

## "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE."

"The Jews therefore murmured at Him, because He had said: I am the living bread which came down from Heaven. And they said: Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How then saith He, I came down from Heaven?"

Jesus therefore answered, and said to them: Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise Him up in the last day. It is written in the prophets: *And they shall all be taught of God.* Every one that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to me. Not that any man hath seen the Father; but he who is of God, He hath seen the Father.

Amen, amen I say unto you: He that believeth in me, hath life everlasting. I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from Heaven; that if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread from Heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give, is my Flesh, for the life of the world.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying: How can this man give us His flesh to eat?

Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen I say unto you: Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His Blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath everlasting life: and I will raise Him up in the last day. For my Flesh is meat indeed: and my Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my Blood, abideth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread, shall live forever." -John VI: 41-59

## WHAT JESUS MEANS:

Let us consider these words of Our Lord, for they are very important for us. Five times Jesus repeats Himself in the same manner. The Jews take Him quite literally, as they could not understand how they could possibly eat the flesh of a living man. This is no allegory! Jesus spoke symbolically at other times, and Sacred Scripture is careful to point out the significance. Many of His followers leave Him, and Jesus turns to His Chosen: "Will you too also leave Me?" He doesn't re-explain Himself - He means exactly what He says. **Jesus really means that we are to eat His Body and Blood in order to have life.** At the Last Supper, He will say, "*Take ye and eat; this is my Body.* (Matthew XXVI:26)" He never intended an analogy.

But how could Jesus share His Body & Blood with so many people? He knows that just as the body requires *natural* food to live, so too does the soul require *spiritual* food to live. And had He not just multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed five thousand (John VI)? For Jesus Christ, it is *not* an impossibility to feed all men with the very Divinity of God. There will be plenty of Heavenly Bread for all.

But again, *how* are we going to get this Bread of Life, and from who? At the Last Supper, Our Lord gave this special power to the Apostles. "*This is My Body which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of Me.* (Luke XXII:19) **For the first time, Jesus turns bread into His Body, and wine into His Blood; then He tells His Apostles to do the same!** He will thrice plead with Saint Peter, "*Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? ...Feed my sheep, ...feed my lambs* (John XXI;15-17). Thus did Jesus send the Apostles to preach to all nations, baptizing them, and feeding them unto Life everlasting.

We call this bread & wine which is turned into Jesus' Body & Blood, the Holy Eucharist. We also call it Holy Communion (common-union). The Faithful, when receiving this Sacrament are called "communicants."

Upon receiving the Eucharist, the communicant receives into his own soul the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ. True, Jesus dwells in us as we love Him and seek to do the Will of God; but in Holy Communion, we are joined even *more* closely to Him. It is the union of beloved. When God looks down upon us from Heaven, He sees His Beloved Son IN us - and there is no analogy here! It is real and true. Saint Paul's famous words are, "*It is not now I, but Christ who lives within me.*" In Holy Communion, Jesus is IN our soul! "*He who eats my flesh abides in me and I in him.*" To *abide* means to *live in*. How pleasing this must be to God! There is no closer union between persons in all the world. This is a very special grace, and Catholics are able to receive it every day at Holy Mass. In the Mass, Jesus renews upon the altar the Sacrifice that He made to the Father when He was on the Cross. The Faithful join their sacrifices with His, and He fills them with Himself. Thus does Communion flow from Sacrifice, and it is in sacrifice that we are adjoined with all other Catholics together to Christ in His love for the Father. It is His offering that gives value to our own, and provides us with the hope of Heaven. And what a proof of love we offer to our dear Jesus! This is what it means to be "united."

After we consume the Holy Eucharist, Jesus is present in us both spiritually and physically. For the next 20 minutes (about the time it takes to digest the host), we are in the most intimate union with our very God Himself. Here our prayers are the most powerful because Jesus is so close. After Communion Time is over, Jesus will remain in our heart spiritually for as long as we desire Him to. Experience will attest to the enrichment of life that frequent Holy Communion will bring to you.

For more copies, or for information, write to:  
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**"Except you eat the Flesh of the  
Son of man, and drink His Blood,  
you shall not have life in you."**

**- Saint John VI**

**What did Jesus mean?**

