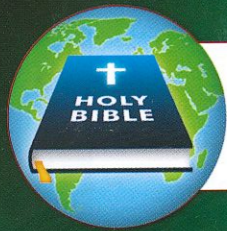


# 3. Exploring the Mass



**Know that Jesus is the bread of life. Think about what this means for us.**

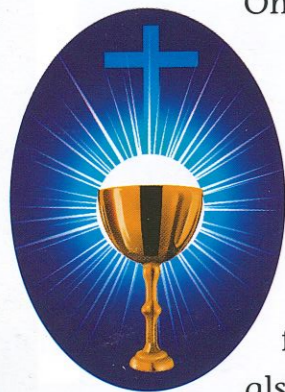
## The Bread of Life

One day, Jesus said to the people,

**“I am the bread of life.**

**He who comes to me will never be hungry; he who believes in me will never thirst”**

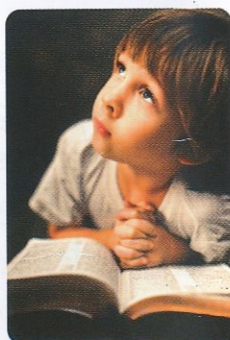
(Jn 6:35).



Jesus wanted the people to understand that they not only needed food such as bread to satisfy their physical hunger, but that they also needed nourishment to satisfy their spiritual hunger. Jesus is the **bread of life** because he himself is the spiritual nourishment we need for our souls, for our inner selves to grow strong.

## How can Jesus be the bread of life for us?

When we read or listen to a scripture text and meditate on it, we will discover what Jesus is saying in it to help us.



Jesus will guide us when we make time to be alone with him. We invite him into our hearts to share our thoughts and listen we to him.

In a special way, Jesus is the bread of life when we receive him in Holy Communion.



In all of these ways, Jesus is the bread of life nourishing our spiritual life. Remember that Jesus is always there for us.

## Pause to discuss (PPP Spiritual & Physical Needs DVD ROM 6).



- What do you think is the difference between our physical needs and our spiritual needs? Give examples.
- Why do you think we have physical needs?
- Why do you think we have spiritual needs?
- Why is it important to nourish our bodies?
- Why is it important to nourish our souls?
- In what ways do you think a friendship with Jesus can nourish our souls?

## The miracle of the loaves

In order to help the people to understand what he meant by saying, **“I am the bread of life”**, Jesus worked an extraordinary miracle. It showed that he could satisfy *not only* our **physical need** for food *but also* our **spiritual hunger**.

“Jesus went off to the other side of the Sea of Galilee and a large crowd followed him, impressed by the signs he had given them by curing the sick. Jesus climbed the hillside. He sat down there with his disciples. It was shortly before the Jewish feast of Passover.



Looking up, Jesus saw the crowds approaching and said to Philip, ‘Where can we buy some bread for these people to eat?’ He only said this to test Philip; he himself knew exactly what he was going to do. Philip answered, ‘Two hundred denarii would only buy enough to give them a small piece each’.



One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said, ‘There is a small boy here with five barley loaves and two fish; but what is that among so many?’ Jesus said to them, ‘Make the people sit down’. There was plenty of grass there, and as many as five thousand people sat down. Then Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and gave them out to all who were sitting ready; then he did the same with the fish, giving out as much as they wanted.

When they had eaten enough, Jesus said to the disciples, 'Pick up the pieces left over, so that nothing gets wasted'. So they picked them up, and filled twelve baskets with scraps left over from the meal of five barley loaves. The people, seeing this sign that he had given, said, 'This really is the prophet who is to come into the world'" (Jn 6:1-14).



### Pause to discuss

What do you think Jesus wanted the people to understand from this miracle?

The next day, puzzled and curious, the people went looking for Jesus. He knew why they had come and said to them,

**"I tell you most solemnly, you are not looking for me because you have seen the signs, but because you had all the bread you wanted to eat. Do not work for food that cannot last, but work for food that endures to eternal life"**

(Jn 6:26-27).



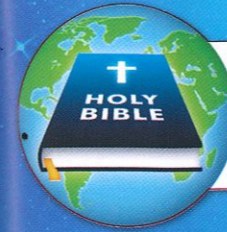
Sometimes Jesus exaggerated to make a point. He did not really expect people to stop working to provide food for themselves and their families. Jesus was trying to make them understand that they needed spiritual food too, which was more important because it would last forever.

### Activities

1. Imagine you were there with the people who wanted to see Jesus the next day.
  - a) List the reasons why you wanted to see him.
  - b) What questions would you have wanted to ask him?
  - c) What answers do you think he would have given to you?
2. 'Jesus is the bread of life.' Give examples of:
  - a) some of our spiritual needs,
  - b) ways in which you think Jesus can satisfy them.



