

How Holy this Feast The Eucharist & the Parish

Welcome

Opening Response

How holy this feast
in which Christ is our food:
his passion is recalled,
grace fills our hearts,
and we receive a pledge of the glory to come.

Introduction

In the Liturgy we are called to respond both individually and corporately, as the Body of Christ. When we say 'Amen' when we receive Communion it is both a statement of personal faith and (literally) an act of Communion, communion with the whole Church. In a similar way prayer before the Blessed Sacrament is personal prayer and prayer with the Church. More than that the gift of this prayer is to help us participate in Mass more deeply, to be more deeply in communion.

Listen to Scripture

Reading

1 Cor 10: 16-17; 12: 12-14

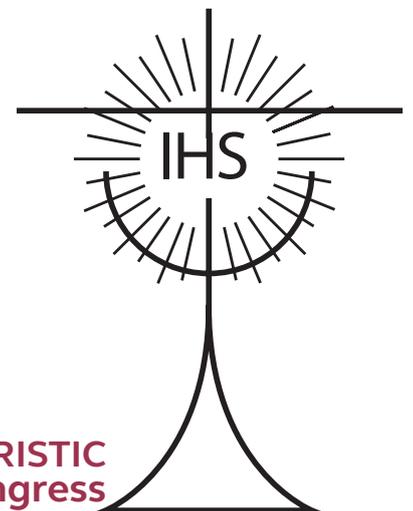
The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

For the body does not consist of one member but of many.

Reflection 1

- St Augustine says that at Communion 'we become what we receive' — how does (or how do you hope) that Holy Communion changes you?
- When do you experience praying in communion?



Read with the Church

Documents

from the Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Benedict XVI *Sacramentum Caritatis* †

The personal relationship which the individual believer establishes with Jesus present in the Eucharist constantly points beyond itself to the whole communion of the Church and nourishes a fuller sense of membership in the Body of Christ. For this reason, besides encouraging individual believers to make time for personal prayer before the Sacrament of the Altar, I feel obliged to urge parishes and other church groups to set aside times for collective adoration. Naturally, already existing forms of eucharistic piety retain their full value. I am thinking, for example, of processions with the Blessed Sacrament, especially the traditional procession on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, the Forty Hours devotion, local, national and international Eucharistic Congresses, and other similar initiatives. If suitably updated and adapted to local circumstances, these forms of devotion are still worthy of being practised today. [68]

From the Encyclical of Pope Francis *Evangelii Gaudium*

The Church is called to be the house of the Father, with doors always wide open. One concrete sign of such openness is that our church doors should always be open, so that if someone, moved by the Spirit, comes there looking for God, he or she will not find a closed door. There are other doors that should not be closed either. Everyone can share in some way in the life of the Church; everyone can be part of the community, nor should the doors of the sacraments be closed for simply any reason. This is especially true of the sacrament which is itself 'the door': baptism. The Eucharist, although it is the fullness of sacramental life, is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak. These convictions have pastoral consequences that we are called to consider with prudence and boldness. Frequently, we act as arbiters of grace rather than its facilitators. But the Church is not a tollhouse; it is the house of the Father, where there is a place for everyone, with all their problems. [47]

Reflection 2

- What do you appreciate about the parish?
- With whom do you feel in communion with?
 - Is this different to having something in common with someone?
- Who might be excluded?

Preparation

Think about the various aspects of parish life you are involved in and what you would want to prayer for each.

Think of people at Sunday Mass who you only know by sight or slightly; how do they reveal Christ's presence to you.

Think about those in your are circle of family, friends and acquaintances and who you hope for them.

You may be invited to share these (as much or as little as you wish) with the group or you may wish to keep them to yourself.

Prayer

from the Didache

We thank you, Father,
for the holy vine of David, your servant,
which you have revealed through Jesus, your Son.
Praise to you now and evermore!

We thank you, Father,
for the life and the knowledge
that you have revealed through Jesus, your Son.
Praise to you now and evermore!

Just as this bread that we break
was once distributed on a hillside
and its fragments gathered so as not to lose any,
so let your Church be gathered
from the farthest parts of the earth into your Kingdom.
Praise to you now and evermore!

Because yours are the glory and the power forever.
Praise to you now and evermore!

We thank you, holy Father,
for your holy name that dwells in our hearts.
Praise to you now and evermore!

For the knowledge, the faith, and the immortality
that you have revealed to us through Jesus, your Son.
Praise to you now and evermore!

It is you, all-powerful Master, who created the universe
in praise of your name.
Praise to you now and evermore!

You give food and drink to the children of men;
but to us you give the grace of a spiritual food,
of a drink for eternal life through Jesus, your Son.
Praise to you now and evermore!

Above all, we thank you for your power.
Praise to you now and evermore!

Remember, Lord, your Church,
to deliver it from every evil, and to make it perfect in your love.
Praise to you now and evermore!

Gather together from the four winds
this sanctified Church
into the kingdom that you have prepared.
Praise to you now and evermore!

Come, Lord, and let this world pass! —Amen.
Hosanna to the house of David! —Amen.
Let him who is holy come! —Amen.
Let him who is not, repent! —Amen.
Marana tha (Come, Lord)! —Amen.

Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament

Exposition

Song

Possible themes include: the Eucharist, Jesus, and faith in Jesus. Suggested titles:

- Adoramus te

Adoration

Reading

- Repeat the Scripture reading (1 Cor 10: 16-17; 12: 12-14)
- An alternative text would be to repeat one of the readings from the previous Sunday.

Song

- The reading could be followed by the singing of a simple Taizé chant

Prayer

- After a period of silence the text from the *Didache*.

Silence

Benediction

Eucharistic Song

- Bread for the world (Farrell)

Prayer.

The following is suggested from the Rite:

Lord our God,

you have given us the true bread from heaven.

In the strength of this food

may we live always by your life

and rise in glory on the last day.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Reposition

Acclamation

See Notes

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