



PARISH OF ST. AGATHA

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THE EUCHARIST IS THE BREAD OF SINNERS NOT A REWARD OF SAINTS.

Pope Francis celebrates the Solemnity of Corpus Christi inviting the faithful to embrace the Lord's gift of the Eucharist and to make a gift of our lives too. The Pope reflected on the gift of the sacrament of the Eucharist and invited believers to make their own lives gifts, just as Jesus did. The Pope reflected on the narrative of the last Supper as recounted in the Gospel of Mark (Mk 14:12-16, 22-26). "The words and gestures of the Lord touch our hearts: He takes the bread in his hands, pronounces the blessing, breaks it and offers it to the disciples, saying: *Take; this is my body*", the Pope said. With great simplicity, Jesus gives us the greatest sacrament in a humble gesture of giving and of sharing.

THE GREATEST THING IS TO SERVE

Explaining that at the culmination of his life, Jesus "does not distribute an abundance of bread to feed the crowds, but he breaks himself at the Passover supper with the disciples," and He shows us that the aim of life lies in self-giving, that "the greatest thing is to serve." Reflecting on how we find the greatness of God in a piece of bread, "in a fragility that overflows with love and sharing, the Pope highlighted the meaning of the word *Fragility* explaining that at the last supper "Jesus becomes fragile like the bread that is broken and crumbled. But his strength lies precisely therein."

THE STRENGTH OF LOVE THAT IS - GIVES LIFE

"*In the Eucharist fragility is strength*: the strength of the love that becomes small so as to be welcomed and not feared; the strength of the love that is broken and shared so as to nourish and give life; the strength of the love that is split apart so as to join us in unity," he said. Pope Francis went on to speak also of another strength that stands out in the fragility of the Eucharist: "the strength to love those who make mistakes." Noting that "It is on the night he is betrayed that Jesus gives us the Bread of Life," he reflected on the fact that "He gives us the greatest gift while in his heart he feels the deepest abyss: the disciple who eats with Him, who dips the morsel in the same plate, is betraying Him."

RESPONDING TO EVIL WITH GOOD

Notwithstanding the suffering caused by betrayal, the Pope said, **Jesus reacts to the evil with a greater good**: "He responds to Judas' 'no' with the 'yes' of mercy. He does not punish the sinner, but rather gives His life for him." "When we receive the Eucharist," the Holy Father explained, "Jesus does the same with us: he knows us; he knows that we are sinners and we make many mistakes, but he does not give up joining his life to ours." Describing the Eucharist, not as the reward of saints, but as *the Bread of sinners*, the Pope said that each time we receive the Bread of Life, the Lord comes to give new meaning to our fragilities. Urging the faithful never to refrain from sharing their fragilities with Lord, he reminded them that His mercy is not afraid of our miseries. "And above all he heals us with love from those fragilities that we cannot heal on our own: that of feeling resentment toward those who have hurt us; that of distancing ourselves from others and closing off within ourselves; that of feeling sorry for ourselves and lamenting without finding peace," he said.

THE EUCHARIST JOINS US WITH JESUS

The Eucharist, Pope Francis said, "heals because it joins with Jesus: it makes us assimilate (absorb) his way of living, his ability to be broken up and given to brothers and sisters, to respond to evil with good." Concluding his catechesis, Pope Francis said the Lord "gives us the courage to go outside of ourselves and bend down with love toward the fragility of others. As God does with us: This is the logic of the Eucharist: we receive Jesus who loves us and heals our fragilities in order to love others and help them in their fragilities.

And he invoked the Blessed Virgin to help us to embrace the gift of the Eucharist and to make a gift of our life too. (Vatican News/Linda Bordoni).

EUCCHARISTIC DIVINE HEAVENLY FLESH AND BLOOD

The discussion of Jesus as the Bread of Life is brought to us on this Solemnity Sunday which celebrates His Most Holy Body and Blood in the Eucharist (Mk 14:12-16, 22-26), because of its importance for the salvation of our souls. It is the Spiritual Food for our spiritual journey, which feeds our immortal soul, while living on earth. It is like a spiritual fuel that helps drive the soul up into Heaven someday. Jesus ascended into heaven in Human Bodily Form, but returned to earth in Sacramental Form, in a new Eucharistic Body (Holy Communion). We Catholics are a sacramental people and need to be fed by Sacrament. A Sacrament is the visible image of Jesus in the world today. He becomes Sacrament for the sole purpose of physically feeding our sacramental souls, with His Sacramental Self. He gives everything to us, by the breaking of Himself. He asks us to imitate His action, by also breaking open of ourselves and spending our charitable nature on each other.

EAT MY BODY AND DRINK MY BLOOD

Jesus asks us to eat His Eucharistic Flesh and drink His Eucharistic Blood, in this holy and sacred way. His Body now appears to us in the new Form of a Living Bread, which contains the full substance of His Most Holy Body and Blood: His Real Presence on earth. His Presence today is also called an Eternal Covenant, because he is the Eternal Marriage of Love, between God in Heaven, and us on earth. Unleavened bread in Mass is transformed into Him, through the Life Giving power of the Holy Spirit. It does not taste of human flesh, but of bread, a heavenly Bread, as God designed it. He leaves us to work out the Mystery ourselves, helped by His teachings and using the Faith He gave us in Baptism. We are also asked to unfold the Divine Wisdom He gifted us in our Sacrament of Confirmation. As His new disciples, we now have the advantage of knowing the meaning and purpose of the Last Supper (First Mass), where He instituted His Eucharistic Presence for today's world.

SHOCK!

Naturally the disciples were shocked listening to Jesus, as it seemed like a primitive recipe for cannibalism. The real reason for doubting was their lack of faith in Him. It is the same reason why the unbeliever rejects the Church today. The disciples eventually stood by Jesus, because they knew He talked with Authority from Heaven, and so they did not abandon Him forever, except for the faithless Judas. We now know that in the Upper Room, Jesus was preparing the world for the coming of His Eucharistic Presence, in the sacramental form of Living Bread from Heaven. It was not the earthly human Body of Jesus that He was offering them to eat, but His New Divine Risen Body, clothed in Eucharistic Flesh. We believe this by faith and not by reason. Jesus physically appears to us today in the form of Living Bread.

BREAD OF LIFE

At the Offertory in every Mass, there is natural bread before us on the Altar. It will be offered up to Almighty God, who in return, will transfigure the offering, made from the work of human hands, into the Living Crucified Body and Blood of His Son on the Cross. We then remember His Death at the Consecration and then His Resurrection at the *Our Father* prayer. The Risen Jesus is then recognised at the breaking of the Bread and then comes to us in Holy Communion. *Blessed are You Lord God of all creation, for in Your Goodness we have received the bread we offer You, fruit of the earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the (Living) Bread of Life.* The Life-Giving Holy Spirit takes possession of the bread and miraculously transforms it from its earthly substance, into its Divine substance. Something similar happened at the Annunciation, when the same Life-Giving Spirit overshadowed and entered the virginal womb of Mary and miraculously created Life in her womb. *Mother Mary gave birth to the earthly Jesus in the Stable and Mother Church gives birth to the Eucharistic Jesus in the Mass. This is the basis of our Faith to believe the Words of Christ at the Last Supper. Take: This is My Body, this is My Blood.*

AND SPIRITUAL DRINK

Also, in the Offertory of the Mass, the Priest continues with wine saying, *Blessed are You Lord God of all creation, for in your Goodness we have received the wine we offer You, fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become for us our Spiritual Drink.* This life-giving miracle of divine creation continues after the Spirit makes Holy these Gifts, by descending upon them from Heaven, in a silent and invisible way, *like the dew fall.* The Holy Spirit continues to descend, changing the Gifts of bread and wine from their earthly substance into their new Divine Substance (trans-substantiate). If we understand this then we can understand the concept of Resurrection, where we will be transfigured from death into Life in a new body. At the Offertory of the Mass, we too offer-up ourselves to God, by saying that we are *lifting and offering our hearts up to the Lord.* We should feel a new increased spiritual change in our hearts, after every Mass. The Spirit creates in us at Mass, the ability to love and forgive each other, because the Loving and Merciful Blood of Jesus is now flowing in our veins. We are to become **who** we have received. If we don't believe in Jesus' Presence in the Eucharist then we don't understand or believe in true Resurrection either, when we will be transformed from an earthly substance made from dust to a divine substance made by the Spirit. To live in Heaven, we must begin to live