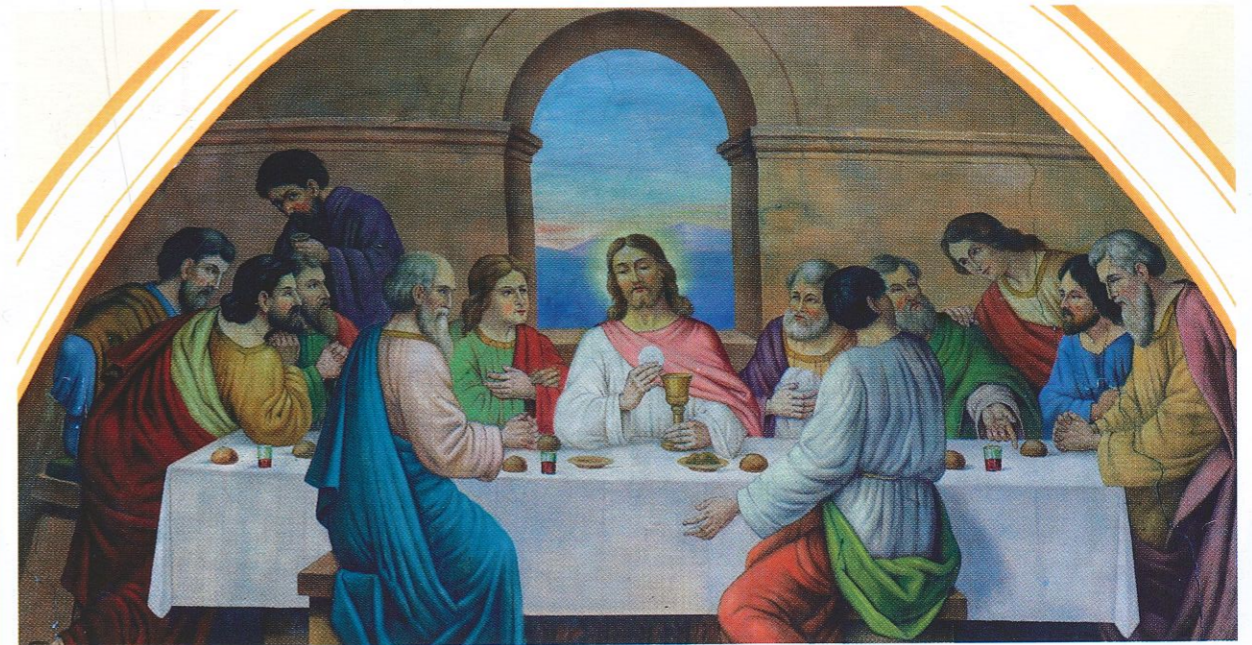
# The New Covenant



**Understand that Jesus made a New Covenant with us. Think about our part in this Covenant.**

## The Last Supper → New Covenant

In the Old Testament, when God made a covenant with the Jews (Israelites), they agreed to live the Ten Commandments. At the Last Supper, Jesus made a **New Covenant** with us.



St. Paul tells us what happened.

"The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said,

**'This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'** In the same way, after supper, he took the cup saying, **'This cup is the New Covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me'**.

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor 11:23-26).

## The New Covenant

At the Last Supper, Jesus made a New Covenant with his disciples and with us. He fulfilled this New Covenant by freely handing over his life in love to the Father, by accepting death on a cross. He said to his disciples and to us: "This is my body which is handed over for you. Do this in remembrance of me." What is Jesus asking us to do about our part in the New Covenant? Jesus is asking us to hand over our lives to him by living out this New Commandment:

### The New Commandment

"I give you a New Commandment:  
love one another;  
just as I have loved you,  
you must also love one another"  
(Jn 13:34).

### Pause to discuss



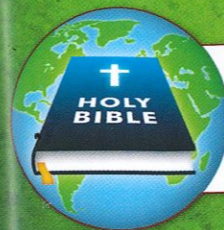
- At the Last Supper, what did Jesus do for us?
- How do we know?
- What is he asking us to do?
- Give examples of how we can enter into this New Covenant with him.
- How can we live out this New Covenant in daily life?

### Activities

1. Imagine you have to explain what happened at the Last Supper to children preparing for their First Holy Communion. Make a presentation or write down what you would say to them. Mention what happened at the Last Supper and why it is important.
2. Make a design or a thinking map to explain the New Covenant. Think about:
  - what Jesus says and does,
  - what he asks of us,
  - what we can do to fulfil our part in the New Covenant.

