason he sacrificed himself for the redemption of the world. His sacrifice on the cross was a manifestation of God's love and concern for the whole world. Here it was the humanity that was in need of salvation and redemption and not the God. It was the world that looked for forgiveness from God. The God of Christianity is presented as a powerful God who does not need our worship and sacrifice or our thanksgiving.<sup>1440</sup> In Vedic period Agni was considered the high-priest.<sup>1441</sup> Agni is often presented as the 'mediator and judge.'<sup>1442</sup> Agni carried the sacrifices of men to the gods.

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<sup>1439</sup> Chandogya Upanishad, 3.6. 1 ff.

<sup>1440</sup>The forth weekday preface In the Roman Mass book, states: Lord, "you have no need of our praise, yet our desire to thank you is itself your gift. Our prayer of thanksgiving adds nothing to your greatness but makes us grow in your grace." We must insist that man's worship of God does not increase God's glory absolutely, nor does God require that worship for his own benefit. This is taken from the fourth weekday preface of the Roman Catholic Holy Mass.

<sup>1441</sup>Rig-Veda, ll. 1.2; 1.1.1.

<sup>1442</sup>Rig-Veda, IV. 2. 1, 3, 4, 5.

Veda teaches that the prajapati is the one who created the entire universe. Both the Vedic traditions and the Christian believe that the world originated from the creator God. The prajapati sacrificed himself and the whole world came into existence.<sup>1443</sup> But according to the Christian teachings the creation is not the result of the self-sacrifice of God. The whole creation came into existence out of the Words he spoke. God spoke and the world came into existence (Genesis. 1. ff). According to teachings of Hinduism, God created the world not out of anything but out of the 'material of his own being.'<sup>1444</sup> But the Christianity believes that God created the world out of 'nothing' and not out of any pre-existent material.(Genesis.1.1ff).<sup>1445</sup>

#### 4.4.6 Faith

In the Vedic sacrifice the element of faith is essential. It is the faith that makes the sacrifice 'effective and efficacious.' Without the aspect of faith the sacrifice becomes fruitless and barren. "Sacrifice without injunction, or food offered, or mantra, without gifts given to the priest, devoid of faith, is seen as darkness."<sup>1446</sup> We find something different in the Christian concept of sacrifice. A priest, who offers the Eucharistic sacrifice, can validly offer it without having sufficient faith provided he has the intention of the Church. The faith of the priest, who offers the sacrifice, is taken for granted. But in case he offers the sacrifice, without having faith, the sacrifice is still effective and efficacious because the effect of the sacrifice does not depend on the faith of the sacrificing priest. The Catholic teaching insists that faith alone is not enough to make sacrament of the Eucharist efficacious. But the sacramental action is also very much important. It is the Spirit of God who causes the effect of the sacrament in the human person. It is ultimately the God who grants grace in the sacraments. In the Vedic sacrifice the efficacy is not simply 'ex opere operato.' There is no efficacy of the sacrifice without God intervening.<sup>1447</sup> But in the

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<sup>1443</sup>See chapter one (footnote nos. 126-128).

<sup>1444</sup> Kedar Nath Tiwari, *Comparative religion*, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1983, P.14.

<sup>1445</sup> Here the Bible does not use the term 'out of nothing' but the biblical scholars believe that the totality of Scripture does in fact teach this.

<sup>1446</sup> Bhagavad -Gita, 17. 13.

<sup>1447</sup> H.Aguilar, *The sacrifice in the Rig-Veda*, Varanasi, India, 1976, P.100.

Christian sacraments there is the efficacy of the sacraments effected by the mere performance of the rite itself.

The Puja is the modern form of Hindu sacrifice. In this new form of sacrifice the community and congregational participation is not very much stressed. The individuals make their own God experience and worship. The individual has to find his own salvation in the Hindu context. "The one who does not help to keep the wheel of creation in motion by sacrificial duty and rejoices sense pleasures, that sinful person lives in vain."<sup>1448</sup> In Hinduism an individual has to make sacrifices in order to keep moving forward in life happily. He himself has to find his way to salvation and make sacrifices in order to have a deep experience of the divine. He cannot wait to profit from the others, whereas in Christian sacrifice the community participation is very much emphasised. This is very much true even if a priest alone celebrates the Eucharist without the people; the whole Christian community is present in the celebration. The grace and effect of the Eucharistic sacrifice is extended not only to the participants but also to the entire humanity and world. He celebrates it for the whole community and the entire world is united in the sacrifice. God offers his grace freely to the people. In the Hinduism the worship can be offered to many gods. The believers can choose their own gods (ishttadevatha) or the chosen deity while in Christianity the worship is offered only to 'one God through Jesus Christ.' There is ultimately only one God in Christianity. According to the Hindu traditions the samskaras or the sacraments are celebrated at home and not in the temple. The sacraments, according to the Catholic teachings are celebrated in the Church administered by a priest. The entire Church is present at the time the sacraments are administered. The grace is offered to all who are open to it.

The word puja (worship) is used in Hinduism for various things. The word can be used for 'worshipping the Supreme Being', for worshipping the 'minor gods' and goddesses and honouring 'inanimate objects like 'weapons', implements of

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<sup>1448</sup> Bhagavad-Gita,3. 16. "Evam pravartitam cakram nanuvartayatiha yah , aghayur indriyaramo mogham partha sa jivati."

one's trade and 'honouring special persons of great honour and position. In Hinduism there is something called 'Aayudha puja' which is literally the worship of the 'tools and instruments of work.' The teachers, children, plants and animals are objects of puja in Hinduism. In Christianity the worship is given only to God, who is the Supreme Being. Only honour is given to the saints and to the important persons.<sup>1449</sup>

"The co-operation between the humans and the gods in Vedic sacrifice resulted in the re-creation of the entire cosmos."<sup>1450</sup> But the Christian theology never teaches that Jesus' historical death recreated the cosmos in the Vedic sense. "Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection signalled the advent of God's 'redemption and hence renewal of his creation, clearly a spiritual re-creation."<sup>1451</sup> "If anyone is in Jesus he is a new creation. The old has passed away, the new has come into being" (11 Corinthians. 5.17). "All of creation eagerly awaits for the revelation of the sons of God" (Romans. 8.19). The creation is renewed by the death and resurrection of Jesus. "The ongoing role of Jesus Christ extended beyond the Eucharist in the economy of God's salvation in Christian theology and focused at the same time on the future consummation of the age."<sup>1452</sup> There is the 'fulfilment of the Eucharist in heaven.'

These are few similarities and differences between the two sacrifices which have been brought out in this particular chapter. These similarities which we find between Hinduism and Christianity enable us to understand our own faith and

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<sup>1449</sup> Noel Sheth, Hindu sacrifice and the Christian Eucharist; in: Body, bread, blood, Eucharistic perspective from the Indian Church, Francis Gonsalves (ed), P.78. In Hinduism there is something called the 'Aayudha puja' which is the worship or the honouring of implement or weapons of trade or profession. The instruments of work are worshipped. The basic concern in this worship is the dedication of the tools to gods without whose blessings they are ineffective. Here we have the important idea that God's blessing is necessary if human work is to be effective and fruitful. The Aayudha puja reminds us that we need the grace and blessings for our work. In the Aayudha puja the tools which are used for work, are decorated with flowers and a sort of honour is given to them. For a detailed study see, A.P.Nirmal, A theological Approach to the questions of celebration of some Indian festivals by Christians; in: Bangalore theological forum, vol 5, January-June, Bangalore, 1973, PP.38-41.

<sup>1450</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.315.

<sup>1451</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.315.

<sup>1452</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P. 315.

practices better and to appreciate other religions better. A person who newly embraces Christianity is able to experience for himself a certain similarities in his new way of life. The similarities and differences between two traditions help us to appreciate the significance and worth of our beliefs and practices. Influenced by the Hindu puja the Christians in India bring coconuts, bananas, flowers, and sweets etc., as offerings to Christ. Hymns and repetitive prayers (japa), are very much common in Indian Church. "The Hinduism is able to inspire us to 'recapture the cosmic dimension of the Eucharist. The inclusion of the offerings of light, incense, flowers, fruits etc., in the Eucharistic liturgy, can help us to realize our deep communion with nature."<sup>1453</sup>

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<sup>1453</sup> Xavier Irudayaraj, *Communion sacrifice in Hindu ritual in Indian ecclesiastical studies*, vol 10, India, 1971, P.97.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

We have considered in detail the concept of sacrifice both in Christianity and Hinduism. We have also presented certain similarities and differences between the two. In the first chapter we made an attempt to define the concept of sacrifice in Hinduism. We have seen that the Vedic sacrifice was very much the centre and pillar of the Vedic life. The people drew strength and inspiration from it. The Vedas which are the important Scriptures of the Hindus are revealed directly by God himself. The ancient sages were inspired by the Word of God. At the heart of the Vedic thought lies the matter of ritual thought. The early Hindu society revolved around a religious thought and insight that recognized this world's relationship with the transcendent world. This insight came by 'way of revelation.' The ancient Indians received knowledge or sacred wisdom from the ritual or specifically from the first sacrifice performed by the gods. This knowledge served as a 'paradigm' for the early Hindu society. The primordial sacrifice revealed that human's primary and most important responsibility was to sacrifice as the gods performed in the beginning.<sup>1454</sup>

