

Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ + June 7, 2026-A + Homily, Father Ed Hislop

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16; Psalm 147: 12-13, 14-15, 19-20; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; John 6:51-58



“Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the bread we offer you: fruit of earth and work of human hands, it will become for us the bread of life.”

“Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation, for through your goodness we have received the wine we offer you: fruit of the vine and work of human hands, it will become our spiritual drink.”

Preparation of the Gifts, The Roman Missal

Real bread; bread that is seen as bread, bread that is the work of human hands, not machines. Bread that comes from wheat planted into the soil of the earth, planted and nurtured by farmers, by the sun, by water, rain and the seasons—fruit of the earth; harvested, ground, mixed with the waters of creation, made into flour, carefully kneaded into dough and baked in fire. Bread that is bread, bread that is common and known and needed by all, bread that looks and tastes like bread; bread around which people gather at table; bread that must be broken to be shared and consumed for life. Bread, that is bread, bread that is known by all who see it and taste it.

Bread over which the stories are told, affliction is named, thanksgiving is offered, memory evoked; bread, broken and shared at table to make of all who eat a new loaf of nourishment for the many. This is the “living bread that came down from heaven...” This, *all of this*, Christ says, is my body given up for you. Take, all of you and eat of it. *“Because the loaf of bread is one, we though many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf,”* the one loaf. THE SYMBOL IS THE REALITY.

The same is true of wine: fruit of the vine and work of human hands. Grapes, vines planted in the soil of earth, nurtured by the sun and the vigilant care of vine growers, who prune and water, harvest and crush while patiently awaiting the transformation into something new. Tasting and waiting for the moment of quality when the grapes are transformed into a drink for joy, celebration, feasting, conversation; comfort. Wine for life, for vigilant care, a drink for “fellowship,” mercy and forgiveness. A drink to draw together into a deeper communion of living;

a drink to discover that the same blood runs through the veins of all. A cup shared to name the holy communion we are. *“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ,”* the blood of Christ flowing through the heart and veins of the many; The blood of Christ flowing through the veins of *“people of every race, language and way of life,”* The Roman Missal, Eucharistic Prayer Reconciliation II the holy mystery that leads us to reverence Christ in the needy of this world, *Collect, Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ-A* teaching us not to forget the Lord our God. Dt 8:14 The holy mystery of mercy, compassion, joy, celebration and hope. *“Take this all of you and drink, for this is the chalice of my blood...poured out for forgiveness.”* THE SYMBOL IS THE REALITY.

To this sacred table we are invited by Christ, despite our unworthiness, doubt or struggle. We are invited, not alone but with people of every language, race and way of life; with the saints and those who have died in his friendship, to share in the unending banquet of unity. The Roman Missal, Reconciliation Prayer II

Invited at Christ’s command to eat and to drink, who only says the word and our soul is healed. So, we come, not alone, we process together with a solemn sense of wonder, and as we move, we pray, we sing in one common voice. We process with awe for the great mystery we are about to become. Though many, we are to become one! So together we pray in song. Today, our words are these: *“Bread of life, