



The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, (CORPUS CHRISTI)

Cycle A

Sunday, June 14, 2020

Readings & Background

This Sunday's Readings

First Reading : *Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a*

Moses tells the people to remember how God delivered them from slavery in Egypt.

Responsorial Psalm : *Psalms 147:12-15, 19-20*

Praise God, Jerusalem!

Second Reading : *1 Corinthians 10:16-17*

Though many, we are one body when we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ.

Gospel Reading : *John 6:51-58*

Jesus says, "I am the living bread."

Background on the Gospel Reading

This Sunday we celebrate a **second solemnity during this period of Ordinary Time** in the liturgical calendar. Today is the **Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ**. This day was once called **Corpus Christi, which is Latin for "Body of Christ."** In the revised Lectionary the name for this day is expanded to reflect more completely our Eucharistic theology.

Today's Gospel is taken from the **Gospel according to John**.

The reading is part of a discourse between Jesus and a crowd of Jews. The discourse comes shortly after **the miracle of Jesus' multiplication of the loaves and fishes**.

In John's Gospel, **miracles such as this are identified as "signs" through which people come to believe that Jesus is the Son of God**. These signs are followed by dialogue, or discourse that interprets and explains the miracle. In John's Gospel, Jesus' multiplication of the loaves is said to have occurred near Passover, thus linking it to the Exodus story and God's saving action toward the Israelites.

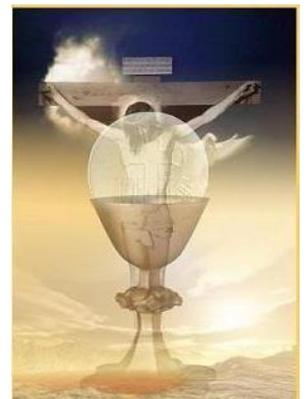
Having seen Jesus multiply the loaves and fishes, the crowd pursues him, perhaps seeking more food but **also looking for another sign**.

Jesus tells the crowd **that he is the bread of life**. He explains that just as God gave the Israelites manna to sustain them in the desert, so now God has sent new manna that will give eternal life. It is in this context that Jesus repeats those words in today's Gospel and tells them again **that he is the living bread that came down from heaven**.

Jesus' words are not well understood by the crowd; they argue that Jesus is not from heaven but born of Mary and Joseph. The crowd also has trouble understanding **how Jesus could give them his flesh to eat. Jesus tells them that when they eat his flesh and drink his blood, they will remain forever connected to him**. These are difficult words, but they are important because they seek to **show us our intimate connection with Jesus**.

This is the **mystery that is at the heart of our Eucharistic** theology.

In the elements of bread and wine, Jesus' Body and Blood are truly present. When we share in the Body and Blood of Christ, Jesus himself comes to dwell within us. This communion with the Lord makes us one body, brings us eternal life, and sends us forth to be Christ's Body in the world.



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Gospel Reading

John 6:51-58

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Family Connection

Our faith teaches us that when we gather to celebrate Mass, Jesus is present to us. **The bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ.** This is what we mean by the word **transubstantiation: Jesus makes himself present to all who receive the Body and Blood of Christ.**

If there are children in your family who have already celebrated their First Holy Communion, invite them to share their memories of this special day.

If there are family photos taken on this occasion, bring them out and share them together.

Adults in the family may also share memories or photos that they have of their First Communion.

Then read together today's Gospel, John 6:51–58.

Reflect together on what ***Jesus means when he calls himself the "living bread."***

Recall that every time we receive the Eucharist, Jesus keeps the promise he made in today's Gospel—those who eat his flesh and drink his blood will remain forever connected to him.

Perhaps family members can share what it means for them to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.

Together thank God for this gift of Holy Communion.

Make an act of Spiritual Communion at this time.



Pray together the Lord's Prayer or today's Psalm.