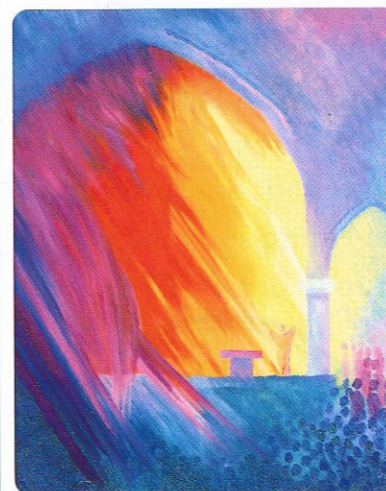


# The Beginning of Mass



**Understand the Penitential Act and the Liturgy of the Word.  
Reflect on our participation in them.**

## Living the New Covenant by living the New Commandment



It is at Mass in particular that we get help to live the New Covenant and New Commandment.

At the beginning of Mass, we come together to meet Jesus. The priest greets us. His greeting, 'The Lord be with you', is asking Jesus to be present with us.

### The Penitential Act

In order to prepare to celebrate the Mass, the priest invites us to acknowledge our sins.

**What kind of sins?**



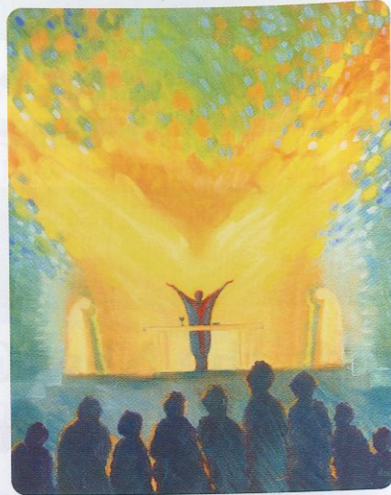
We need to think about the New Commandment Jesus has given to us. Have we truly loved God, the members of our family, everyone at school and other people? Frequently we fail to do this, so at Mass, we have the opportunity to ask God to forgive us.

At the beginning of Mass:

- we think of the sins we have committed,
- we say sorry for them,
- we ask Jesus for forgiveness.



Together with all the people, we admit we have sinned and say we are sorry:  
**I confess to almighty God**  
**and to you, my brothers and sisters,**  
**that I have greatly sinned,**  
**in my thoughts and in my words,**  
**in what I have done and in what**  
**I have failed to do,**  
**through my fault, through my fault**  
**through my most grievous fault;**  
**therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,**  
**all the Angels and Saints,**  
**and you, my brothers and sisters,**  
**to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

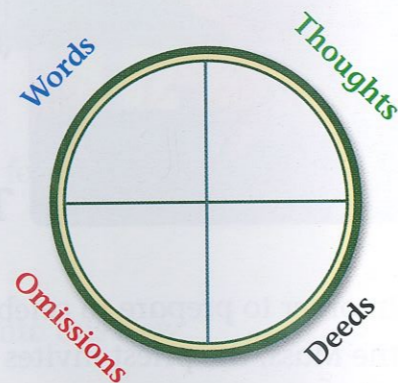


Activities

1. Learn the words of the 'I confess'.  
 When you think you know them, test each other.

2. Divide a large circle in four.  
 In each section, write an example to explain the following phrases.  
 I have sinned through my own fault,

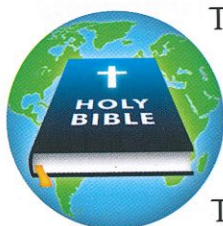
- in my thoughts,
- in my words,
- in what I have done,
- in what I have failed to do.



**The Gloria**

On most Sundays and certain feast days, we sing or say the Gloria. It is a hymn of praise to God. It is a song of rejoicing in God's goodness.

**Liturgy of the Word**



The readings are from the Old Testament, the Letters of the New Testament and from the Gospels. These are called the **Word of God** because the writers of the Bible were inspired by God.

The words we hear in the readings are not just about what happened in the past. In them, God is speaking to us now. So we have to listen carefully, not just with our ears, but with our hearts and minds.

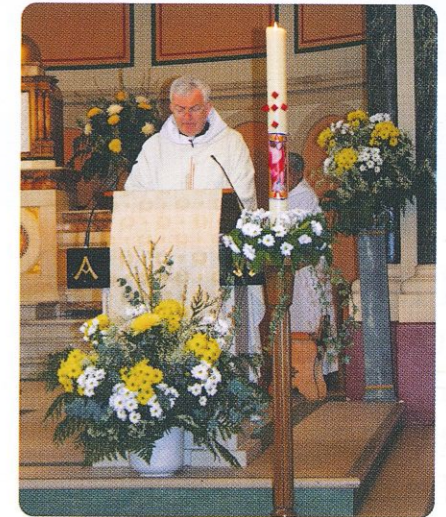
We cannot know what God is saying to us unless we listen to Him! Jesus says, "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it" (Lk 11:28). He wants us to put into practice what we hear and understand. He wants the **Word of God** to influence what we do and say.

