

ctkAlive! Scripture Study

Feast of Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi) 2020—A Cycle Readings



“Last Supper” (1988)
[Bohdan Praesecki](#)

Note: For your convenience and to broaden your benefit from this and all sessions in this series, we have added links to books, authors, and other references mentioned in the text.

Caution: *Links to the internet are like rabbits dashing across a hunter’s path. Instinct says, “Leave the reflection and chase after that link!” Instead, we suggest waiting until you have followed the entire reflection. Then take all the time you wish to follow these interesting and educational links.*

Exception: *In the course of the lesson, you may have an opportunity to watch or listen to a relevant song or video.*

The liturgical celebration of the Body of Christ ([Corpus Christi](#)) originated in the mid-thirteenth century as a local Belgian celebration. For more history about this feast day, click on the above link.

Opening Prayer

Anima Christi (Soul of Christ)
Prayer of [St. Ignatius of Loyola](#)

(adapted for use here)

Soul of Christ, sanctify me.
Body of Christ, save me.
Blood of Christ, inebriate me.
Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me.
O good Jesus, hear me.
Within Your wounds hide me.
Let me not to be separated from you.

From the malignant enemy, defend me.
In the hour of my death, call me.
And bid me come to you;
That with your saints I may praise You...
Forever and ever.
Amen.

Liturgy of Corpus Christi

“Occasionally, when [St. Augustine](#) handed the Eucharist to a communicant, instead of saying, ‘the body of Christ,’ he would say, ‘*Receive what you are.*’.... For him it was more important that the people became the real presence of God, that they became food and drink for the world.” — [Ronald Rolheiser, OMI](#), “Worshipping in Anguish,” in his book [Forgotten Among the Lilies](#)

Introduction to the Corpus Christi Readings

Deuteronomy 8: 2-3, 14-16 “*Remember* how Yahweh, your God, brought you through the desert for 40 years.”

Antiphon Psalm 147: 12-15. 19-20 “Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.”

I Corinthians 10: 51-58 “The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion with the blood of Christ.”

John 6: 51 “I am the living bread from heaven; whoever eats of this bread will live forever.”

The Liturgical Readings

First Reading: Deuteronomy (8: 2-3, 14-16)

“*Remember* how Yahweh, your God, brought you through the desert for forty years. He humbled you, to test you and know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. He made you experience want, he made you experience hunger, but he gave you manna to eat which neither you nor your fathers had known, to show you that one does not live on bread alone, but also by everything that comes from the mouth of God.” (See also Matthew 4:4)

“Then, do not let your heart become proud and do not forget Yahweh, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, the house of slavery. It is he who has led you across this great and terrible desert, full of fiery serpents and scorpions, an arid land where there is no water. But for you he made water gush forth from the hardest rock. And he fed you in the desert with manna which your fathers did not know. He made you experience want and put you to the test, so that it would be for your good later on, lest you say, ‘With my own strength I have attained all these good things.’”

Personal Reflection

In the last line of the Deuteronomy reading, Moses cautions his people never to say: “With my own strength I have attained all these good things.”

— *When have I heard myself (in the past or present) saying or thinking, “I did it myself” taking all the credit, as if I didn’t need help from God or anyone else?*

The “call to remembrance” of God’s blessings is repeated many times in the course of both the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian New Testament, beginning with Adam and Eve after their fall from grace: remember “it was from clay that you were taken, for you are dust and to dust you shall return.”

— *Why do the Scriptures (both Hebrew and Christian) call so often for believers to “remember,” “not lose sight of”?*

Everyone has had one or more dark days in their lifetime. Let me recall when I was “starving” for something to fill a void in my life.

— *What was I was missing at that time?*

— *Where and when did I find that “missing piece” in my life?*

— *How did my life change once I discovered the reason—and solution—for my spiritual starvation?*

Antiphon: Psalm 147 (12-15, 19-20)

A song of praise to God who maintains the world.

Glory and praise forever!

Exalt Yahweh, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion!
For he strengthens the bars of your gates
and blesses your children within you.

Glory and praise forever!

He grants peace on your borders
and feeds you with the finest grain.
He sends his command to the earth
and swiftly runs his word.

Glory and praise forever!

It is he who tells Jacob his words,
his laws and decrees, to Israel.
This, he has not done for other nations,
so his laws remain unknown to them.

Glory and praise forever!

Personal Reflection

The psalmist sings of a time when Israel and Yahweh were in harmony with each other. Sadly, that harmonious relationship did not last long.

- *When did I experience a particular moment/period in my life when all was well between God and me? (Let me take a moment to recall and relive that special period of my life?)*
- *What inner forces are at work to call me away from maintaining that intimacy?*

Second Reading: I Corinthians (10: 16-17)

“The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a communion with the blood of Christ? And the bread that we break, is it not a communion with the body of Christ? The bread is one and so we, though many, form one body, sharing the one bread.”

Personal Reflection

In Chapter 8 of his final book, *The Baltimore Catechism Revisited* (2018), the late Fr. Brian T. Joyce, pastor of Christ the King Community, wrote:

“I love the outline of Mass that the poet-priest, John Shea, gave. Four things: gather the folks, tell the story, break the bread, and change the world. We gather the folks when we come together in the name of Jesus. We tell the story. We listen to our stories in Scripture. We break the bread and receive Communion, and then we go out to change the world, or at least, little by little, to change ourselves.” (*underlines added*)

During the current shelter-in-place, it has been a challenge for our community to gather, tell stories, receive Communion, and change the world.

