

**The Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ  
(Cycle C) Homily  
Saint William, Champion | June 19, 2022  
Gn 14:18-20 | 1 Cor 11:23-26 | Lk 9:11b-17**

**Deacon Robert Mintus**

The CEO of Tyson Foods manages to arrange a meeting with the Pope at the Vatican. After receiving the papal blessing, he whispers, "Your eminence, we have an offer for you. Tyson Foods is prepared to donate 100 million dollars to the church if you change the Lord's Prayer from 'give us this day our daily bread' to 'give us this day our daily chicken.' "

The Pope responds, "That is impossible. The Prayer is the word of the Lord - it must not be changed." "Well," says the Tyson man, "we anticipated your reluctance. For this reason, we will increase our offer to 500 million dollars. All we require is that you replace the 'our daily bread' with 'our daily chicken.' "

Again, the Pope replies, "That, my son, is impossible. For the prayer is the word of the Lord and it must not be changed." Finally, the Tyson guy says, "Your Holiness, we at Tyson Foods respect your adherence to your faith, but we do have one final offer. We will donate ONE BILLION DOLLARS to the

great Catholic Church if you only change the Lord's Prayer from 'our daily bread' to 'our daily chicken.' Please consider it." And he leaves.

The next day the Pope convenes the College of Cardinals. "There is some good news," he announces, "and some bad news." "The good news is that the Church has come into one billion dollars."

"And the bad news, your eminence?" asks a Cardinal. The Pope continues, "We're losing the Wonder Bread account."

What is it that makes us Catholic? What is it that makes our gathering Eucharist? It's not the music, or the readings, or even the people. For most people, it all comes down to one thing: the Body of Christ. And it is one of those things that unites us as a people. Go to any Church, and the one thing that is most common is our reception of the Eucharist. It isn't Mass without it.

One question that I have been asked a number of times has been "Why don't we open Communion to all those who believe?" My answer is that, for Catholics, we believe that in our celebration, through the prayers of the presider and the grace of God, the bread that we offer becomes the Body of Christ, and the wine that we offer becomes the Blood of Christ. Please note that I said BECOMES and did not say SYMBOLIZES or REPRESENTS. But

that is the key difference between our belief as Catholics and those of other Christian faiths. We say and believe that through a divine mystery called transubstantiation, those objects that were once ordinary bread and wine become the very body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. And we believe that as long as the consecrated host and wine retain their physical form, Jesus is there. That is why we treat them with the utmost respect. That is why we make a sign of reverence before the cup, why we bow to the tabernacle after Communion, why a priest or Eucharistic minister will consume a consecrated host that is dropped, why we carefully blot up any consecrated wine should it be spilled, and why we carefully clean the patens or plates and chalices or cups at the conclusion of mass to prepare these vessels for the next mass.

Some years ago, I was talking with a friend who had been in the seminary undergoing formation for the priesthood. One of his instructors was a lady who was not Catholic. And a number of his classmates had noticed that while she attended mass with them, she never went with them to Communion. One day, they brought it up in class. They noted, "You are teaching us, and you probably are more Catholic than many people we have run into or will run into once we become priests. So why

don't you go to Communion?" She smiled, and said, "Because I understand and respect the difference in the beliefs of my church and yours."

One of the greatest challenges that we faced during Covid was the fact that we could not gather and share the Eucharist, and why the Bishops of all the Ohio dioceses agreed to temporarily suspend the sharing of the cup. And that is why this Pentecost was so special as it marked the return of Holy Communion to it's fullest form as we reinstated the cup.

So, in about twenty minutes from now, we will again gather around the table and share in the Body and Blood of our Lord. And like anything we eat or drink, it has the power to change us. Don't we often use the adage, "You are what you eat."? So don't take this opportunity lightly, come to the feast. It isn't just Wonder Bread that builds strong bodies.