

'THE RICHNESS OF EUCHARIST - CORPUS CHRISTI' - 3rd June 2018

Theologians could take us through the many teachings on the Eucharist over 2,000 years. They could help us understand insights into the early Church, and traditions in each era of the church.

For example:

- [Comparing the Hebrew Berakah prayer and Eucharist;](#)
- Comparing the words for Eucharist in the New Testament and later;
- Comparing the insights of Greek and Latin patristic sources;
- Comparing the insights of St Augustine and St Ambrose and St Thomas Aquinas;
- Reading contemporary church insights;
- Comparing the text of each of the usual four official Eucharistic Prayers;
- Comparing the text of each of the other official Church Eucharistic Prayers that we use for special occasions.

WE ASK OURSELVES WHY EUCHARIST HAS BEEN CALLED THE LORD'S SUPPER, THE BREAKING OF BREAD, THE MASS?

WE ASK OURSELVES IN WHAT WAYS DO WE NOT ONLY REMEMBER THE PASSOVER BUT WE PASSOVER (VERB) IN EUCHARIST?

We are enriched by the insights of the Eastern Catholic Churches.

We could tell our own stories of participating in the Eucharist during our lives, and accounts that have been passed on to us in family life.

Each country brings part of the story.

For example, Eucharist celebrated in times of persecution like the catacombs of Rome or the "Mass Rock" in Ireland or refugee camps or internment camps around the world.

Eucharist celebrated at Weddings and Funerals and Graduations and Anniversaries and Ordinations and Professions.

Sometimes baptisms are celebrated during the Eucharist.

Parish Masses, Home Masses, School Masses, University Masses, Children's Masses, Youth Masses, Hospital Masses,

Masses with particular ministry groups.

Wedding anniversary Masses with the families present, and renewal of vows.

Eucharist celebrated with special intentions, for example, in times of sickness and injury, joy and love, peace and justice, of seed planting, of harvest time, of those in captivity, of exile, of refuge, of war, of civil disturbance and natural disasters.

This weekend and next weekend we have additional parish celebrations of Eucharist

for families with children receiving Holy Communion for the first time.

In some places, including Brisbane, there are processions today. Reminding us of the New Testament image of church assembly as the Body of Christ. An occasion of unity with many cultures coming together in Christ.

There is so much that can be said about Eucharist. Any time we gather for Eucharist, it is not just those physically present in that space, but its link to the world, and to the communion of saints.

BECOMING AN ADULT CATHOLIC

No wonder when an adult prepares to become a Catholic, there are detailed reading and discussion about Eucharist, with catechist and sponsors giving witness to the Eucharist in their own lives.

- **Expressing its sacredness,**
- **Expressing its inner peace,**
- **Expressing our utter gratitude to God for this incredible gift of Jesus.**
- **Expressing our union with God, our longing for God,**
- **Expressing our belonging in God and with each other as family.**

Sponsors share the meaning and reality of Eucharist in their lives.

Poets and artists and musicians over the centuries have given insights into what can be hard to explain –
the inner movement within us as we share Eucharist.

Each year on **Holy Thursday** we hear St Paul's account of Eucharist in his First Letter to the Corinthians 11/23-26. And John's Gospel of the Washing of the Feet - The call to service in Eucharist.

Then on **Corpus Christi**, over a three-year cycle, we hear the Gospel accounts of the first Eucharist from Matthew, Mark and Luke. This year we hear from Mark.

MARK 14:12-16, 22-26

We note the preparation first in verses 12-16

"On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, his disciples said to him, 'Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?' So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the city, and a man carrying a jar of water will meet you; follow him, and wherever he enters, say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks,

***Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"
He will show you a large room upstairs, furnished and ready.
Make preparations for us there.'***

*So the disciples set out and went to the city,
and found everything as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover meal."*

HOW DO WE PREPARE OURSELVES BEFORE WE COME TO EUCHARIST?

The gift of the Eucharist is described in Verses 22-26

*"While they were eating, he took a loaf of bread,
and after blessing it he broke it,
gave it to them, and said,*

'Take; this is my body.'

*Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them,
and all of them drank from it.*

He said to them,

'This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.

***Truly I tell you, I will never again drink of the fruit of the vine
until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.'***

When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."

OPENNESS

Did you notice that verses 17-21 weren't included in today's passage?

Yet they are important.

They tell the account of Jesus knowing that one of those present (Judas) will betray him.

'Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me, one who is eating with me.'

When we come to Eucharist, Jesus knows our faults, our failures and our sins.

We come to Eucharist, recognizing our individual and community faults.

We bring it to prayer.

We listen as the Word of God challenges us and comforts us.

We place our lives openly before God.

We pray that in the love of Jesus, we will respond more fully to God's ways.

We pray the Holy Spirit will direct us in the ways we need to change.

During the Second Vatican Council in the 1960's,

Eucharist was described as "*the source and summit of the Christian life*".

[A summary of our beliefs in Eucharist is in the official ['Catechism of the Catholic Church'](#) and [Part Two. Section Two. Article 3 The Sacrament of the Eucharist](#)]

We come to Eucharist, celebrating God's covenant of love with us.
Jesus in the Eucharist. The Real Presence.
In gratitude, let us pray.
In thanksgiving, let us pray.

Fr Gerry

[Readings: <http://uscgb.org/bible/readings/060318.cfm>]

[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook06032018>]

Other References:

[USCCB article: The Jewish Roots of the Mass](#)

[Catechism of the Catholic Church](#) and [Part 2. Section 2. Article 3 The Sacrament of the Eucharist](#)
[Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults \(RCIA\)](#)

Pope Francis, Mass at the chapel of Santa Marta

