

The Eucharist and the Digital



Opening Reflection

- What did you do during COVID-19 at your parish or school? Did you live-stream Masses? Why or why not?
- What do you think about these live-streams now? Do you think that they were good? Bad? Why or why not?



The COVID-19 Pandemic: The Good and Bad

The Nature of the Digital

“...digital technology is opening space for a retrieval of age-old Western forms of social organization, including lordship and fealty. Online discourse is already fragmenting into increasingly self-enclosed and self-selected subgroups. There is likely a narrow and closing window of time during which public discourse as a practice still holds general appeal. Using that time wisely means preparing elites and the public – but especially ourselves and those closest to us – for what is to come” (James Poulos, “Imagine All the People.”)



Sincere Rituals

The image shows the interior of a grand, historic church. The architecture features high, vaulted ceilings with intricate details and a series of arches along the walls. The floor is made of polished stone tiles. In the foreground, rows of dark wooden pews are arranged on either side of a central aisle. A few people are seated in the pews, including a person in a white hooded garment in the lower left and another person in a dark jacket in the lower right. At the far end of the church, the altar is visible, featuring a large, ornate crucifix set within a semi-circular apse. The lighting is warm and focused, highlighting the architectural details and the central altar area.

Subjunctive Rituals



Catholic liturgy
operates in the
subjunctive mood.

Cyril of Jerusalem





Ocular Communion

An Advent wreath is the central focus, featuring five lit candles in shades of purple, pink, and white. The candles are surrounded by green pine branches and small red and white berries. The background is a warm, dimly lit room with a window and a small table with a red candle on it.

John Henry Newman and Advent

Mass as Television






Matter Matters



**The Sacramentum
Tantum: The Sign Alone**



**Sacramentum et Res: The
Reality and Sign**



Res Tantum: The Reality Itself

The Nature of the Digital

“...digital technology is opening space for a retrieval of age-old Western forms of social organization, including lordship and fealty. Online discourse is already fragmenting into increasingly self-enclosed and self-selected subgroups. There is likely a narrow and closing window of time during which public discourse as a practice still holds general appeal. Using that time wisely means preparing elites and the public – but especially ourselves and those closest to us – for what is to come” (James Poulos, “Imagine All the People.”)

O Sacrum Convivium

O sacrum convivium!

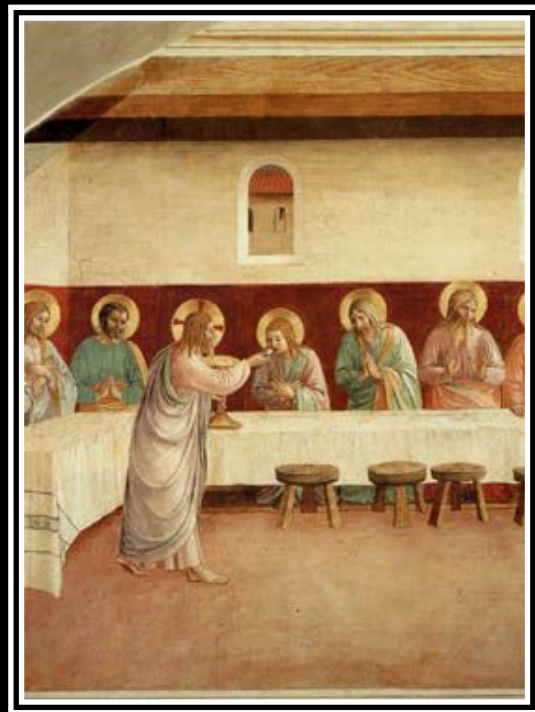
in quo Christus sumitur:

recolitur memoria passionis eius:

mens impletur gratia:

et futurae gloriae nobis pignus datur.

Alleluia.



Questions for Discussion

- Return to your earlier assessment of live-stream Masses at your parish? Would you now change your answer? Why or why not?
- How do you think the Eucharistic liturgy, specifically attentive to the subjunctive, could respond to the advent of the digital?
- Do you have other insights or thoughts that you would like to share with the group?

If You Have Questions or Thoughts

Timothy P. O'Malley, Ph.D.

Director of Education/Academic Director of the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy

McGrath Institute for Church Life

tomalley@nd.edu