**The Gospel**

Before the reading of the Gospel the priest greets us with the words:

*The Lord be with you.*  
 We reply: *And with your spirit.*

When the priest says:  
*A reading from the holy Gospel according to ...*  
 We reply: *Glory to you, O Lord.*



While saying these words, it is a tradition for us to make a little cross + on our forehead, lips and heart. This is asking God to be in our thoughts (head), in our words (lips) and in our heart.

At the end of the Gospel, the priest says: *The Gospel of the Lord.*  
 We reply: *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

Activities

1. The readings at Mass can help us when we are sad, lonely, tired, happy, worried, annoyed, in need of something or wanting to feel loved by God.  
 a) Look up the following quotations from the Bible.

Jn 14:1

Jn 14:14-15

Lk 6:27

Isaiah 43:4

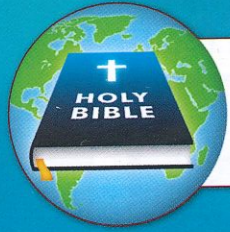
Col 3:12

b) Choose the quotations that best fit the faces below. Draw the face and put the scripture reference with it. Give reasons for your choice.



2. a) Why is the Liturgy of the Word a very important part of the Mass?  
 b) Explain how some of the readings could influence moral values and behaviour.

# The Offertory at Mass



Understand what happens at the Offertory.  
Think about the offerings we can make.

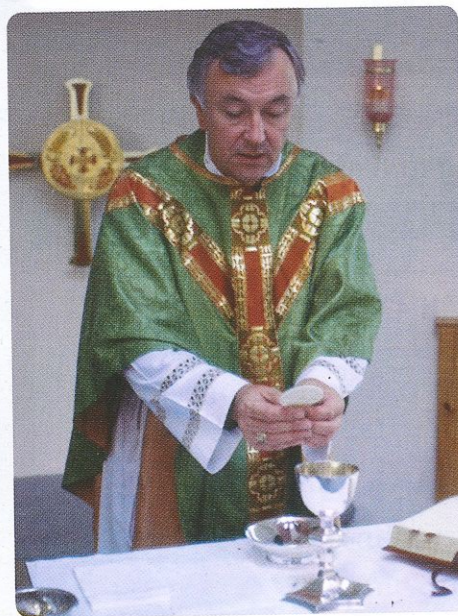
## The Offertory

At the Offertory, when we see people taking the bread and wine up to the altar, we offer our lives to Jesus. The bread and the wine are symbols of our self-offering. They represent the gift we make of ourselves to God. For example, we can offer:

- the times we have helped others,
- the successes, good things that have happened,
- our disappointments and difficulties.



All these gifts are offered to God the Father when the priest says:



*Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation,  
for through your goodness we have the bread we offer  
you:*

*fruit of the earth and work of human hands,  
it will become for us the bread of life.*

We reply: **Blessed be God forever.**

*Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation,  
for through your goodness we have received  
the wine we offer you,*

*fruit of the vine and work of human hands,  
it will become our spiritual drink.*

We reply: **Blessed be God forever.**

The gift of ourselves and all that we do to help others, God transforms into something beautiful. In return, we receive God's love and grace.

Activity

- Explain what happens at the Offertory of the Mass. Why is it very important?
- Give examples of the offerings we can make to Jesus.



## Blessed Chiara Badano (1971-1990)

Chiara Badano offered her life to Jesus. In return, she received the love and grace of Jesus and experienced inner peace and joy.



Chiara was a young Italian girl who loved swimming, mountain climbing, ice-skating, skiing and tennis. While playing tennis, she began to complain about a pain in her shoulder. At first, it was assumed that she had strained it on the court. However, when the pain did not go away, she had an MRI scan. Chiara was told that she had a tumour in her bone; the treatment would be very severe.

She came home from hospital, threw herself on her bed and stayed there for about half an hour. In this time, Chiara made the decision to hand over her life to Jesus. She believed that whether she lived or died, she was safe in the hands of Jesus. She put all her trust in him. During the difficult months that followed, she remained very close to Jesus.

Throughout this severe illness, her friends were always amazed to find her joyful and interested in what they were doing. "She was not thinking of herself, but of us," they said.



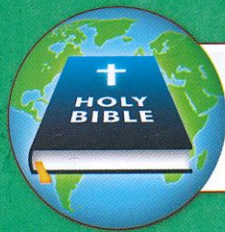
Eleven months later, on 7 October 1990, Chiara died. She had requested that she be buried in a white dress like a bride going to meet Jesus and said, "Don't shed any tears for me. I'm going to Jesus. At my funeral, I don't want people crying, but singing with all their hearts".

