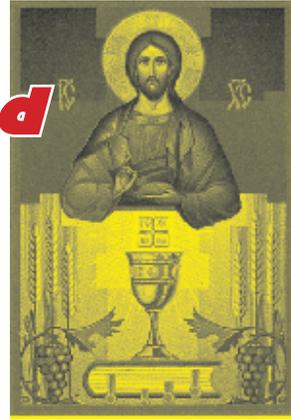


# Body and Blood Offered for Us



## I. A LOOK AT THE THREE READINGS

### FIRST READING (Gen 14: 18-20)

<sup>18</sup>Melchizedek, king of Salem,\* brought out **bread and wine**. He was a priest of God Most High.<sup>c</sup> <sup>19</sup>He blessed Abram with these words:/"Blessed be Abram by God Most High,/ the creator of heaven and earth;/ <sup>20</sup>And blessed be God Most High,/who delivered your foes into your hand."

**THE FOCUS:** Bread and Wine

### COMMENTARY

- The text comes after Abram overtakes the kings who kidnapped Lot, his kinsman.
- Melchizedek comes out of the blue (v.18)!
- Purpose: to **bless** Abram (*Abraham in Gen 17:5*).
- The God Most High is known to be creator of heaven and earth (v.19).
- Melchizedek also **blesses** God (v.20).
- Let us not forget what Melchizedek brings: bread and wine (v.18), important to develop in our liturgy.

### REFLECTIONS

Ever since used as offerings, bread sustains human life; wine makes the heart glad. By these offerings, we symbolically give up part of our lives.

Bread comes from the wheat; wine from grapes (vineyard). They are both agricultural products and staple food in the Mediterranean world. Nothing extraordinary.

Along with the offering is the blessing not only of Abram (producer/consumer) but also of God (creator of raw materials).

We do not have to be **extravagant** in our offering to God.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** (Ps 110:1, 2, 3, 4)  
**YOU ARE A PRIEST FOR EVER,  
IN THE LINE OF MELCHIZEDEK.**

### SECOND READING (1 Cor 11:23-26)

<sup>23\*</sup> <sup>k</sup>For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took **bread**, <sup>24</sup>and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, "This is my **body** that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." <sup>25</sup>In the same way also the **cup**, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my **blood**. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." <sup>26</sup>For as often as you eat this **bread** and drink the **cup**, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.

**THE FOCUS:** The **Bread** (Body) and **Cup** (Blood of Christ)

### COMMENTARY

- The text explicitly refers back to the synoptic account of the Last Supper.
- The formula of consecration is also found here in vv.23-25.
- Paul claims in v.23 that his formulation of the Last Supper comes from the Lord himself.
- At this point, the synoptic gospels (Mt, Mk, Lk) are not yet written.
- V.26 is original from Paul. It is included by liturgists as a sequence to the consecration, known as the Acclamation C.

- The purpose of the eating of the bread and drinking of the wine is to **remember** Jesus (vv.24 and 25).

## REFLECTIONS

The community in Corinth is evangelized by St. Paul. As an evangelized community, the Corinthians celebrate the eucharist (thanksgiving).

St. Paul captures very well the eucharistic formula at Last Supper. Paul must have been referring to the Christian practice of his time, as revealed by God to him.

Paul gives the reason why the Christians should eat and drink of the body and blood of Jesus: “in remembrance of him.” It is a sacrament of remembrance.

Jesus desires to be remembered until the end of times, and the proper way for the Christian to remember Jesus is through the participation in the eucharist.

## GOSPEL READING (Lk 9:11-17)

### *Setting: preaching the kingdom of God*

<sup>11</sup>The crowds, meanwhile, learned of this and followed him. He received them and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and he healed those who needed to be cured.

### *Worry of the Twelve*

<sup>12</sup>As the day was drawing to a close, the Twelve approached him and said, “Dismiss the crowd so that they can go to the surrounding villages and farms and find lodging and provisions; for we are in a deserted place here.”

### *The challenge of Jesus and their response*

<sup>13</sup>He said to them, “Give them some food yourselves.” They replied, “**Five loaves** and two fish are all we have, unless we ourselves go and buy food for all these people.” <sup>14</sup>Now the men there numbered about five thousand.

### *The miracle: multiplication of the loaves and fish*

Then he said to his disciples, “Have them sit down in groups of [about] fifty.” <sup>15</sup>They did so and made them all sit down. <sup>16</sup>Then taking\* the **five loaves** and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing over them,

broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. <sup>17</sup>They all ate and were satisfied. And when **the leftover fragments** were picked up, they filled twelve wicker baskets.

