

JESUS AND THE NEW COVENANT

UNIT TWO: JESUS FULFILS HIS MISSION

Lessons 4

What We Need to Know about the Eucharist

CONTENT:

1. Catholics believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Some reasons are:
 - The Bible gives strong support to this belief.
 - Beginning with the apostles, the Church has always accepted this belief.
 - God is all-powerful. If he could create the universe from nothing, he can also change something into something else.
2. The Eucharist is a sacrifice of Jesus' body and blood. It is also a memorial of his death and resurrection.
3. Jesus instituted the Eucharist, as also the priesthood on Maundy Thursday.
4. The Liturgy of the Word & the Liturgy of the Eucharist are the 2 main parts of the mass.
5. By the word of Christ and the action of the Holy Spirit, bread & wine are changed into Jesus' body & blood. This change is called transubstantiation. Although it still looks and tastes like bread and wine, it is now Jesus: body, blood, soul and divinity.
6. The Mass was known as the 'Breaking of the Bread' during the apostles' time.
- 😊 7. We are expected to treat the Holy Eucharist with reverence and love.

REFERENCES: 1Cor11:23-27 Compendium: Nos 271-283. CCC 1373-81.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Copies of the Compendium of the CCC; handouts, blackboard.

ASSIGNMENT: Look up the internet/books and get interesting stories, miracles etc connected to the Eucharist. Be prepared to make a presentation for the next class. [*Optional activity!*]

BLACKBOARD SUMMARY:

WHY DO PEOPLE BELIEVE?
 Parents' faith,
 Teachers, priests' words
 Example of the saints
 Reasoning (thinking it out)
 Seeing God's power... His love
 God's Word

I. STARTER:

[Students share what they have noted down after asking family/other Catholics the question:

"Do you believe that the bread and wine at Mass really becomes Jesus? Why?"

Use the blackboard to highlight the reasons given by the students. Sum up as follows:]

- Our belief is based on reason. It is not blind, or unreasonable. (At the same time it goes beyond reason!) This means that we believe that Jesus is truly present in the consecrated host because we have taken into consideration certain things:
 1. As you have found out, one reason we believe something is that people we trust have told it to us. When a wise and truthful person tells you something, it makes sense to accept it. In this case, wise and holy people through the centuries have believed it:
 - Beginning with the apostles, Christians through the ages have worshipped the Eucharist because they believe that it is indeed Jesus.
 - All the saints have accepted this truth and in fact had a great love for the Eucharist.
 - Wise and holy people we know have accepted this truth and passed it on to us.
 2. Another reason we believe is because the Bible gives strong support to this belief.
 - All the Synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) repeat the words of Jesus as saying, "This is my body... This is my blood." They don't say, "This bread will remind you of my body."
 - Saint Paul also stresses that it is really Jesus himself in his letter to the Corinthians.

3. We also believe this truth because of our experience of God (He has revealed himself to us).
- We know that God is all powerful. If God could make the universe from nothing by his word, he can also change things by his word. I.e. He can change the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus. (*This is an argument of Saint Ambrose.*)
 - Many people have experienced miracles through the Eucharist which have strengthened our belief. Eg. Padre Pio, St Catherine, apparition at Fatima etc. (We can do some research and share these at our next class.)

II. DEVELOPMENT:

[Give out handouts. Students write 3 reasons for belief in the real presence in [1] (The underlined words above give the reasons in brief.)

They are then divided into groups according to the number of 'Compendiums' available, and read through the Nos. 271-83, filling in the answers to the crossword in both places (blanks and puzzle) The numbers next to the blanks indicate the place where the answer should be written in the puzzle. After the students have completed the puzzle, review the answers aloud, adding a few comments as follows:]

- A. What is the Eucharist? It is a SACRIFICE of Jesus' BODY AND BLOOD. It is also a MEMORIAL of his DEATH and Resurrection.
Through the Eucharist we are, as it were, able to be present at Jesus' death and resurrection and receive his saving grace.
- B. When did Jesus institute the Eucharist? On MAUNDY THURSDAY.
It is also known as Holy Thursday. At this meal, Jesus also instituted the priesthood. By saying 'Do this in memory of me' he was giving the apostles the ministry of being priests.
- C. What are the 2 main parts of the Eucharist? The Liturgy of the WORD and the Liturgy of the EUCHARIST.
Some people don't realise that the first part is important, but the Church tells us that we meet Jesus through his Word as well as in the Sacred Host.
- D. What is the word used to describe the changing of bread & wine into Jesus' body & blood? TRANSUBSTANTIATION.
Although it still looks and tastes like bread and wine, it is now Jesus, in a most real way.
What makes this change take place? The Word of CHRIST and the action of the HOLY SPIRIT.
- E. In what way is Jesus present in the Eucharist? He is present body, blood, SOUL and DIVINITY.
I.e. as both GOD and MAN.
- F. What was the Mass known as during the apostles' time? 'The BREAKING of the BREAD.

III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

If the host really becomes Jesus, then how should we behave, respond? Think about it and write down some thoughts that come to you. *[Students write on the back of their handouts]* Now share your thoughts with your partner. *[Allow students to share, and make sure the following points come out:]*

- At Mass, we should be conscious of Jesus, and not distracted or thinking of other things.
- We should not be in a state of sin when we receive Communion. We should ask pardon for sins we have committed. If we have sinned in a serious way (mortal sin), we should first go for Confession, only then receive Communion.
- We should prepare beforehand to receive the Lord by fasting for at least an hour.
- We should also dress in decent way and behave in a way that gives respect to God who is present. (E.g. We wear modest clothes and don't try to attract attention to ourselves. We bow or kneel as we enter the church.)
- If we love Jesus, we should visit Him in the church or chapel whenever possible.

HOME ASSIGNMENT: Look up the internet/books and get some interesting stories, miracles etc connected to the Eucharist. Be prepared to make a presentation at the next class. (*This activity should be allotted to groups of about 4. It could be done at a later date/ on a day set aside for 'faith sharing.'*) Bring a rosary for the next class.