Activities

- What do you think was the secret of Chiara's joy? What can we learn from her?
- In what ways do you think Chiara might be an inspiration to young people today?



# The Consecration



Know what happens at the Consecration.  
Reflect on what this means for us.

## What happens at the Consecration?

At the Consecration, Jesus becomes truly present in the bread and wine. This is the way God reaches out to us. He gives Himself to us in the gift of Jesus, who is truly God and truly human.



But how do I know Jesus is present when I can't see him?  
Tony

We cannot see everything that exists. We do not see our intelligence, yet we know we have it. We do not see our mind but, we can experience its effects because we can think and make decisions.

It is only by the gift of faith that we can believe in the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. At the Last Supper, when Jesus gave the bread to the Apostles, he said, "This is my body". When he gave them the cup of wine to drink, he said, "This is my blood". Jesus can bring about what he says.

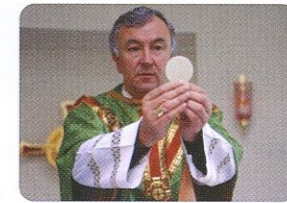
## The Consecration

At the Consecration, we remember and participate in the Last Supper, which Jesus had with the Apostles before he was crucified. The miraculous change in the bread and wine is brought about by the power of the Holy Spirit.



We believe Jesus is present when the priest raises the sacred host and says,

"Take this, all of you and eat of it,  
for this is my body,  
which will be given up for you".



We believe Jesus is present when the chalice is raised and the priest says,

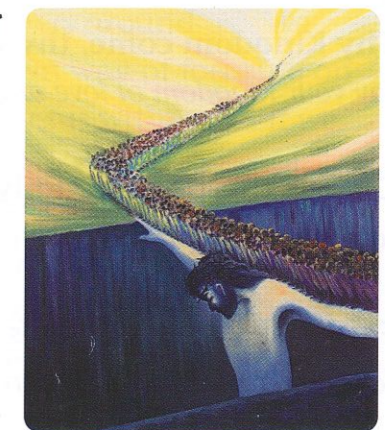


"Take this, all of you and drink from it,  
for this is the chalice of my blood,  
the blood of the new and eternal Covenant,  
which will be poured out for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins".

We still see bread, we still see wine, but with our faith we say, Jesus is really and truly present and he is God.

## Jesus makes the perfect sacrifice

It is at the consecration in the Mass when we remember the sacrifice that Jesus made when he freely offered his life on the cross. He handed over his life in love to the Father as the most perfect sacrifice to take away the sins of the world. His love was so perfect that it overcame death and he rose triumphantly.



Now Jesus, in the person of the priest, offers the sacrifice of his Body and Blood and invites us to offer ourselves in thanksgiving to the Father. The priest says,

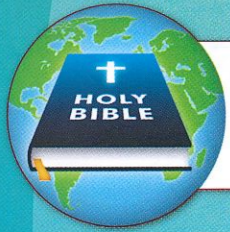
"Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever."

We reply: AMEN.

### Activities

1. Look back at Tony's question on page 54 and write an answer to it.
2. Think of a way to explain to someone who is not a Catholic what we believe about the Eucharist and why we believe it. You will need to make links with the Last Supper.

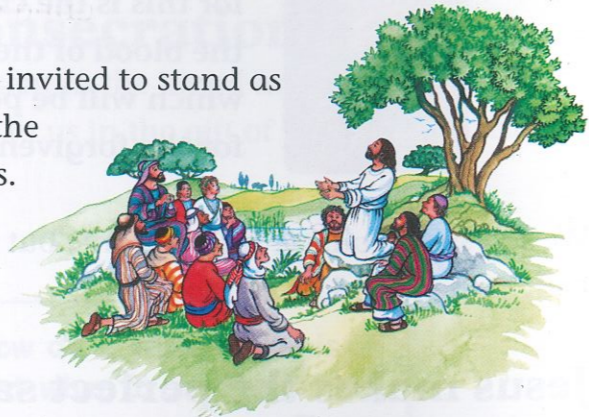
# Holy Communion



**Know that it is Jesus we receive in Holy Communion.  
Be aware of how important this is for us.**

## Our Father

In preparation for Holy Communion, we are invited to stand as one family and pray to God our Father. It is the same prayer that Jesus taught to the disciples.



**“Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.”**

*May your name always be kept holy.*

**“Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”**

*May your Kingdom of love and trust come into our world.*

**“Give us this day our daily bread.”**

*May you give us nourishment for our body and soul.*

**“Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”**

*May you forgive us our sins in the same way as we forgive those who hurt us.*

**“Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”**

*Do not let us be tempted to do things that are wrong.*

### Activities

1. How can we bring God's Kingdom into the world? Discuss.
2. Why do you think the 'Our Father' is a good preparation for Holy Communion? Some clues: Praise; God's will; Kingdom; Forgiveness.
3. We ask God to forgive us our sins in the same way as we forgive others. Give two examples to show what this really means.

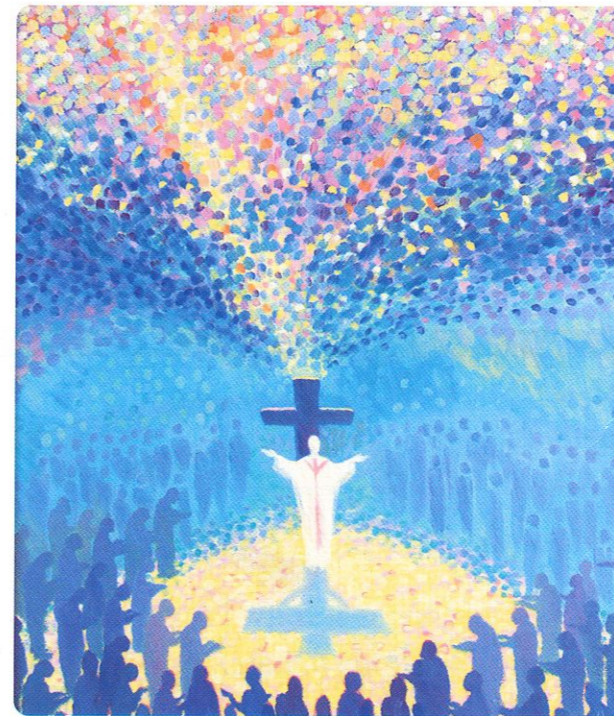


## Receiving Holy Communion

As we prepare to receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we remember that he is the nourishment we need for our souls, for our inner lives, because:

- **Jesus** is the **Way** to the Father.
- **Jesus** teaches us the **Truth** about life.
- **Jesus** offers us eternal **Life** with God.

When we receive Jesus in Holy Communion, we become more deeply part of him and we are given a promise of sharing his life fully in heaven.



We welcome Jesus into our hearts. The time after Holy Communion is a time of most special prayer. During it, we speak personally to Jesus who is present within us.

We have to be very careful not to be distracted by others around us. We must find our own way of focusing on the presence of Jesus within us. If we deliberately let our thoughts wander, Jesus will not give us a nudge to remind us that he is with us. It is up to us to really make an effort to be with him. He loves each of us immensely.



Don't miss this precious opportunity to ask Jesus to help you. Share your most private thoughts with Jesus and let him know how much you love him.



## Pause to reflect

Think of two ways to help you remain present with Jesus when you receive Holy Communion. Write them down.



## Blessing at the end of Mass

At the end of Mass, the priest gives us a blessing and we are called to live out the Mass in our daily lives.

**“Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.”**

Our mission is to fulfil our part of the New Covenant by putting into practice the New Commandment.

**“I give you a New Commandment: love one another; just as I have loved you, you must also love one another”**  
(Jn 13:34).

It is by fulfilling this New Commandment that others will know that we are truly Christians.



1. List some of the ways you can put the New Commandment into practice in your daily life.

2. Draw an outline of your hand. Look back at the parts of the Mass.

Think about: The beginning, Readings, Offertory, Communion and final blessing.

On each finger and the thumb write down one thing you should do to help you participate in each part of the Mass.



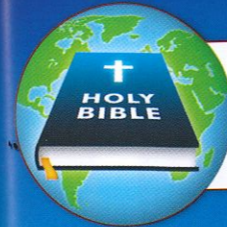
3. How do you think each part of the Mass will help us to live our lives more fully? Explain what we need to do:

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| i) at the beginning,     | iv) at the Consecration, |
| ii) during the Readings, | v) at Communion,         |
| iii) at the Offertory,   | vi) at the end of Mass.  |

4. In some countries where Catholics are not allowed to practise their faith and receive the sacraments, many of them are prepared to risk their lives to be able to celebrate Mass.

Give reasons why you think the Mass is so important for them.  
(For help see WS TB p. 78)

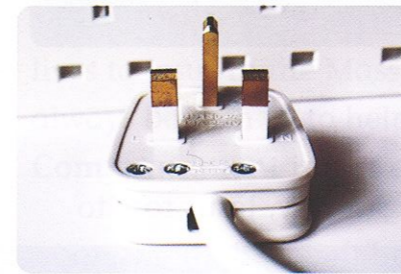
## The Eucharist: Source & Summit of Life



**Understand that the Eucharist is the source and summit of life. Reflect on its importance for us.**

### Jesus is the source of life

Think of the power of electricity. When we plug in and switch on, this source of energy makes things happen: lights blaze, kettles boil, we can charge laptops and mobiles so we can find information and talk to friends. Things will happen when we ‘plug in’ to Jesus. He is the source of strength and energy which enables us to be fully committed Christians.



