

## October 1, 2017: Real Presence

Dear Family,

Each week we gather at Mass. At the center of this gathering is the Eucharist. But what do you and I perceive in terms of the Eucharist? Do we see, with the eyes of faith, God; or do we simply see a wafer, or do we really see anything at all?

Holy Mother Church tells us that the Holy Eucharist is, “the source and summit” of our Catholic faith. Why? It is for no other reason that we KNOW that, after the priest prays the prayer of consecration over the bread and wine, they cease to be bread and wine and those substances change completely; they are now God Himself. The degree to which you and I have interiorized that FACT will determine how we approach Mass on any day of the week, especially on Sunday. It will determine whether one makes Mass the top priority of each week. It will determine if one even goes to Mass. It will determine whether one regularly gets to Mass as late as possible. It will determine whether one regularly leaves Mass as early as possible. It will determine whether one desires to spend time with our Lord in adoration. Our Eucharistic belief will determine pretty much everything about a Catholic’s faith.

At the Last Supper Jesus established two things; He established the Holy Eucharist – “This is my body...This is my blood...” – and He established the priesthood – “As often as you do this, you do it in remembrance of me”. The two are inseparable.

From that day until the end of time, every time a Catholic priest prays those words of consecration at Mass, the bread ceases to be bread, the wine ceases to be wine and that becomes God Himself. This fact simply fulfills all of Sacred Scripture, from the offering of bread and wine by the priest Melchizedek (Gn 14:1-24), to the sacrificial lamb at the Exodus (Ex 11:1-13:16), to the Last Supper itself (Mt 26:17-30, et al), to Jesus emphatically insisting that His body is the “Bread come down from heaven” (Jn 6:51) and that His body is “true food” and His blood is “true drink” (Jn 6:55).

This is but a scratching of the surface when it comes to the biblical foundations for the fact that what we receive at Mass in communion is God Himself. But no matter how many bible passages I quote, no matter how in depth a logical argument I could offer on this subject, I cannot “prove” to you that the Eucharist is God. In the end the burden is on you and me to allow God to prove to us that He is truly present in the Eucharist. And the only way that can happen is if you and I persistently spend time with Him in prayer and adoration. In that experience of Him, there will ultimately be no doubt of His true presence so that when Sunday rolls around, you and I can’t wait to get to Mass, we receive Him with utter joy at communion, and, if Mass goes a little longer than normal, that’s just fine, because we get to spend a little more time in His presence.

God bless and Mary keep you,

Fr. Michaud