

Hungry for the Bread of Life?



Sometimes you get so hungry, you don't even feel hungry anymore.

People can bounce from one church to another, looking for something... but no matter how wonderful the preacher is, or how friendly the community, they feel like something is missing. The truth is, they are hungering to be fed with the Bread of Life.

The Eucharist is the greatest treasure we have as Christians, because it is Jesus himself. Many of our non-Catholic brothers and sisters believe that the Eucharist is just a symbol of Jesus, but such a belief is relatively new in the history of Christianity. All the way back to the earliest days of Christianity, one finds Christians proclaiming that when they come together to worship, they receive the very Body and Blood of Jesus in what appears to be ordinary bread and wine.

Where did the early Christians come up with such a seemingly far-fetched idea? Well, they got it from Jesus himself. After feeding the five thousand miraculously, he prepared his followers for an even more amazing gift in his "Bread of Life" discourse. In very graphic language, he promised, "I am the Bread of Life... Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink." (John 6:48-55)

This is the only time recorded in the Gospels when people left Jesus because of a doctrinal teaching. They understood him literally and were appalled, just as people find the Catholic belief bewildering today. But if Jesus were only speaking figuratively, what was there to get upset about? And why didn't Jesus clear up their misunderstandings?

A year later, at the Last Supper, Jesus gave his followers this mysterious gift for the first time. He said of the bread, "This is my body," and of the wine, "This is my blood." (Matt 26:26). He did not say, "This is a symbol of my body" or "This represents my blood." He was giving himself to his friends in a very intimate and supernatural way. And he commanded them (and us) to continue what he taught them: "Do this in memory of me." (Luke 22:19)

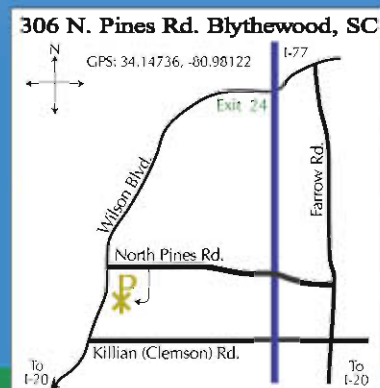
In every Catholic church throughout the world, Christians continue to experience this most wonderful treasure and worship as Jesus commanded. Jesus wants to unite himself with you, not only in spirit, but as you are, both body and soul. He wants to feed you with the true Bread of Life. For answers to common questions about the Eucharist, visit www.CatholicBridge.com. And if you are hungering for the Bread of Life, we would like to help welcome you home.



TRANSFIGURATION CATHOLIC CHURCH

~ Welcoming you home ~

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Next Week: Why do churches disagree?