How do we know Jesus is the source of life?

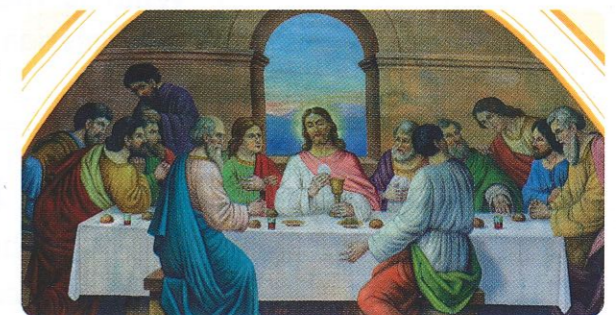
Sabrina



To understand what is meant by Jesus being the ‘source of life’, let us look again at what happened at the **Last Supper, Good Friday and Easter Sunday**.

### Holy Thursday: Last Supper

At the **Last Supper**, Jesus told his disciples that he was about to **hand over** his life for us. In this way, he made a **New Covenant**. He was saying that he was going to give his life for us, and he was asking us to do the same for him.



**In entering into this New Covenant with Jesus, we can be sure:**

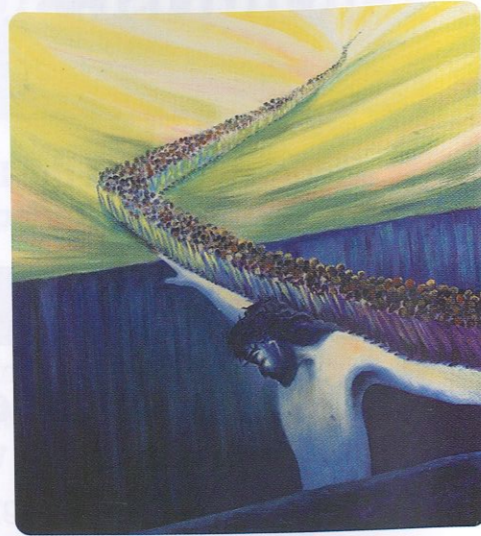
- Jesus is with us – when we are happy.
- He is with us – when we are anxious.
- He is with us – when someone hurts us.



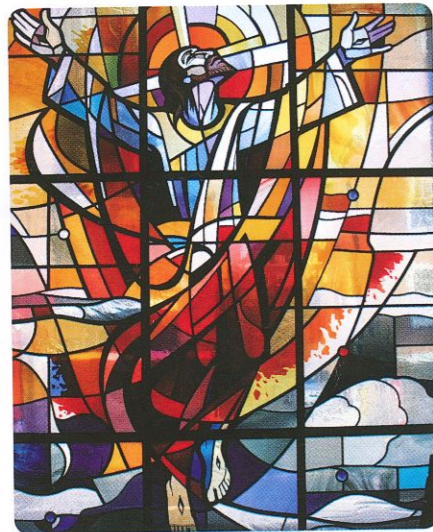
## Good Friday: Crucifixion

On the day after the Last Supper, **Good Friday**, Jesus actually handed over his life. When dying on the cross, he offered his life for each one of us.

Jesus gave himself to the Father as the most perfect sacrifice to take away the sins of the world and to open the way to heaven for us. This was the fulfilment of the **New Covenant**.



## Easter Sunday: Resurrection



Three days later on **Easter Sunday**, Jesus rose to be the Lord of the living and the dead, that is, to be the **Saviour**.

Since rising from the dead, Jesus has a totally new relationship with us. He is able to share his **new life** with us. Jesus has become the **source of eternal life**.

We receive this life from him in a very special way when we celebrate the Eucharist.

What is the summit of Christian life?  
Chris



## The summit of Christian life



The summit of a mountain is the highest peak. So the summit of Christian life is like reaching the highest peak of our relationship with Jesus.

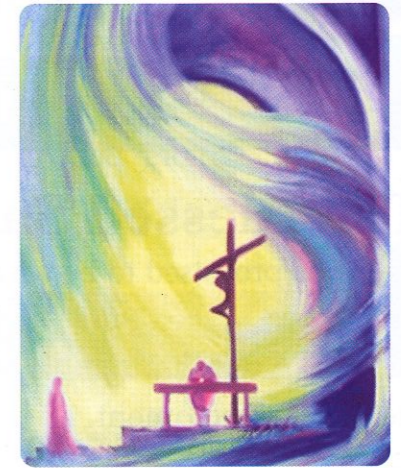
In celebrating the Eucharist, which we call the **Mass**, Jesus gives himself to us.

