

from the Anglican Patrimony: The Breaking of the Bread

Text Acts 2:42 *And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

For many among us fancy only a Sacrament in this action, and look strange at the mention of a sacrifice. Whereas we not only use it as a nourishment spiritual, as that it is too, but as a mean also to renew as 'covenant' with God by virtue of that 'sacrifice' as the Psalmist speaketh. So our Saviour Christ in the institution telleth us, in the twenty-second chapter of Luke and twentieth verse, and the Apostle in the thirteenth chapter of Hebrews and tenth verse. And the old writers use no less the word sacrifice than Sacrament, altar than table, offer than eat; but both indifferently, to shew there is both.

And again too, that to a many with us indeed so *fractio panis*, as it is that only and nothing beside; whereas 'the bread which we break is the partaking of Christ's' true 'body'--and not a sign, figure, or remembrance of it. For the Church hath ever believed a true fruition of the true body of Christ in that Sacrament.

Further, as heretofore hath been made plain, it is an imagination to think that this 'breaking of bread' can be severed from the other, which is Isaiah's breaking 'bread to the needy.' Whereby as in the former Christ communicateth Himself with us, so we in this latter communicate ourselves with our poor brethren, that so there may be a perfect communion. For both in the sacrifice which was the figure of it it was a matter of commandment, insomuch as the poorest were not exempt from God's offering; and our Saviour Christ's practice was, at this feast, to command somewhat 'to be given to the poor.' And last of all the *agapæ* or love-feasts of the Christians for relief of the poor, do most plainly express that I mean. In place of which, when they after proved inconvenient, succeeded the Christian offertory.

Lancelot Andrewes

From *Lancelot Andrewes Works, Sermons, Volume Five*
Preached in the Parish Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, on the Ninth of
January, A.D. 1592

Lancelot Andrewes (1555–1626) was bishop successively of Chichester, Ely and Winchester during the reign of James I of England, and was placed in charge of the translation of the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible.