

CELEBRATION OF THE WORD

The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
(Corpus Christi)

This is a celebration of the Word to aid your worship this Sunday, alone or with family. If possible, place a simple cross or crucifix prominently in the room and light one or more candles. You can also place an image of the Virgin Mary there if possible. As a family, choose the one who leads the prayer, and someone to do the readings.

Whoever leads the prayer can say:

Saint John Paul II reminds us that, in commemorating the solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, the Church “does not only celebrate the Eucharist but solemnly bears it in procession, publicly proclaiming that the sacrifice of Christ is for the salvation of the whole world.” We rejoice in this post-Easter expression of our Eucharistic devotion in order to deepen our attachment to the unique and unending Event that transforms our lives. As the Sequence for Corpus Christi begs: “Jesu, of your love befriend us,/ You refresh us, you defend us,/ Your eternal goodness send us/ In the land of life to see.”

SIGN OF THE CROSS

After a moment of silence, let everyone begin by making the Sign of the Cross:

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

HYMN

Choose an appropriate hymn.

We place ourselves before the Lord, beginning with an act of contrition:

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

The following are the readings of the solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.

A reading from
the Book of Deuteronomy

8:2-3, 14b-16a

MOSES SAID TO the people: “Remember how for forty years now the LORD, your God, has directed all your journeying in the desert, so as to test you by affliction and find out whether or not it was your intention to keep his commandments. He therefore let you be afflicted with hunger, and then fed you with manna, a food unknown to you and your fathers, in order to show you that

not by bread alone does one live, but by every word that comes forth from the mouth of the LORD.

“Do not forget the LORD, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery; who guided you through the vast and terrible desert with its saraph serpents and scorpions, its parched and waterless ground; who brought forth water for you from the flinty rock and fed you in the desert with manna, a food unknown to your fathers.”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

————•PSALM 147•————

R (12) Praise the Lord, Jerusalem.

Or: Alleluia.

Glorify the LORD, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion.

For he has strengthened the bars of your gates;
he has blessed your children within you. **R**

He has granted peace in your borders;
with the best of wheat he fills you.

He sends forth his command to the earth;
swiftly runs his word! **R**

He has proclaimed his word to Jacob,
his statutes and his ordinances to Israel.
He has not done thus for any other nation;
his ordinances he has not made known to them.

Alleluia. **R**

A reading from the first

Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians

10:16-17

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because the loaf of bread is one, we, though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

————•SEQUENCE•————

The sequence Laud, O Zion (Lauda Sion), or the shorter form beginning with the verse Lo! the angel's food is given, may be sung optionally before the Alleluia.

Laud, O Zion, your salvation,
Laud with hymns of exultation,
Christ, your king and shepherd true:

Bring him all the praise you know,
He is more than you bestow.

Never can you reach his due.

Special theme for glad thanksgiving
Is the quick'ning and the living

Bread today before you set:

From his hands of old partaken,
As we know, by faith unshaken,
Where the Twelve at supper met.

Full and clear ring out your chanting,
Joy nor sweetest grace be wanting,

From your heart let praises burst:

For today the feast is holden,
When the institution olden
Of that supper was rehearsed.

Here the new law's new oblation,
By the new king's revelation,
Ends the form of ancient rite:

Now the new the old effaces,
Truth away the shadow chases,
Light dispels the gloom of night.

What he did at supper seated,
Christ ordained to be repeated,
His memorial ne'er to cease:

And his rule for guidance taking,
Bread and wine we hallow, making
Thus our sacrifice of peace.

This the truth each Christian learns,
Bread into his flesh he turns,
To his precious blood the wine:

Sight has fail'd, nor thought conceives,
But a dauntless faith believes,
Resting on a pow'r divine.

Here beneath these signs are hidden
Priceless things to sense forbidden;
Signs, not things are all we see:

Blood is poured and flesh is broken,
Yet in either wondrous token
Christ entire we know to be.

Whoso of this food partakes,
Does not rend the Lord nor breaks;
Christ is whole to all that taste:

Thousands are, as one, receivers,
One, as thousands of believers,
Eats of him who cannot waste.

Bad and good the feast are sharing,
Of what divers dooms preparing,
Endless death, or endless life.

Life to these, to those damnation,
See how like participation
Is with unlike issues rife.

When the sacrament is broken,
Doubt not, but believe 'tis spoken,
That each sever'd outward token
doth the very whole contain.

