

**RECONSTRUCTING SAINT THOMAS’S ARGUMENTS
FOR CHRIST’S SUBSTANTIAL BEING IN THE EUCHARIST**

Credo quidquid dixit Dei Filius,
Nil hoc verbo veritatis verius.

—ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Adoro Te Devote*

What God’s Son has told me, take for truth do I;
Truth himself speaks truly or there’s nothing true.

—GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS, “Godhead Here in Hiding”

Summa Theologiae, Tertia Pars, q. 75, a. 1

“Is the body of Christ in the sacrament truly or only figuratively?”

We know:

1. Upon consecration it *becomes true* to say of the Eucharist, “This is the body of Christ”.
2. In that statement, “is the body of Christ” is a *substantial predicate*.

Now since:

3. A true substantial predication signifies *the actuality of the substantial form* signified by the predicate in the subject.

It follows therefore that:

4. Upon consecration, the substantial form signified by “is the body of Christ” comes to be actual in the Eucharist.

But:

5. For a substantial form to come to be actual is for the substance of which it is the form to come to be.

And of course:

6. The substantial form signified by “is the body of Christ” is *Christ’s bodiliness*.

So it follows (from 4, 5 & 6) that:

7. Upon consecration, the Eucharist comes to be *the substance of Christ’s body*.

q. 76, a. 1, **“Is the whole Christ under this sacrament?”**

Further:

8. The substantial form that is Christ’s bodiliness is the one whole substantial form of Christ, only named in respect of its material degree of actuality.

And:

9. In that one substantial form, other degrees of actuality of Christ (such as His life, divinity, etc.) accompany the material degree of actuality (in Aquinas’s phrase, “by concomitance”).

It therefore follows (from 5, 8 & 9) that:

10. Upon consecration, the Eucharist comes to be *the substance of Christ*.