We have come to the understanding that the concept of sacrifice in Hinduism has different meanings and not just one meaning only. Every activity of man is considered a sacrifice in Hinduism. Every good action that is done without expecting its fruit is treated as sacrifice. The Vedic sacrifice was considered by the people at that time as something essential for the salvation. Hence one had to sacrifice in order to come to the experience of salvation. In this sense, every man sacrifices daily. The Vedic sacrifice is not present in the modern Hinduism as exactly as it was in the Vedic times. It is not possible for the ordinary people to perform Vedic sort of sacrifice, offering things and killing of animals. This is due to the high expenses and the impracticability. But the Vedic sacrifice is existing in different forms and shapes. Its very spirit is kept alive even today in different modes and forms. The benefit of the sacrifice is based largely on the ritualistic identifications of the sacrificer with the

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<sup>1454</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, *Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity*, Peter Lang, New York, 1995, P.9.

sacrifice. 'The sacrificer draws the sacrifice out of himself.' The sacrifice is his self and the self is the sacrifice.<sup>1455</sup> The karman is his self. In the later Vedic period or in the modern Hinduism the external act of sacrificing has lost its prominence. The attitude and the right 'spirits were given importance and attention.' The interiority, meditation and interior detachment from the fruits of the work and the charitable acts done for the humanity, were considered as important sacrifices.

Whatever may be the kind of sacrifice, the ultimate aim of all the sacrifices was union with the divine or to rise above the material world to have a close contact with the divine world. The primary goal of the sacrifice is to fly to heaven and to conquer the heavenly worlds.<sup>1456</sup> In truth the sacrificer makes himself a ladder and a bridge to reach the celestial world.<sup>1457</sup> Everything revolved around this experience of yajna. This indicates that the Vedic people had a deep yearning for the divine to attain the divine realm. The sacrifice for the Vedic people was a kind of reaching out to the divine. Yajna is not just merely a concept but rather a 'powerful symbol.' It is not a simple means but 'the end itself.' In this perspective God is not someone who comes from the outside for giving gifts and graces on the sacrificer. It is true that some of the sacrifices like killing of animals cannot be accepted by our contemporary society. This is one of the reasons why the Vedic sacrifices are very rare today. In the sacrifice of the Hinduism there is a meeting of the persons and the gods, there is the meeting of the two worlds, the heavenly and this world. In the Vedic sacrifice the Agni had a significant position. Agni helped the humans and the gods to overcome the numerous obstacles for a successful sacrifice. The Agni acts as mediator between God and men and it is Agni which takes the sacrificial food to Gods. The Agni burns everything and the flame rises above and reaches its heavenly destination. No sacrifice can be completed without the presence and participation of the fire.

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<sup>1455</sup> Axel Michaels, *Hinduism past and present*, Princeton university press, Oxford, 1998.P.246.

<sup>1456</sup> Axel Michaels, *Hinduism past and present*, P.249.

<sup>1457</sup>H.Aguilar, *Sacrifice in the Rig-Veda*, Varanasi, India, 1976P.146.

There was also a concept of sin in the Vedic understanding which is different from the concept of sin in Christianity. The sin in Vedic times, meant the negligence of sacrifice. The cleansing of sins would mean the removing of impurities in ones' life. According to the thoughts of the Vedic religion the sacrifice or the yajna brought immortality and life. The people had to sacrifice in order to experience life and contentment. Hence we can say the Vedic people had the obligation to offer sacrifices and gifts in order to create a spiritual atmosphere and to create a connection to the divine world. The Vedic people also followed an organized system of sacrificing. This was very important to avoid complications and dangerous consequences in the performance of the sacrifice. At the Vedic period the gods were considered not only as sacrificers but also as sacrifice itself. This is because in the Vedic perspective performance of the sacrifice is not merely an external action; it is rather the externalization of something that 'lies in oneself.' 'The external kindling of the sacrificial fire' is in fact the externalization of the fire which one must first kindle within himself.<sup>1458</sup> According to the Vedic thinking the sacrifice has to be born first within oneself before it is externally carried out. Hence we can say that the external sacrifice is the manifestation of the internal longing of a person for the divine. The deep yearning of a man is very well expressed externally in the sacrificial action. Yajna was ultimately the end in itself for the Rig-Vedic people. But it can also function as a means to some particular ends which can be heavenly or earthly.

Hinduism insists time and again on the 'experience of the divine' in any suitable form and style. There are various ways of experiencing the divine such as the 'way of action', including the ritual action, the 'way of knowledge' and the 'way of love of God.' The ritual way is used as a 'preparation and formation' of 'an atmosphere' in which the soul will be disposed to the higher experience of the divine. In the modern Hinduism the worship is known as puja in which there is the rite of welcoming God as a special guest, 'bathing the God', 'dressing him',

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<sup>1458</sup>H.Aguilar, Sacrifice in the Rig-Veda, P.47.



'adorning him', 'putting flowers around him.' All these essential features of puja, create in the religious man a 'disposition and spiritual ambience' that itself is a participation of the divine. The various rites that are used in Hinduism are the 'symbols and expressions of one's religious faith.' The knowledge of the divine or God is manifested in the 'symbolic action of the rites' which are a 'vehicle to reach' the divine. The Hindus have understood this solemn truth and have 'proposed the way of ritual' and 'sacrifices as the necessary condition' to higher spiritual experiences which lead to redemption.' The primary purpose of the sacrifice in the Vedic times was to lead the union of the 'mortal beings with the immortal.'<sup>1459</sup> Finally we can say that a 'great spiritual and cultural heritage' has been handed on to the modern India. It is essential that we don't altogether reject the past Vedic practices, their traditions and customs. These things can be applied even today in the society. The traditions of the Vedic period continue even today in the form of 'earnest prayer and 'appeal to God', temple rituals, pujas and other spiritual exercises. The ancient sages of India through their constant meditation and contemplation were able to delve into the mysteries of the world and to the inner nature of man.<sup>1460</sup> The Vedic people also had a certain pattern of spirituality which they followed in order to recognize the almighty power and authority of God.

In the second chapter a detailed study has been conducted on the sacraments in general. This study has been very useful to reflect and understand deeper the concept of Eucharist. In this chapter an attempt has been made to describe the sacraments in general and their relevance and usefulness for the Christian life. The Christian sacrament is not a 'thing'. The sacrament regards realities which are beyond the symbol. The recipients should have the capacity and intention to receive the sacrament without which the sacrament is not performed. The official sacraments have a significant position in the Catholic theology. They are the 'ritual

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<sup>1459</sup> V.Sujatha, The philosophical implications of yajnas and sacrificial fire a critique; in: Journal of Dharma, vol 26, no.1, Dharmaram college, Bangalore, 2001, P.30.

<sup>1460</sup> V.Sujatha, The Philosophical implications of yajna and sacrificial fire; a critique; in: Journal of Dharma, vol 26, PP.34-35.

means of preserving' and teaching the central beliefs of the Catholicism. The sacraments of the Catholic Church allow the faithful to keep themselves in touch and close contact with the sacred realities that lie at the heart of the Christian faith. The Christian sacramental symbols are 'doors to the sacred realities.' Hence the Christian sacraments are not end in themselves but 'means to an end.' They are doors to the sacred.<sup>1461</sup> What sacrament symbolizes is always 'sacred reality and mysterious' which cannot be fully comprehended. Hence sacrament is a sign or symbol of something that is 'mysterious and sacred.'<sup>1462</sup> The realities that are symbolized by the sacraments are the 'transcendental realities' because their 'author and cause' is God himself. The Christian sacraments invite the faithful to the experiences of salvation. Faith and belief play a role in the 'effectiveness of the sacraments.' Without the faith the sacraments do signify but 'do not effect.' Hence 'faith is the key that opens' the 'doors to the sacred realities.'<sup>1463</sup> According to Theodore of Mopsuestia "every sacrament points to invisible and ineffable realities by means of signs and symbols."<sup>1464</sup> Hence the sacraments bring the people in contact with the heavenly realities and mysteries. For Augustine "the Eucharistic symbols were not empty signs. But the symbols bore the divine action by which God administered his grace to the faithful."<sup>1465</sup>

The sacraments are means available for the faithful people to approach God to be sanctified and blessed by him and to have a profound experience of the divine. A person is greatly enriched by the reception of the sacraments. The 'divine life and grace' is communicated to Christians through the sacraments. The various external ritual actions are very much meaningful for the participants to intensify their faith

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<sup>1461</sup> Joseph Martos, Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to sacraments in the Catholic university, doubleday and company, INC, garden city, New York, 1943, PP. 530-531.

<sup>1462</sup> Joseph Martos, Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to the sacraments in the Catholic Church, P. 12.

<sup>1463</sup> Joseph Martos, Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to the sacraments in the Catholic Church, P. 21.

<sup>1464</sup> Joseph Martos, Doors to the sacred, a historical introduction to the sacraments in the Catholic Church, P.29.

<sup>1465</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.277.

experience and worship. The various characteristics of the sacraments have been described in this chapter which one must be aware of when he approaches them. The sacraments connect the Christian faithful to the divine world. Hence through the sacraments God communicates himself to the people. It is the sacraments that fill the faithful with spiritual graces in order to be Christ's witnesses and bearers of the Gospel in the world. Through the Church which is also a sacrament of Christ, the faithful are being enriched by the divine communication of graces and benefits. God offers his grace always and everywhere to those who are open to him. But the sacraments are specific ways and means of encountering the divine. But there is a commitment, faithful co-operation and disposition of the heart demanded on the part of the recipients while approaching the sacraments. Fundamentally the sacrament is the 'action of God' in Christ 'prolonging in time the salvific work of Christ.' Just as Christ delivered the world from the wretchedness of sin so too he continues to redeem, work and continues his saving work in the sacraments. St. Thomas insists on the 'importance of faith in the 'sacramental economy.'<sup>1466</sup> He did not want to reduce the sacraments to an 'automatic instrument for the release of grace.' It is by faith in Christ that we are saved. The sacrament is a sign of this faith. The sacrament is the 'action of Christ.'<sup>1467</sup> Jesus is active in the 'visible ceremony of his sacramental Body', the Church. Christ continues the 'redemptive liturgy' of Calvary. According to Thomas there are other ways and means for God to communicate graces apart from the sacraments. But the sacraments are the 'normal and regular way 'of bringing about redemption and graces. Hence we can say that sacraments are not just 'mechanical grace machines' which produce graces artificially but they are 'sacred actions' in which 'Church proclaims and celebrates' the saving presence of God and Christ. In the sacraments 'God acts' and God is made 'present' in ritual actions. For the believers the sacraments, therefore, become

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<sup>1466</sup> Thomas Aquinas, IV Sent., d. 1, q. 1, a. 4, q1a.

<sup>1467</sup> Contra Gent., IV, cap.76 (111, P.385, n.4108.

'points of personal encounter with God and Christ.'<sup>1468</sup> Further we see that apart from the 'official seven sacraments of the Church 'Christ himself is the sacrament' of God because he reveals to the world the love and compassion of God and in Christ we can encounter and experience God. Christ continues his redemptive action in the Church through the sacraments. The Church is also a sacrament because it is the 'visible realization and communication of grace.' This 'grace which is attained by Christ becomes visible and available in the whole Church as a visible society.'<sup>1469</sup>

The third chapter on the concept of sacrifice in Christianity has provided us with sufficient information. The first part, in this chapter dealt, with various kinds of sacrifices in the Old Testament. It is important to note that what is essential is that the sacrifice without a proper and appropriate spirit is meaningless and worthless. The external act itself had no much meaning without being charged with 'right spirit.' According to the Old Testament thought the sacrifice is not just a means to contact and approach God and to experience his salvation but it is also a time for God to approach human beings. In sacrifice God is ready to bless his people with his power and graces provided they come to him in total humility and surrender. The animal sacrifices were not able to meet the needs of man. The prophets in the Old Testament again and again invited the people to offer the sacrifice in right spirit and purity of heart. The confession of one's sins is equally important as the external offerings of gifts and sacrifices.

In the second part of the third chapter we have seen the Eucharist as sacrament and sacrifice. The Eucharist is the most perfect sacrament than all other sacraments because Christ himself is present in it whole. The Eucharist possesses a unique excellence because in it are given not only the grace but also the 'author of grace.' We also reached a conclusion that the Eucharist which is a sacrament can also be said to be a sacrifice because of its close and intimate relationship with the

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<sup>1468</sup> Michael G. Lawler, *Symbol and sacrament, a contemporary sacramental theology*, Paulist press, New York, 1996.P.46.

<sup>1469</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Christ the sacrament of the encounter with God*, A Sheed and Ward classic, Kangas city, 1960, PP.55-56.

sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross which took place two thousand years ago is made present and available in the Eucharistic sacrifice. These two sacrifices are not two different sacrifices but one. The merits and graces of the sacrifice of the cross are present and granted to the faithful in the Eucharistic sacrifice. Hence there is only one sacrifice in Christianity which is the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Jesus always wanted to remain with his holy Church and with his people till the end of the world. This is the reason why he instituted the sacrament of Eucharist. The Eucharist is the celebration of the event of the sacrifice of the cross. Hence the sacrifice of the cross is contained in the sacrifice of the Eucharist. Hence we can say that the holy Mass is not the repetition of the sacrifice of the cross. For the Catholics the Eucharist is not merely a meal but it is the moment in which Jesus gives himself to the believers and, it is a moment of encountering Jesus in the celebration. We have also seen that the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist is something real and substantial. This presence happens not because of individual's faith. The presence is objective. Hence we can say that one who comes to the sacrament of the Eucharist, with a disposition of heart and good intention, is able to encounter and experience the salvation and grace of the Calvary. There are different ways and means of adoring and worshipping God. There are prayers of the hour, Rosary, and other devotions in Christianity. But the Eucharistic sacrifice is the centre and climax of all the prayers. It is the highest form of worship in Christianity. We can now say that in Mass a true and authentic sacrifice is offered to God and it is Christ who is offered. "As long as symbols of Christ's presence and sacrifice remain in the context of the ritual act, the Eucharist shall continue to provide access to the Church's greatest mystery for all Christians."<sup>1470</sup>

