

Was Jesus a Priest? Or did Jesus see Himself as a Priest?

Yes, we know that; Jesus was True God from True God, Light from Light, Consubstantial with the Father, through Him all things were made he came down from Heaven and by the Holy Spirit was Incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

But was Jesus a priest? Did He see Himself as a priest? This is a very crucial and important question in the life of Jesus both as the Son of God and as the son of Mary from Nazareth.

The way to answer this question is by reading the Letter to the Hebrews (*Hebrews 7: 1-3; 15-17*). In this chapter, Melchizedek is presented to us both as King of Salem-(meaning the King of peace and righteousness) and as a Priest of God the Most High. When Melchizedek met Abraham, Abraham apportioned to Melchizedek a tenth part of everything he had. Melchizedek resembled the Son of God and he continued to be a priest forever.

Similarly, Jesus was a priest and he saw Himself as a priest forever according to the Order/Line of Melchizedek. So then, what does a priest do? The job description of a priest is only one; to offer “Sacrifice to God the Most High.” This is what Jesus did.

After Jesus’ birth, he grew in age and in wisdom, and then he established the kingdom of God. He did this by preaching, healing forgiving sins, performing miracles and above all, he crowned everything by his very Sacrifice of the Cross in Calvary. Jesus offered Sacrifice because he knew he was a priest and he saw Himself as a priest. Jesus established the Kingdom of God as “the good news.” However, after his death and resurrection, he Himself became the “good news to be proclaimed in the world.”

But again, the Sacrifice of Christ was unique. He was the Altar, the Sacrifice and the Victim all at once. Therefore, the Catholic Priesthood is conformed in the priesthood of Jesus Christ Himself which emerges in the Order/Line of Melchizedek.

A priest therefore, offers Sacrifice on behalf of the people of God to God the Most High. This is “ministerial priesthood.” For the lay people, they join in the sacrifice of (Bread and Wine) offered to God by the Priest. The lay people are able to do so because of their “priesthood of the believers/common priesthood” which we all share together. As the priest offers Bread and Wine to God, the assembly joins in that one and the same perfect sacrifice through their Praise and Thanksgiving, their joys and sorrows of life, their hope and their “Whole Being” as a sacrifice to God.

So then, when a priest prays the Eucharistic prayer during the Consecration, the action of the Holy Spirit, the priest’s quotation of the Words of Jesus and the priest’s gestures, all of these make present to us Sacramentally, the one perfect Sacrifice of Jesus in Calvary.

Without Sacrifice, we cannot be one with God, we cannot be forgiven our sins and we cannot have confidence and ownership in the “House of the Lord” as adopted Sons and daughters of our loving God.

What are we sacrificing today to our brothers and sisters in the world we live in?