

**The Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*)
(Year A)**

The Catechism on the Mystery of Eucharist

The Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life.” ...For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch.” (CCC 1324)

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16—The Miraculous Manna in the Desert

1. The Exodus: Why “Forty Years in the Desert”? So that he might “humble” you (v. 2)
2. The Manna: Why? So that Israel would learn
 - a. “Man does not live by *bread* alone, but...”
 - b. “Man lives by every *word* that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord”
3. Miraculous Food and Drink:
 - a. Paralleled with the “water” from the “flinty rock” (8:15)
 - b. The fathers “did not know” the manna

Psalm 147—God Feeds You with Finest Wheat

1. “Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem!” (Psalm 147:12; cf. Sequence before Alleluia)
2. “He fills you with the finest of the wheat” (147:14)

1 Corinthians 10:16-17—A Communion in the Body and Blood of Christ

1. Cup of Blessing: a “participation” (Greek *koinōnia*) in the “blood of Christ”
2. Bread Broken: a “participation” (Greek *koinōnia*) in the “body of Christ”

John 6:51-58—Jesus and the New Manna from Heaven

1. Jesus Himself: “*I am* the living bread which came down from heaven...” (6:51)
2. His Flesh and Blood: is “true food” and “true drink” (6:55)
3. New Manna: not like the old manna; whoever “eats” this will “live forever” (6:58)

Sequence: *Lauda Sion* (Sung Optionally before the Alleluia)

Lo! the angel’s food is given
To the pilgrim who has striven;
See *the children’s bread from heaven*,
which on dogs may not be spent.

*Truth the ancient types fulfilling,
Isaac bound, a victim willing,
Paschal lamb, its lifeblood spilling,
manna to the fathers sent.*

Very bread, good shepherd, tend us,

Jesus, of your love befriend us,
You refresh us, you defend us,
Your eternal goodness send us,
In the land of life to see...

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (Corpus Christi, Year A)

1. According to the *Catechism* the Eucharist is the “source and summit of the Christian life” (CCC 1324)? Is that how you see the Eucharist? What role does it play in your faith and life? In what ways can we strive to make and keep the Eucharist as the very source and summit of our lives?

2. Go back and review the miracle of the manna in the Old Testament (see Exodus 16). In what ways does the manna prefigure the Eucharist? How is the Eucharist similar to but also different from the manna?

3. What do you make of Jesus’ words regarding the Eucharist in John 6:51-58? Is he speaking literally or metaphorically? How would you know?

For Further Study

1. CCC 1322-1419: the Church’s official teaching on the mystery of the Eucharist. This is the place to begin if you wish to get a solid, authoritative, biblical introduction to the Eucharist and its role in the life of the Church.
2. Brant Pitre. *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist* (New York: Doubleday, 2011). Contains a full study of the Manna in the desert and the biblical roots of Catholic beliefs in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Easy to read, but goes into depth.
3. Benedict XVI, Apostolic Exhortation *Sacrament of Charity* (2007; available at www.vatican.va). One of the most beautiful and challenging documents ever written on the Eucharist. Unfortunately, not as widely read as it should be.