In the third part of the chapter we have dealt with the sacrifice of Christ. Christ is the fulfilment of all the sacrifices in the Old Testament. Since Christ, through his perfect sacrifice on the cross brought redemption to the world, there is

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<sup>1470</sup> Rick Franklin Talbott, Sacred sacrifice ritual paradigms in Vedic religion and early Christianity, P.322.

no more a new sacrifice in the history of humanity. In the sacrifice of Jesus we see that he offered his own self and life and poured out his own blood for the liberation of the humanity from their wretchedness and sins. This is the reason why the sacrifice of Christ becomes something superior to all other sacrifices. The animal sacrifices could not heal the wounds caused by sins, whereas the sacrifice of Jesus wiped out the sins and impurities of humanity once and for all. Jesus Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection signalled the advent of God's redemption and hence renewal of his creation, a spiritual re-creation.

In the final chapter a humble attempt has been made to bring out some similar thoughts and ideas between the two traditions on the point of sacrifice. The dissimilarities and similarities which are noted here are not really substantial differences. The differences found in them, do not keep the people away from each other. But they enable the people to understand and appreciate each other. The awareness of these differences and similarities liberate one from judgemental and prejudistic attitude towards the other. The ignorance and lack of sufficient information and knowledge about other religions keep us away from the ray of truths found in them. By knowing about the other religions one is made capable of interacting with the other in complete freedom and liberty. This mutual knowledge is indispensable, but it must lead one to higher wisdom. Each religion has its own contribution to make to the world and each religion is beautiful in its own way. We find good things in each individual religion. In both Hinduism and in Christianity the ultimate goal is presented as the attainment of salvation and liberation, the attainment of the divine. There are many elements that bring the two religions together in fellowship and mutual love than those which separate them. What unites them more closely is their common yearning and aspiration for the divine. This deep and intense yearning for God is very much rooted in the hearts of the people of both religions. This itself is an important element which binds them together close to each other. The meeting of religions is not merely an 'intellectual endeavour.' "It is in itself a religious experience and a religious task; it is the meeting of God in my friend

who follows another path or even denies God or at least my conception of God.”<sup>1471</sup> Man has a natural tendency to relate himself to God, He feels incomplete and helpless by himself. His heart longs for God who brings in his life contentment and fulfilment. The deepest desires and longings of his hearts are externally expressed in his worship, prayers and ritual sacrifices. Every religion in the world has some kind of ritual sacrifices by which a man is able to express his own gratitude and worship. In Hinduism and Christianity this kind of sacrifice is seen. This sort of sacrifice is needed in order to relate oneself constantly to the divine.

The present study enables us to pave the path for the inter-religious dialogue with the people of other faiths especially with Hinduism. The study must be able to lead to this concrete reality of mutual dialogue with the brothers and sisters of other faith. Dialogue is very much the need and urgency of the time today in Indian Church which is misunderstood by others and which is distanced from each other. As the Indian Church is rooted in multi-religious situations it is looked down by others as the religion which is transplanted from the West. As a result the people have fear, prejudices and doubts. The need of the time is that the Christianity has to be very much rooted in the Indian soil and cultural situations of the people and to be relevant and meaningful to them. The truth of the Gospel has to be sowed deep today in the Indian soil. This demands a certain amount of toil and hard work and above all an authentic Christian witness of poverty and the Gospel values. The Church insists and encourages the local Churches to enter into dialogue with other religious traditions. This dialogue is an appropriate means of communicating the Gospel message of truth to all. The purpose of the dialogue with other religions is to introduce our own faith and God experience to others and to learn from their own. The present study can be a good beginning for mutual contact and communication with the people of other faith. Ultimately we can say that each religion is unique and each has something unique to offer to the moral and integral development of the

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<sup>1471</sup>Raymundo Panikkar, *The unknown Christ of Hinduism*, Darton Longman and Todd, London, 1964, P.10.

world. Each one in this world has a particular spiritual goal to travel towards. Each one has to help, support and encourage the other in this long spiritual journey towards our common destiny. This needs openness and mutual trust on the part of the religions.