Nought the precious gift divides,
Breaking but the sign betides
Jesus still the same abides,
still unbroken does remain.

The shorter form of the sequence begins here.

Lo! the angel's food is given
To the pilgrim who has striven;
See the children's bread from heaven,
which on dogs may not be spent.

Truth the ancient types fulfilling,
Isaac bound, a victim willing,
Paschal lamb, its lifeblood spilling,
manna to the fathers sent.

Very bread, good shepherd, tend us,
Jesu, of your love befriend us,
You refresh us, you defend us,
Your eternal goodness send us
In the land of life to see.

You who all things can and know,
Who on earth such food bestow,
Grant us with your saints, though lowest,
Where the heav'nly feast you show,
Fellow heirs and guests to be. Amen. Alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia. I am the living bread that came down from heaven, says the Lord;/ whoever eats this bread will live forever. **Alleluia, alleluia.**

My flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

**A reading from
the holy Gospel according to John**

6:51-58

JESUS SAID TO the Jewish crowds: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.”

The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Allow for a few minutes of silence and meditation. In a family, the leader could offer some words of consolation and reflection at this moment, such as: “Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Bread of eternal life. Grant that we may receive you worthily so that you may nourish our body and soul and unite us with yourself and with each other. Purify us with your Precious Blood, preserve us from sin so that we may abide in you for all eternity.”

M E D I T A T I O N O F T H E D A Y

The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

Oh Jesus! my Lord, my God, and my all! I believe that you in your living manhood are as truly present in the Blessed Sacrament as when you did walk amidst men and converse with them. Relying on their word, which shall not pass away, I believe that you are here, ever living to make intercession for us. Here is your sacred Body, which hung upon the cross; here is your soul, which was sorrowful unto death and agonized in the Garden of Olives on account of my sins; here are those sacred wounds made by the nails and spear; here are those eyes which looked with pity and love on the penitent Peter; here are those ears which heard the cruel cry...*crucify him*, and which listened so compassionately to all the ills of men. *I do believe, Lord: help my unbelief.*

Throughout the centuries sacred writers have vied with one another in describing the marvel of the Real Presence. It has been called the greatest work of God, the mirror of the divine perfections, the reflection of the wisdom, the immensity, and the eternity of God, a type of all the operations of God, the teacher of the unity of God. It has

been described as the continuation and the parallel of the Incarnation and the sum of its wonders, as the mirror of the life of Christ, as the triumph of the Church and even as its very life, as the explanation of the phenomena of the Church, as the compendium of all miracles, as the example of every virtue, as the fountain of all grace, as the magnet of souls. Yet, strive as they may, no writers, no poets, no saints can say anything more outstanding than this truth—the Blessed Sacrament is God.

CANON FRANCIS J. RIPLEY

Canon Ripley († 1998) was an English priest, author, and apologist.

INTERCESSIONS

The leader can begin with these words:

The source and summit of the Christian life is the most Holy Eucharist. Rejoicing in this incomparable gift of God, we praise the Father and pray:

R Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Church, the Body of Christ: that we will deepen our devotion to the Eucharistic sacrifice which gives life to the world. *R*

That the redemptive power of Christ's Eucharistic sacrifice will extend to the hearts and minds of all those who govern. *R*

For those who live in want: that Jesus the Bread of Life will be their sustenance, and that we will bring the mercy of Christ to all in need. *R*

That the graces of the Holy Eucharist will inspire an increase in vocations to the priesthood. *R*

That the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist will strengthen all marriages and families. *R*

For the grace of a deeper gratitude for what we receive in the most Holy Eucharist. *R*

For an end to the coronavirus pandemic, for God's mercy on all who are suffering and dying, and for strength and protection on all healthcare workers dedicated to fighting it. Let us pray to the Lord. *R*

Personal intentions

Our Father....

An Act of Spiritual Communion:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.

May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, and lead us to everlasting life. And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace. Amen.

To conclude the celebration, you can sing or recite the following or another suitable hymn. Turn and face an image of Mary, if you have one.



*Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;
vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Evae.
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.*

*Eia ergo, advocata nostra,
illos tuos misericordes oculos
ad nos converte.*

*Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.*

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,
our life, our sweetness, and our hope.

To you do we cry,
poor banished children of Eve.
To you do we send up our sighs,
mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn then, O most gracious advocate,
your eyes of mercy toward us,
and after this our exile
show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V Pray for us, O holy Mother of God,
R That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ.

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