

## The Body and Blood of Christ (Solemnity of *Corpus Christi*, Year B)

### Exodus 24:3-8—Moses and the “Blood of the Covenant”

1. Moses and the Twelve Tribes: at the foot of “Mount Sinai”
2. Moses the Priest: he built an “altar” at the foot of the mount (24:4)
3. Liturgy of the Word: reading the “book of the covenant” (24:7)
4. Liturgy of Sacrifice: behold, “the blood of the covenant” (24:7)

### Psalm 116—I Will Take the Cup of Salvation

1. Passover Psalm:
  - a. One of the Jewish Hallel Psalms (Pss 113-118)
  - b. Sung by Jesus at the Last Supper
2. Cup of Salvation: “I will lift up the cup of salvation” (v. 13)
3. Son of Your Handmaid: Jesus sang about Mary at the Last Supper! (v. 15)
4. Thanksgiving: psalmist offers a “sacrifice of thanksgiving” (*todah*) (v. 17)

### Hebrews 9:11-15—Christ the High Priest and his Blood

1. High Priest: Christ is the “high priest” of the “good things to come” (9:11)
2. Offering: his sacrifice is “the blood of Christ” (9:14)

### Mark 14:12-16, 22-26—The Last Supper and the Jewish Passover

1. “First Day of Unleavened Bread” = 8 Day Feast of Passover (Lev 23 )
2. “Passover” Sacrifice: “when they sacrificed the Passover lamb (*pascha*)” (22:12)
3. Preparing the Passover: ritual acts of preparation (cf. Exod 12:1-14)
  - a. Step 1: Choose an Unblemished Male Lamb
  - b. Step 2: Sacrifice the Lamb
  - c. Step 3: Spread the Blood of the Lamb
  - d. Step 4: Eat the Flesh of the Lamb
  - e. Step 5: Keep the Pasover as a “Day of Remembrance” (Exod 12:14)

For the lamb, which is roasted, is roasted and dressed up *in the form of a cross*. For one spit is transfixed right through from the lower parts up to the head, and one across the back, to which are attached the legs of the lamb. (Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 40; trans. ANF)

4. Words of Institution:
  - a. Bread = “This is *my* body” (14:22)
  - b. Cup = “This is *my blood of the covenant*” (14:23; cf. Exod 24:8)
  - c. Poured Out = “for many” (=sacrifice)

### The Catechism on the Passover and the Last Supper

By celebrating the Last Supper with his apostles in the course of the Passover meal, *Jesus gave the Jewish Passover its definitive meaning*. Jesus’ passing over to his father by his death and Resurrection, the new Passover, is anticipated in the Supper and celebrated in the Eucharist... (CCC 1340)

### Questions for Discussion and Reflection (*Corpus Christi*, Year B)

1. What did it mean for the apostles to “prepare the Passover” in the first-century A.D.? What steps would they have had to do to prepare it?

---

---

---

2. Why did Jesus institute the Eucharist during the Jewish feast of “Passover”?

---

---

---

3. Why does Jesus allude to Moses and the “blood of the covenant” when instituting the Eucharist?

---

---

---

### For Further Study

1. Brant Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist: Unlocking the Secrets of the Last Supper* (New York: Image, 2011). Studies the Last Supper and the institution of the Eucharist in light of ancient Jewish traditions about the Passover lamb, the Manna from Heaven, and the Bread of the Presence.