Both Christianity and Hinduism are two different religions with different dogmatic teachings and traditions. They have their own place in the society and they have something unique to offer to the people of faith and convictions. But we still find many things in common in both religions. The faith in God the creator is very much emphasized in both the religions. As a result of this faith, they become God oriented people and this faith they have in their own God enables them to build up a fundamental relationship with God. Hence we see the possibility of a solid spiritual life and a mystical experience in both the religions, because both Christianity and Hinduism are based on the spiritual elements of prayer, meditation and faith in God. Both the religions exist so that they can bring their own people to their Gods. They act as the means to prepare the way for the faithful to rise above the worldly values to attain the values which God offers to them freely.

Where can Hinduism and Christianity meet together to have a fruitful dialogue? Both religions cannot avoid each other. Each person in these religions must have the “deep human honesty in searching for the truth whenever it can be found, an intellectual openness in this search without bias or prejudice and a profound loyalty to one’s own religion.”<sup>1472</sup> One has to be sincerely open to the other. According to Raymundo Panikkar “no authentic religious can overlook this thirst for an open dialogue and for mutual understanding today.”<sup>1473</sup> A missionary zeal without ‘knowledge and love will have disastrous consequences.’ An attempt to alienate one from the other is an egoism and cause ruin of one’s own religion. The encounter has to be reciprocal. Both the religions must be ready and prepared to encounter the truth in the other religions. The comparative study of religion will not

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<sup>1472</sup>Raymundo Panikkar, *The unknown Christ of Hinduism*, P.3.

<sup>1473</sup>Raymundo Panikkar, *The unknown Christ of Hinduism*, P.3.



be able to yield fruits and results unless the 'doctrines are merely considered as starting points for reaching the reality underlying them.' The encounter between Christianity and Hinduism is only possible when they 'really and concretely meet.' According to Raymundo Panikkar "Christ is the meeting point of Christianity and Hinduism. The real encounter can only take place in Christ."<sup>1474</sup>

In this study our purpose was not merely to make a comparison between the concept of sacrifice in two traditions, but also to find some common areas and elements on which we can work together. This study will indicate to us that there are certain common elements in both the religions which will draw us closer to each other in faith. This present reflection and study will certainly open our senses to the truth of these religions to accept what is helpful and useful to orient ourselves to God in a deeper way and to build up a basis and certain spiritual life. We are the people of God and we are to learn from each other the truth which God has given in each religion. There is a ray of truth in all the religions. The common elements in both the traditions prompt us for further discussions and interactions with each other in the area of inter-religious dialogue. The emphasis of faith in God in both religions is a sure foundation for the cordial exchange of ideas and inter faith experience, because I believe, that only 'faith in God can unite us together' and invite us for a friendly and fraternal dialogue. The comparative theological learning offers a promising insight into how God responds to us in the midst of religious diversity. God chooses to be 'known, encountered and accessible' through various religious traditions. God, who is present in one tradition, does not preclude his presence in other traditions. One can come to know God through the study of our own tradition and that of others. The Christian tradition teaches us to know God who can very well be at work and be active in other religious traditions. Hence we can say that this

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<sup>1474</sup> Raymundo Panikkar, *The unknown Christ of Hinduism*, P.6. The above statement cannot be proved to be true. The statement is only personal opinion of Raymundo Panikkar. Raymundo is a well known Indian theologian who was born of Spanish mother and Indian father.

comparative study of the concept of sacrifice enables us to learn the truth of the other traditions.<sup>1475</sup>

In Christianity there are set of organized rules and regulations and above all a well developed and clear spirituality that is based on the teachings of Jesus which are great directions and guide to the followers of Christianity. From the chapter on the concept of Eucharist we saw that Christians have the sacrifice of Jesus as their central sacrifice. For a Christian it is very much important to have a deep rooted faith in this sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. His faith is lived out basing it on the sacrifice of Jesus. A Christian has to participate in the Eucharistic celebration which is ultimately a participation in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The cross of Jesus becomes an important part of the spirituality of a Christian. A Christian derives his power and grace from the participation of the sacraments especially of the Eucharistic celebration. It is there that he offers his whole self along with the sacrifice of the Eucharist. The symbols used in the Eucharist have also a connection to the nature and the creation. The bread and wine are used in the Eucharistic sacrifice. These materials are made out of the things of the earth and finally they become the vehicles and instruments of God's abounding grace and salvation. But in order that they become the instruments of God's love and redemption they have to be transformed by the Word of God which is spoken by the priests. This is also seen in the Hinduistic idea of sacrifice. The words accompany the ritual action. In Hinduism too we can see a stress on the meticulous way of performing the sacrifice. The priest is expected to perform the ritual according to the rules and regulations in order that it produces the effect for the people. Hence we can say that "Hinduism and Christianity as two- believing religions undoubtedly meet in God, in the Absolute, in the Ultimate."<sup>1476</sup> In Christianity and in Hinduism the rituals meant bringing this world and the heavenly world together. The presence of God is the central aspect that mystically unites the humans and God.

