

On the Revised Translation of the Mass
Bulletin Insert 3
“Do this in Memory of Me”

Belief that the Mass is heaven on earth comes from what Saint John records in the Book of Revelation about his vision of the heavenly Liturgy in which angels and saints sing the constant praises of God by venerating the Lamb. It could be argued that we simply imitate on earth what Saint John sees in heaven.

This objection is consistent with what we typically understand by a memory. It is usually understood as something that happened in the past. For the ancient Jews, and therefore the early Christians, memory of God’s actions were never isolated in the past, but could be made present again through a sacred action.

The *Haggadah*, a collection of instructions detailing the celebration of the Jewish Passover meal, says that “in every generation, every Jew must regard himself as though he, personally, was brought out of Egypt.” Christians took this to heart and applied it to the Mass. Jesus’ declaration to “do this in memory of Me,” meant that when His followers did so, they were as present at the Last Supper as His original Apostles.

Our Mass resembling what Saint John describes in the Book of Revelation is no imitation, but rather a participation in the realities he details. The Mass is indeed heaven on earth!