

The Living Word

The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Year A

11 June 2023

First Reading Dt 8:2-3, 14-16

He gave you food which you and your ancestors did not know.

Moses said to the people: 'Remember how the Lord your God led you for forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, to test you and know your inmost heart – whether you would keep his commandments or not. He humbled you, he made you feel hunger, he fed you with manna which neither you nor your fathers had known, to make you understand that man does not live on bread alone but that man lives on everything that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

'Do not then forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery: who guided you through this vast and dreadful wilderness, a land of fiery serpents, scorpions, thirst; who in this waterless place brought you water from the hardest rock; who in this wilderness fed you with manna that your fathers had not known.'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 147:12-15. 19-20. R. v.12

(R.) Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.
or

(R.) Alleluia!

1. O praise the Lord, Jerusalem!
Zion, praise your God!
He has strengthened the bars of your gates,
he has blessed the children within you. (R.)
2. He has established peace on your borders,
he feeds you with finest wheat.
He sends out his word to the earth
and swiftly runs his command. (R.)
3. He makes his word known to Jacob,
to Israel his laws and decrees.
He has not dealt thus with other nations;
he has not taught them his decrees. (R.)

Second Reading 1 Cor 10:16-17

Though we are many, we form a single body because we share this one loaf.

The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ, and the bread that we break is a communion with the body of Christ. The fact that there is only one loaf means that, though there are many of us, we form a single body because we all have a share in this one loaf.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 6:51-52

Alleluia, alleluia!

**I am the living bread from heaven,
says the Lord;
whoever eats this bread will live for ever.
Alleluia!**

Gospel Jn 6:51-58

My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.

Jesus said to the Jews:

'I am the living bread which has come down from heaven.

Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever;
and the bread that I shall give
is my flesh, for the life of the world.'

Then the Jews started arguing with one another: 'How can this man give us his

flesh to eat?' they said. Jesus replied:
'I tell you most solemnly,
if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man
and drink his blood,
you will not have life in you.
Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink
my blood
has eternal life,
and I shall raise him up on the last day.
For my flesh is real food
and my blood is real drink.
He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood
lives in me
and I live in him.
As I, who am sent by the living Father,
myself draw life from the Father,
so whoever eats me will draw life from me.
This is the bread come down from
heaven;
not like the bread our ancestors ate:
they are dead,
but anyone who eats this bread will live
for ever.'



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

I once saw a young mother discreetly breastfeeding her baby during Mass, and thought ... 'What a wonderful thing!' There could not be a better illustration, a better acting out of what Jesus says in today's Gospel: 'The one who eats me will live.'

Of course, even mothers who find they cannot breastfeed offer the same gift for nine months as the baby draws its life from the mother's body in the womb.

This is a good analogy for what Our Lord was teaching in today's Gospel.

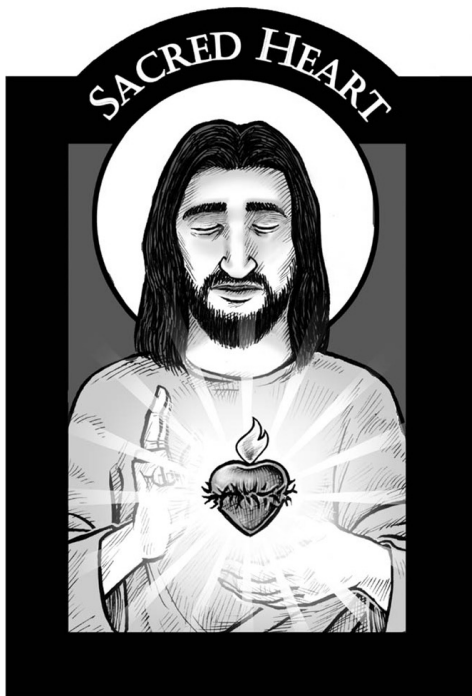
'Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me and I in them.' Notice the very maternal language. The risen Lord truly abides in us, we truly abide in the risen Lord. This is as intimate as the baby dwelling in the womb of its mother.

Moreover, it is a Holy communion which is both a present reality and a foretaste and promise about our place in God's future: 'The one who eats this bread will live forever.'

We could pause for a moment to pray with St Thomas Aquinas: 'Oh Sacred Banquet in which Christ is received *and* a pledge of future glory is given to us.'

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Can you work out which two of these pictures are the same?



Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is a tradition that has developed over the centuries. Particular groups such as the Society of Jesus – Jesuits – have made devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus an important part of their community life. Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus reminds us of the love Jesus has for all of us. The love of Jesus is not just an abstract concept but a real love which led to his suffering and death on the cross.

Wordsearch

Try to find these words:



- arguing
- blood
- bread
- drink
- eat
- eternal
- flesh
- heaven
- live
- one
- son
- true

A	U	U	G	Q	Z	V	U	O	A	P	N	U	M	K	C	D
I	E	K	G	P	S	X	Q	G	Q	L	E	X	Z	C	A	V
V	V	Q	T	L	K	A	X	G	Z	K	V	A	M	E	B	S
H	S	R	N	N	L	X	Q	U	D	E	A	Y	R	H	F	C
E	U	R	T	H	S	E	L	F	L	Y	E	B	E	N	O	Z
X	L	U	G	V	V	X	X	A	U	Z	H	Q	P	A	F	E
V	S	R	R	S	B	V	S	I	Z	U	C	A	C	V	Q	D
I	X	A	E	T	E	R	N	A	L	G	S	P	E	N	Z	E
D	Q	R	X	Q	V	O	K	G	S	S	Y	F	R	F	U	T
P	G	G	S	R	B	N	P	B	W	K	L	E	E	L	P	F
S	W	U	E	N	O	J	S	A	R	M	R	V	P	E	K	G
U	P	I	D	J	E	X	I	B	D	M	I	P	Q	U	N	K
I	M	N	O	W	B	G	A	O	P	L	N	O	S	L	I	W
Q	U	G	W	S	C	V	O	U	Y	B	L	U	C	T	R	G
I	K	X	T	A	E	L	G	H	R	G	E	X	D	T	D	B
K	F	O	E	S	B	U	Y	W	V	P	G	M	R	I	Z	N
B	N	Y	T	J	F	A	Y	H	Y	E	F	J	P	H	P	A