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<sup>1475</sup> Francis X. Clooney, *Comparative theology*, Wiley- Blackwell, United Kingdom, 2010, P.114-117.

<sup>1476</sup> Raymundo Panikkar, *The unknown Christ of Hinduism*, P.16.

Finally we can say that the sacrifice of the cross is the supreme work of God's 'mercy and justice.' It is primarily in the mystery of Christ crucified that harmony is 'perfectly established between God's mercy and justice.' On the cross the justice of God is clearly demonstrated in full vigour upon Christ suffering and crucified. 'Justice is wrapped up in mercy and justice is wholly dependent on mercy.' "From that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Mathew .16.21). Peter took him aside, and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This will never be done to you" Mathew. 16.22). But he turned, and said to Peter, get behind me, Satan, you are a stumbling block to me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men" (Mathew . 16. 23). As against the modern thought which says God is love and a loving God cannot allow cruelty of the crucifixion, we can say that the love of God also includes the justice of God. The crucifixion is the revelation of the justice of God. Jesus, who was sinless, took upon himself the sins of the whole world. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we will be saved from God's wrath through him" (Romans.5.9). Jesus is wholly engaged in the love of the affairs of the Father. Jesus shows us the infinite mystery of God's love and mercy above all, on the cross. Hence cross is beyond all and above all a work of 'filial love and can be the most profound revelation of love. The mysteries of agony, of crucifixion and of the burial are mysteries of the filial love of Jesus for his Father. These mysteries are 'incomprehensible.' When these mysteries 'serve to reveal infinite mysteries of the love of God' and 'glorify the love of the Father', then everything has meaning and nothing is out of place. 'Christ crucified has indeed become by the power of God our wisdom, our wisdom of love.' Death itself has contributed to the great 'epiphany of the mystery of God as love.' 'The sacrifice of Jesus reveals and manifests the 'absolute quality of the love of God' and 'death alone can be sign of the absolute and substantial primacy of God's love.' Death can be used by God's 'wisdom' as the sign which is best able to express clearly the greatness of

his love which is 'substantial', 'eternal' and 'incomparable.' It is death which alone can express and demonstrate the 'intensity and depth of God's love.' The sacrifice of the cross is the 'supreme work of justice.' 'God is never so pure, as strict as exact as on the cross.'<sup>1477</sup> A sinner is totally incapable of making amends for the offence against God and his love.<sup>1478</sup> Jesus took upon himself all the sufferings and the crucifixion in order to 'satisfy the justice of God.' It is the will of God that Jesus suffered. The connection between justice and mercy of God is manifested so plainly on the cross. It is clear that Eucharist is the celebration of life and a sign of hope and joy.

But we need to know that there is no real life, without death, there is no joy without sufferings and cross, there is no resurrection and hope without Good Friday and death. This is the belief from the Christian perspective. "I am telling you the truth: a grain of wheat remains no more than a single grain unless it is dropped into the ground and dies. If it does die, then it produces many grains" (John. 12. 24). The cross is the centre of Christianity and avoiding deliberately the cross of Christ the Christianity loses its importance, beauty, worth and meaning. Without the cross being in the centre of our life as Christians, Christianity will become an easy and comfortable religion. But Jesus tells his followers "whoever wants to be my disciples must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me" ( Luke. 9. 23). Hence, we can say that in spite of the various questions and doubts raised by the modern thinkers regarding the relevance and value of the sacrifice of Jesus, it is absolutely necessary to speak of and accept the reality of the sacrifice of the cross of Jesus and of the Eucharist as the sacrifice. This concept has been an integral part of the Vedic religion and it continues to be so in the modern Hinduism. Every pious Hindu performs some sort of sacrifice in his life in order to keep up his contact with his God. Another reason is that there cannot be a possibility of appropriate dialogue between Christianity and Hinduism in Indian Church without taking into

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<sup>1477</sup>M.D Philippe, *The worship of God*, Burns and Oates, London, 1959, PP.74-90.

<sup>1478</sup> M.D. Philippe, *The worship of God*, P.94.

consideration the concept of sacrifice. Hence I am personally convinced of the necessity and relevance of the concept of the sacrifice in Indian situation and context.

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