

The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ (B)

Gospel text (Mk 14,12-16.22-26): On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when they sacrificed the Passover lamb, Jesus' disciples said to him, "Where do you want us to go and prepare for you to eat the Passover?" He sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the city and a man will meet you, carrying a jar of water. Follow him. Wherever he enters, say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says, "Where is my guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"' Then he will show you a large upper room furnished and ready. Make the preparations for us there." The disciples then went off, entered the city, and found it just as he had told them; and they prepared the Passover.

While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many. Amen, I say to you, I shall not drink again the fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

«This is my body. This is my blood»

Mons. José Ángel SAIZ Meneses, Archbishop of Seville
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Today we solemnly celebrate Christ's Eucharistic presence amongst us, "the gift by excellence": "This is my body (...). This is my blood" (Mk 14:22-24). Let us get

ready to rekindle our soul with the “Eucharistic amazement” (St. John Paul II).

In their Passover meal the Jewish people commemorated the history of salvation, the wonders God bestowed upon his people, especially their deliverance from slavery in Egypt. During this commemoration, each family ate the Paschal Lamb. Jesus Christ becomes the new and definite Paschal Lamb sacrificed in the Cross and eaten in the Eucharistic Bread.

The Eucharist is sacrifice: the sacrifice of Christ's immolated body and his blood shed for all of us. This was already anticipated in the Last Supper. And, throughout history, it will be renewed with each Eucharist. In the Eucharist we find our nourishment: it is the new nourishment that provides the Christian with life and strength on his way towards the Father.

The Eucharist means Christ's presence amongst us. The resurrected and glorious Christ dwells with us, in a mysterious but real way, in the Eucharist. This presence implies on our side a worship attitude and an attitude of personal communion with Him. His Eucharistic presence guarantees that He remains with us and is working on his salvation plan for us.

The Eucharist is a mystery of faith. It is the Church's centre and key of life. It is the source and the deeper roots of the Christian existence. Without the Eucharistic presence the Christian faith would be just reduced to a philosophy.

With the institution of the Eucharist Jesus gives us the commandment of love of charity. It is not either the last advice from the friend that is going far away or from the father who is getting ready for his final journey. It is the confirmation of the dynamism He provides us with. With the Baptism we start a new life that is nourished with the Eucharist. The dynamism of this life impels us to love our neighbors and it is a dynamic growth that may even induce us to sacrifice our own life: it is in this context that the world will realize we are Christians.

Christ loves us because He receives the life from the Father. We shall love by receiving the life from the Father, especially through the Eucharistic nourishment.