



AMDG  
THE MOST HOLY BODY  
AND BLOOD OF CHRIST  
(CORPUS CHRISTI)  
YEAR A  
14TH JUNE 2020



**Christ is our Food and Drink**

OPENING PRAYER

O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament  
have left us a memorial of your Passion,  
grant us, we pray,  
so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood  
that we may always experience in ourselves  
the fruits of your redemption.

This Sunday the Roman Catholic church celebrates the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, traditionally known by its Latin name 'Corpus Christi'. It is an opportunity to reflect on the fact that Christ gave us his body and blood as spiritual sustenance.

The *First Reading* reminds us that God fed his people with manna and water as he brought them out of Egypt. Their faithful God did not abandon them.

The *Psalms* continues on the same theme. God provided the finest food, gave peace, and through his word ensured that Israel could follow the right path.

In his letter to the Corinthians, St Paul reminds his audience of the intimate relationship between the bread and wine we partake in the Eucharist, and the body and blood of Christ. We are united through this one bread and form one body of Christians. (*Second Reading*)

In the *Gospel*, Jesus explains to the Jews that his body and blood will nourish them spiritually. This food is not the same as the food that God gave Israel in the desert; what Jesus offers here is a way for us to be living in him and he in us.

By sharing his body and blood through the form of bread and wine in the Eucharist, there is an intimate relationship between ourselves and the Lord. This week, let us pray for all those who do not know this close union, or who are not able to be part of it. We also remember all deprived of the Eucharist because of the pandemic.

## SECOND READING 1 CORINTHIANS 10: 16-17

**T**he 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.

Before I start my prayer, I take a few moments to ask myself how I am feeling. What has brought me here? Force of habit, a sense of 'should' or 'must', or a desire to be with the Lord? Whatever my answer, I don't judge: I simply accept it and open my heart to the Lord.

I move on only when I am ready.

In time, I read these words. They may be very familiar.

I pause and bring to mind the times I associate with them.

Perhaps I think back to happy times ... or difficult ones. Who was with me then?

I read the words again and ponder.

Has my understanding of what they mean changed over the years?

In what ways?

I speak with the Lord, who knows and understands me better than anyone.

It may be that the mention of bread and drink triggers a mental image of a meal.

Who do I normally share my meals with? Is their company important to me?

I may want to bring to mind all those who have to eat alone, especially in these times of self-isolation and shielding. I ask the Lord to comfort them.

They are not forgotten.

I go back to the text once again and ponder.

Most likely I've not been able to break bread and drink the cup for several weeks because of the pandemic. What has that been like?

Perhaps it has made me reflect anew on its importance?

I tell the Lord how I feel, in the sure knowledge that he will understand.

Eventually, I close my prayer with words of thanks and gratitude for the time spent with him.

## GOSPEL JOHN 6: 51-58

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 that person up on the last day.  
For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.  
Whoever 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.'

Wherever I am, I take a few moments to focus on my prayer, putting aside my daily concerns and inviting the Lord to 'make his home in me'.

When I am ready, I read these words of Jesus. I spend some time reflecting on their impact now, two thousand years or so after they were spoken.

Words can have a literal meaning or be understood at a spiritual level. I ponder, and ask the Lord to open this text for me. In trust, I wait.

I may need to return to the text later. But in the meantime, Jesus's words, living at the back of my mind, perhaps become clearer.

When I join my fellow Christians for the Eucharist, what is it like for me to hear these words spoken: 'the body of Christ' ... 'the blood of Christ'?

What difference does this make in my daily life?

Perhaps I am drawn to reflect on their deeper meaning.

Have they lost some of their impact through over-familiarity?

When the time comes to conclude my prayer, I thank the Lord for being with me and for helping me to feel part of the body of Christ today.

## Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

The Lord fed his people with the finest wheat and honey;  
their hunger was satisfied. *Entrance Antiphon*

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

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in this Sacrament.

I love you above all things,  
and I desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you as if you were already there  
and unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you.

*Act of Spiritual Communion, St Alphonsus Liguori*

*Deut. 8: 2-3, 14-16; Psalm 147 (148); 1 Cor. 10: 16-17; John 6: 51-58*



‘Feed us now,  
O Son of God,  
as you fed them  
long ago’.  
(Peter Allen)



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Prepared by St Beuno's Outreach in the Diocese of Wrexham

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