

Read: *We Believe*, Chapter 9 – The Eucharist – Christ’s Meal and Sacrifice
View and Discuss: Symbolon 12 – The Eucharist
Devotion: Adoration (at Immaculate Conception)

Opening Prayer: Anima Christi (Binder pg. 4 of “Common Catholic Prayers and Devotions”)

- **Song: We Come to Your Feast**
- **Archbishop Fulton Sheen**

Why is Jesus Christ in the Eucharist? “We might make several answers to this question. But that which comprises them all is this: He is there because He loves us, and because He desires that we love Him. Love – that is the reason of the institution of the Eucharist.

Love wishes to share happiness and unhappiness. To give is its nature, its instinct, to give all with joy, with pleasure.

Jesus said, “I will be with you always, even until the end of time.” And He gives Himself to all, and always. He wishes all His children to possess Him. He gives Himself in Communion, He absorbs us into Himself. *He in me, and I in Him*. Through the Eucharist, we abide in Him, and He dwells in us.

“Love lives, then, with Jesus present in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist.” The needs of our heart are satisfied.

- **Saint Faustina Kowalska**

(1811) “But I want to tell you that eternal life must begin already here on earth through Holy Communion. Each Holy Communion makes you more capable of communing with God throughout eternity.”

- **St. Maximilian Kolbe:**

"If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion."

- Catechism references for further reflection:

- Eucharist – Source and Summit of Church Life: CCC 1324-1327

*In brief, the Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: "Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking."¹³⁸ 138. St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres. 4, 18, 5: PG 7/1, 1028.**

- Bread and Wine; Body and Blood: CCC 1333-1336

At the heart of the Eucharistic celebration are the bread and wine that, by the words of Christ and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, become Christ's Body and Blood. Faithful to the Lord's command the Church continues to do, in his memory and until his glorious return, what he did on the eve of his Passion

- Institution of the Eucharist: CCC 1337-1344

The Lord, having loved those who were his own, loved them to the end. Knowing that the hour had come to leave this world and return to the Father, in the course of a meal he washed their feet and gave them the commandment of love.¹⁶¹ In order to leave them a pledge of this love, in order never to depart from his own and to make them sharers in his Passover, he instituted the Eucharist as the memorial of his death and Resurrection, and commanded his apostles to celebrate it until his return; "thereby he constituted them priests of the New Testament."¹⁶²

Jn 13:1-17; 34-35

Council of Trent (1562): DS 1740

- Sacramental Sacrifice: CCC 1357-1368

We carry out this command of the Lord by celebrating the memorial of his sacrifice. In so doing, we offer to the Father what he has himself given us: the gifts of his creation, bread and wine which, by the power of the Holy Spirit and by the words of Christ, have become the body and blood of Christ. Christ is thus really and mysteriously made present.

- Transubstantiation: CCC 1376-1377

The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: "Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation

• **Questions for Discussion:**

- What does it mean that the Eucharist is the “source and summit” of our Catholic faith? Why do you think Jesus used a meal to convey His presence to His Church? Is believing in the mystery of the “real presence” of Jesus in the Eucharist reasonable?

- What is the relationship between the Eucharist and the Jewish feast of Passover? What was sacrificed at a Passover meal? How does the Passover shed light on the Mass as a sacrifice? What does it mean that Jesus’ Pascal Sacrifice is “made present” at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass?

- What similarities and differences are there between what Catholics believe about the Eucharist and what Protestant faiths believe about “Communion”?

- **For Catechumens and Candidates:** Do you look forward to receiving Holy Communion at Mass? Why?

- **For Catholics:** What do you experience in Holy Communion? What is most meaningful about receiving Holy Communion to you? How would you describe receiving Jesus in the Eucharist affects your relationship with Him (deepens it, more intimate)?

- Why do we pray before the Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist in “Adoration”? What experience have you had in spending time with Jesus in Adoration and how has that affected your relationship with Him?

- **Adoration at Immaculate Conception Church**
- **Closing Prayer.**