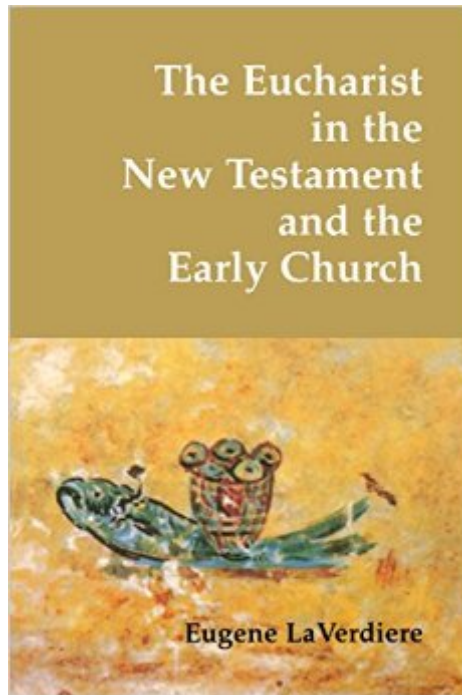


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# The Eucharist In The New Testament And The Early Church



## Synopsis

As presented in the New Testament, the Eucharist is a source of both inspiration and guidance today. In *The Eucharist in the New Testament and the Early Church*, Father LaVerdiere examines what the New Testament tells us about the Eucharist and how the Eucharist provides an important experiential and theological resource for the gospel stories of Jesus' life, ministry, passion and resurrection, as well as for the life and development of the Church. Father LaVerdiere illustrates how the origins of the Eucharist coincide with the origins of the Church. The development of the Eucharist reflects the development of the early Church, as well as its creative theological and pastoral reflection. Through the lens of the New Testament it views the beginnings of both Church and Eucharist when the risen Lord appeared to the disciples at meals soon after Jesus' passion, death and resurrection. He also looks beyond the New Testament and explores the ongoing development of Eucharistic theology and practice up to the mid-second century, ending with Justin Martyr, the first to describe the Eucharist to people who had no personal experience of it. Father LaVerdiere focuses on the Eucharist in relation to ecclesiology, Christology, and liturgy. He begins by reflecting on how Christians referred to the Eucharist before it had a name, how names for the Eucharist came to be and their importance, how the Eucharist was celebrated at the very beginning, how liturgical formulas came to be, how these formulas brought out the riches of the Eucharist, and how the Eucharist related to different pastoral situations. The concept of "trinity" — the assembly, the Eucharist, and the Church — guides this study. The Eucharist is the sacrament of the assembly, the sacrament of the Church's life in the world. From the very beginning, there was no separating the three, nor are there separating references to the Eucharist from the letters, gospels, or other work in which the three appear. Here, Father LaVerdiere stresses that in order to know the Eucharist in the New Testament and the early Church, one has only to look at the composition and actual life of the Church. Thus, to know the Church, one has only to look at the way it celebrates the Eucharist. Since most of today's challenges concerning the Eucharist are similar to those experienced by the early Church, *The Eucharist in the New Testament and the Early Church* will be of great help to pastors, students, catechists and those in ministry, who want the celebration of the Eucharist to make a difference on the rest of Christian life in the Church. Eugene LaVerdiere, SSS, is the senior editor of *Emmanuel* magazine and an adjunct professor of New Testament studies at Catholic Theological Union and Mundelein Seminary in Chicago. He is author of *Fundamentalism: A Pastoral Concern*, *A Church for all Peoples: Missionary Issues in a World Church*, and *Luke from the New Testament Message* series published by The Liturgical Press."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a must read for anyone who wants to deepen his/her appreciation to the Eucharist. It is well written, and I found it easy reading. Thank you. I highly recommend this book. I bought many copies to share with my friends.

If you want a Catechism go get one! If you want biblical scholarship get this book from a renowned scholar....Fr LaVerdiere shines in his writings and is not for people who want His writings are more specific for other GOSPELS, Dining in: the Kingdom of God: The Eucharist in Luke's Gospel, THE BEGINNING OF THE GOSPEL (2VOLUMES) Many would prefer a catechism for answers, but long before the Catechism the early church and the New Testament were the rock upon which the theology, or better their biblical groundings of the Eucharist dwelt. It is there that the Theology still finds its foundation and still dwell. I read this book in 1997 and I have re-read it several times. It still provides me with a rich biblical background. I highly recommend any of Eugene's books they are solidly grounded in the original Greek text and explain meanings and situations from that Greek text. This man is brilliant! I treasure this book and those mentioned above. See my profile for other works if you desire.

If you are looking for a book that will give you the Catholic Church's rich interpretation of the biblical text and Church Fathers on the Holy Eucharist, this book is not the one for you. Fr. LaVerdiere sadly takes a fundamental attitude of skepticism towards the biblical text -- taking the historical-critical

method to its outer extremes -- and feels that he has to reconstruct the experience of the early Church and the development of Eucharistic praxis. In so doing, he inflicts a Protestant ecclesiology on the biblical text. As such, the conclusions that he sets forth are largely his own educated guesses and opinions -- based on very shaky foundations -- rather than the sure faith that the Church has handed down to us. But it does not have to be this way. The Church has preserved for the last 2,000 years the great treasure that the Lord gave to us, and has a very rich and highly-developed theology of the Holy Eucharist firmly rooted in the biblical texts and patristic witness. You may find this first of all in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and then in many other fine books, such as "The Hidden Manna" by Fr. James T. O'Connor or "Holy Eucharist" by Fr. Louis Bouyer. I'm sure Fr. LaVerdiere wrote his book with good intentions, but he greatly missed the mark. Help stop the cutting down of trees for bad books: don't buy this book!

Anything that comes from the liturgical press is worth reading for Catholic research. This is no exception. The majority of the books of the New Testament as well as some patristic texts are explained in Eucharistic terms as well as a theme for each book ie: Dining in the Kingdom of God: The Eucharist in Luke's Gospel. LaVerdiere is clear in his statements and allows room for questioning early practices. He is a poet in his research as much as he is a historian.

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