“Without father, mother, or ancestry, without beginning of days on end of life, thus made to resemble the Son of God, he remains a priest forever.”

So we are reading the Letter to the Hebrews, and the author is drudging up from Old Testament lore all kinds of images, which are actually rather difficult to comprehend. Here the figure of Melchizedek, who in the Book of Genesis appears to Abraham.

Now according to the Letter to the Hebrews, he is not really a human being at all because you have never met a human being without a father or a mother or ancestry, without beginning of days or end of life—what kind of being is that? So this belongs to the many different life forms that exist in the literature of the past, which people more or less generally refer to, incorrectly of course, as angels. Angel of course is only one of these non-human intelligent life forms that happens to be spoken about in Scripture and elsewhere. This is another one. If you recall I mentioned that when Moses saw the temple, the vision of the temple, there was a high priest in this heavenly vision he saw. So the idea is something like one of the servants of God. We see different servants of God listed in various places, for example, we read, we even sing about the cherubim and the seraphim, and in the Eucharist prayers, in the beginning, so-called preface, we talk about the powers, the thrones, and the dominions. These are different servants of God.

Well, the high priest apparently was one of the servants of God. And here the high priest is appearing to Abraham. The interesting thing is that Abraham gives him a tithe, acknowledging that he really comes from God the Most High. He is called priest of God the Most High. When Gabriel appears to Mary he tells Mary that she is to be the mother of the Son
of the Most High. And this is another way of talking about Yahweh. **Yahweh is the Son of the Most High.** So in these ways the appearances of Melchizedek, Yahweh, and so on in the Old Testament are all prefiguring the coming of Christ in the flesh. And that is why this author says that Jesus now “is raised up after the likeness of Melchizedek, and has become so not by a law expressed in a commandment”—he is referring to earthly high priests—“but by the power of a life that cannot be destroyed.” So again, **this is how Melchizedek fits into the general picture, you might say, of heavenly liturgy that is expressed in the First Eucharistic Prayer.**

This is all part of our tradition, part of our heritage, and it reflects how the New Testament found itself fulfilled, fulfilling the figures and the prophecies and the shadows and the intimations found in the Old.