Jesus asks us to offer to him all that we do to help others. Insofar as we truly and sincerely do this, we reach the **summit of life**.

## The Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life

The **source of life** is in the Mass, when we draw spiritual strength and energy from Jesus in the Eucharist to help us to live out the values of the Kingdom of God. This is the **source** of Christian life.

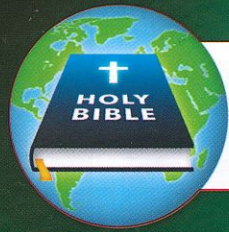
The **summit of life** is when we offer the whole of our lives to Jesus in the Mass. He promises that he will always be with us to help us to live out the **New Commandment** in our daily lives.



### Activities

1. Write an explanation to answer the questions asked by Sabrina and Chris. You will need to mention the following.
  - a) At the Last Supper, what did Jesus say he was going to do?
  - b) What was he asking us to do?
  - c) What did Jesus do on Good Friday?
  - d) Why did he do this?
  - e) What happened on Easter Sunday?
  - f) What is Jesus able to give to us now?
  - g) What has he become for us?
2. Identify how the Eucharist is the source and summit of Christian life. Explain how this belief has arisen.
3. Many people don't really understand why the Mass is so important. They don't understand that it is the source and summit of the whole Christian life. Make a little booklet with explanations and illustrations. Include:
  - Jesus as the source of life,
  - New Covenant and how we live it out,
  - participating in the Mass - the summit of life.

# The Blessed Sacrament



**Know that Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament.  
Be aware of how his presence can help us.**

## The Blessed Sacrament

Jesus has promised to be with his Church until the end of time. One of the ways in which he fulfils this promise is through his permanent presence in the Blessed Sacrament.

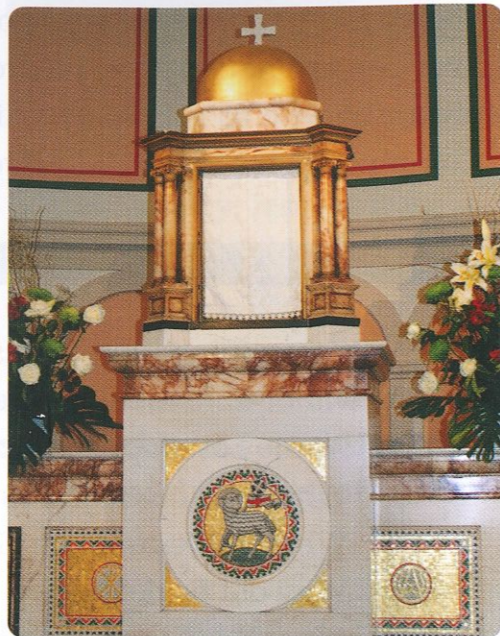


To all Catholics, the Blessed Sacrament is very precious. It is what we call the consecrated hosts. These are kept in a ciborium in the tabernacle so that we can always pray in the presence of Jesus.

The Blessed Sacrament can also be taken to people who are very ill in hospital or at home and are unable to get to Mass.



Throughout the world, in every tabernacle, in every church Jesus waits for us to come to him. It is important to show reverence for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. While we are in church, we try to be very quiet. The sanctuary lamp is a sign that Jesus is present in the tabernacle. In reverence for the Blessed Sacrament, we genuflect towards the tabernacle when we enter and leave the church.



### Activities

1. Choose a hymn about the Blessed Sacrament, for example, 'O Bread of Life' or 'Godhead here in hiding'.  
In what ways do the words speak to us of the presence of Jesus?
2. Write your own prayer to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

## Pause to reflect

A visit to the Blessed Sacrament



- Jesus is waiting for us. He knows us so well.
- We allow time for our hearts and minds to become conscious of his presence.
- We share our deepest thoughts and desires with Jesus.
- We listen to Jesus.
- We can tell him everything and anything.
- We remember that Jesus has told us to trust in God and trust in him.
- Slowly and surely we will experience his peace coming over us.

## Benediction: Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament



The Blessed Sacrament is kept in the tabernacle, but when we have Benediction, it is placed on the altar in a monstrance.

Benediction is a special time of prayer, of adoring Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

When entering or leaving the church during Benediction, we genuflect on both knees and bow our heads in reverence.



### Activities

1. With the help of the glossary, write out the meaning of the following words:  
**Genuflect      Monstrance      Sanctuary Lamp      Tabernacle**
2. Make a leaflet to encourage others to make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament in the church.  
Include:
  - what the Blessed Sacrament is and where to find it;
  - why it is helpful to make a visit;
  - a few suggestions for what a person could do during a visit.