— *How have I been able to live a “Eucharistic life” during this never-experienced time in our lives?*

Some Catholics choose to attend Mass and receive the Eucharist when they “feel like it.” Others do so because it is their “obligation.” Still others attend Mass and Communion because it is their spiritual “life blood.”

— *Where do I fit on that spectrum? How important is weekly/daily Mass and Eucharist to my relationship with Jesus?*

— *At the deepest core of my life, how convinced am I that the Risen Christ is truly, fully present in the consecrated bread and wine?*

Our community’s mission statement is—“Hear the gospel and, (go out to) make a difference” in the world.

— *How convinced am I that the Risen Christ is truly and equally present in the Mass’s time of storytelling—the written Word of Scripture?*

Proclamation from the Gospel of John 6: 51-58

“I am the living bread from heaven; whoever eats of this bread will live forever. The bread I shall give is my flesh, and I will give it for the life of the world.’

“The Jews were arguing among themselves, ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’

“So Jesus replied, “Truly, I say to you, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. The one who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. My flesh is really food, and my blood is truly drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood, live in me, and I in them. Just as the Father, who is life, sent me, and I have life from the Father, so whoever eats me will have life from me. This is the bread from heaven; not like that of your ancestors, who ate and later died. Those who eat this bread will live forever.”

Personal Reflection

In his August 16, 2015, homily, Fr. Brian Timoney told us:

“It is quite clear that, for St. John, participation in Eucharist is the way by which we, who believe in Jesus, enter into and remain in a personal relationship with him. ‘Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.’ And, ‘The one who feeds on me will have life because of me.’”

In light of this teaching of Jesus, some questions we might ask ourselves are . . .

- *What do the words “remains in me and I in (them)” mean to me?*
- *How am I incorporating the abiding (always there) presence of Christ into my daily awareness and personal lifestyle?*
- *Can I recall a time when receiving the Eucharist was merely something I “did” on Sundays? When did I change my thinking? What does receiving the Eucharist mean to me today?*

Shelter-in-Place and Nationwide Unrest

During the past two weeks, we have witnessed a common nationwide angst and demonstrations calling for social justice for all people, regardless of race, color, or creed. Especially for those marked as “other” and “lesser” because of the color of their skin.

- *What has been my gut reaction to the scenes I have witnessed daily on TV?*
- *Regardless of my political leanings, what have I learned that will help me going forward to become part of the solution to race-related injustice, rather than part of the ongoing problem?*

Journaling Prompts

Take some time to write about the insights gained from reflecting on the readings for the feast of Corpus Christi and on recent uprisings to end racial discrimination. Suggested prompts:

- *What is the first thought that comes to mind?*

We mustn't simply be grateful "recipients" of God's good gifts. We need to be "givers," too.

— *What difference will this week's Scriptures and current societal events make in how I think, live, love—and "give back"—during the week ahead?*

Questions

Feel free to send any questions or comments you might have to ctkAlive@ctkph.org

Preview of Next Session

12th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jeremiah 20: 10-13 "I hear many people whispering, 'Terror is all around me.'"

Psalm 69 "Lord, in your great love, answer me."

Romans 5: 12-15 "Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin, death; and later on, death spread to all humankind, because all sinned."

Matthew 10: 26-33 "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will acknowledge before my Father in heaven."

For Inspirational Viewing/Listening/Reading

Books:

[Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist](#) by [Brant James Pitre](#)

(A revelatory exploration of the Jewish roots of the Last Supper that seeks to understand exactly what happened at Jesus' final Passover.)

Brant Pitre is a professor of Sacred Scripture at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana.

[Forgotten Among the Lilies](#) by [Ronald Rolheiser, OMI](#).

Essays on learning to love beyond our fears

Note: I have read both of these books and given each my highest rating.— AJG

Songs:

["One Bread One Body"](#) by John Foley (1978)

[“Pie Jesu”](#) sung by [The Priests](#) — a beautiful, prayerful rendition by a classical/religious musical group, made up of Fr. Eugene O'Hagan and his brother Fr. Martin and Fr. David Delargy, Catholic priests in the Diocese of Down and Connor, Northern Ireland.

View their YouTube [page](#) to hear more.

[Panis Angelicus](#) (Angelic Bread or Bread of Angels) is a traditional Eucharistic hymn, composed in 1861 by [Cezar Frank](#) and sung here by [Andrea Bocelli](#).
Lyrics based on a prayer by [St. Thomas Aquinas](#)

Closing Prayer

Prayer After Receiving Holy Communion
by [St. Padre Pio](#)

(abridged)

Stay with me, Lord, for it is necessary to have You present so that I do not forget You. You know how easily I abandon You.
Stay with me, Lord, because I am weak and I need Your strength, that I may not fall so often.

Stay with me, Lord, for You are my life and without You I am without fervor.
Stay with me, Lord, for You are my light and without You I am in darkness.

Stay with me, Lord, to show me Your will.

Stay with me, Lord, so that I hear Your voice and follow You.
Stay with me, Lord, for I desire to love You very much and always be in Your company.

Stay with me, Lord, if You wish me to be faithful to You.

Stay with me, Lord, as poor as my soul is I want it to be a place of consolation for You, a nest of Love.

Stay with me tonight, Jesus, in life with all its dangers, I need You.

Stay with me, Lord, because at the hour of my death, I want to remain united to You, if not by Communion, at least by grace and love.

Stay with me, Lord, for it is You alone I look for, Your Love, Your Grace, Your Will, Your Heart, Your Spirit, because I love You and ask no other reward but to love You more and more.
Amen.

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(follow the link above to the novel *Bishop Myriel: In His Own Words*)