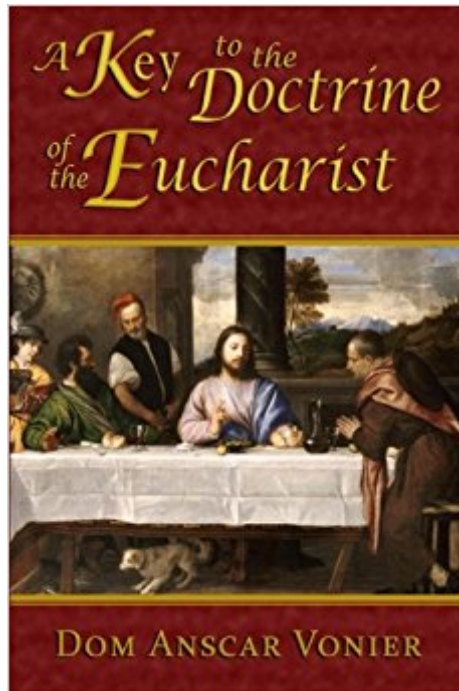




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A Key To The Doctrine Of The Eucharist



Synopsis

"The first theologian in modern times to discover to our wonder and joy the fully sacramental character of the Mass was, doubtless, that profound and personal thinker, Abbot Vonier." - Fr. W. Barden, O.P. In his greatest, and most influential masterpiece, Abbot Vonier gives a spiritually and intellectually enriching explanation of the Eucharist based on a careful study of "the great sacramental doctrine of the Church" found in the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Council of Trent. Vonier writes, "To conceive the sacrifice of Mass as a sacrament is a simple visualization of a great truth which, if it be once grasped by the mind makes all the difference between light and fantasy. The great beauty and intellectual clarity of the Church's theology as explained by Vonier reminds the reader over and over that "In theological matters the spark that illumines always comes from under the hoof of strict reasoning."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dom Anscar Vonier, Abbot of Buckfast, was among the greatest sacramental theologians of the English-speaking world, famous for his clarity in explaining the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas for lay readers. His many works include The Personality of Christ, The Angels and The Spirit and the Bride.

A brilliant explanation of both the "real presence" of Christ in the Eucharist as articulated by St.

Thomas Aquinas and the deeper meaning of what the understanding of a "Sacrament" brings to the Catholic belief of the seven sacraments and their efficacy in everyday lives.

Beautifully written information.

What I have read so far is excellent.

This book was recommended to me several decades ago, and on more than a few other occasions, by a good and highly-respected friend. He had also given me my own copy to read. It basically sat in its place in my library for all that time. Shortly after his death, I came face to face with the book on .com. Now back in print as a paperback, it was being offered to me as a "recommended" item. Impressive! The preface was written by Peter Kreeft and the Introduction by Aidan Nichols, O.P. There was also a review by Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J. that indicated "This book should never be out of print." I began to seriously wonder, "What have I missed?" I bought the paperback edition with the intention of finally following through on my friend's advice. This did not begin as the easy read I thought it should be. It is a book that has to be worked through. It is based on the teachings of Saint Thomas Aquinas, and though I have had a solid foundation in his work over the years, Vonier did not seem to allow for any shortcuts. You had to do the work! Vonier also drew much from the resultant teaching of the Council of Trent, steeped as well in Thomas' thought. While I also believed I had had a satisfactory understanding of Sacramental Theology, I suppose I was a bit unprepared for Vonier's insights. I am glad, however, that I was receptive to them. If there was "only one thing" I could be grateful to the Abbot for, and I know it sounds trivial because we think we understand, it would be a new appreciation and perception of what "Sacraments" are! Vonier claimed it was necessary for him to dispel the notion that the Eucharistic sacrifice could be explained in terms other than from sacramental theology. A case he described considered the first Mass, in the Upper Room, as a sort of first-phase of the actual Sacrifice of Christ that would occur the next day, instead of its true nature: the sacramental presentation of that Sacrifice, as if the latter, in some way, could be dependent on the former. Subtle as it may seem, he strove to show how this drifted far from that taught by Saint Thomas Aquinas, that the Eucharist, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, is the sacrament of the Sacrifice of Christ. It is not different from the Sacrifice of Calvary because it is a sacrament. It is "the Sacrifice;" but it is the sacramental presentation of the Sacrifice of Calvary. It is identical to the Last Supper too because in the Mass, Christ is the Victim, and because of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, Christ is also and always the Priest. Abbot Vonier shows how each of the

sacraments is a presentation of the Sacrifice of Calvary. Of the other sacraments, he shows this most clearly with Baptism. Hard as it is to work through many of the details presented, books like this deserve our attention if for nothing else but to get our theology straight! Otherwise, how easy it is, even unknowingly, to pass on false notions. I also came to understand Abbot Vonier's intention, as stated in 's Product Description, that this book was "written to give lay Catholics a better understanding of the Eucharist." Once you get into it you realize that lay Catholics, at that time he wrote this, were better educated in philosophy and theology and better equipped to handle such a book. Read it! Even if you have to wrestle with it!

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