## THE FOCUS: The Distribution of the Bread

## COMMENTARY

- The passage is known as the multiplication of the loaves or the feeding of the 5,000.
- The multiplication is introduced in the context of the preaching the kingdom of God and healing (v.11).
- First of all, Jesus comes to preach the kingdom of God. The healings and miracles are manifestations of the coming of the kingdom of God.
- The immediate context of the passage is the return of the twelve from their mission work and Jesus gives them a treat (to take a rest in private at Bethsaida, but people learn about his plan and they follow him [9:1-6,10]).
- Jesus preaches to them until sundown. They are hungry for the word of God. The twelve are alarmed (v.12).
- V.14 is an information fed to us by the gospel writer— 5000 men (how about women and children?).
- Jesus asks them to give food. Another big job. It is not a joke to feed 5000; they have just returned and are happily reminiscing the success of their mission (v.13).
- Jesus rules out dismissal (by the apostles).
- V.13b records the natural reaction of the apostles. They express their helplessness.
- Jesus commands them to have the people seated (to make to recline).
- V.16 picks up the formula of the Last Supper: **took** the loaves (bread), **said the blessing**, **broke** them, **gave** them.
  - V.17 reports: All ate and had their fill. There was even left-over. What does this mean?

## REFLECTIONS

The multiplication of the loaves (and fish) reminds us of the eucharist.

It gives another dimension of the bread of the



eucharist: It is multipliable. It is made available to all.

The bread that Jesus offers is to be eaten in a relaxed manner.

The apostles (disciples) need not worry where to get supply. Jesus provides.

The disciples, therefore, must always be ready for the distribution to the multitudes.

Work at the table of the Lord is not a work for a small family or community; work with Jesus knows no limits. The workers must be prepared to handle large crowds.

Distribution of holy communion is a task of church's ministers (*priests, deacons and extraordinary ministers of the holy eucharist*).

The ministers must be ready to feed the hungry throng, even if they have just finished evangelizing, preaching, healing the sick and casting out demons.

The eucharist, the bread must be distributed at all cost. We will always have enough and surplus. There are always people who would like to eat.

Our task as servants of Jesus is to feed the hungry souls with the word of God and with the bread transformed into the body of Jesus.

## **II. TYING THE THREE READINGS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP YOUR HOMILY/SHARING**

The First Reading explicitly talks about the bread and wine.

The Second Reading talks about the eucharistic meal (*bread and wine = body and blood*) which is done in memory of Jesus.

The Gospel Reading talks about the multiplication of the bread, using the eucharistic formula at Last Supper.

### **How to develop your sharing / homily**

Start talking about food (meals, agapes, etc.) during fiesta (*lots of food, usually different kinds but the same nutrients [proteins] prone to hypertension*).

We get sick when we eat too much or when we eat the wrong food.

Today's liturgy is about the body and blood of Christ, the eucharistic meal (No side effect).

What is this eucharistic meal all about?

We take it in the form of bread and wine. It reminds us of the First Reading (*Melchizedek offering bread and wine*).

When we celebrate the eucharist, we remember Je-

sus Christ until "he comes in glory" (Second Reading).

This meal is supposed to satisfy our hunger. Participants of this meal must not go away hungry (Gospel).

It is a meal that promotes community and intimacy. Remember that the people are made to recline (to relax).

In this feast of Corpus Christi, we focus on the sacrament of the eucharist, on the reception of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the forms of bread and wine.

The eucharist is the center of our Christian lives.

Our personal and public lives should be ordered (according to the teachings of Jesus and his Church) in order to be able to receive holy communion.

Those who do not keep Christ's and church's laws are not entitled to receive the eucharist.

Frequency to holy communion helps one become holy (to become like Christ).

The eucharist is a constant source of blessing and strength to those who worthily receive it.

Those who are restricted to receive for grave reasons must seek the sacrament of reconciliation and put things in order.

Those who go to receive communion must be in proper disposition (with reverence) and attire.

No Christian or Catholic in one's right mind should avoid receiving holy communion.

Devout Catholics must see and feel in the eucharist the presence and generosity of Christ as well as his solidarity with us.

There are untold benefits to those who seek solace and salvation in the eucharist.

In the mass, we once more remember Jesus Christ in his passion, death and resurrection. He comes to us again in the forms of bread and wine. He is the one offered as an offering to the Father and as food to satisfy our deep spiritual longing. May all of us who receive communion worthily also receive the full spiritual benefits of the sacrament. For those who believe they have been blessed by God, the eucharist is thanksgiving. The eucharist assures us of our salvation (life with God).

**-Prepared by Fr. Cielo Almazan, OFM**

## **III. OUR CONTEXT**

1. Filipinos love fiesta. What is your favorite aspect of the fiesta? Why?
2. What are the things that have happened to my life that I wish to thank God for during the celebration of the eucharist.
3. In what ways does our celebration of the eucharist promote moments of our conversion. Discuss your answers. (HM)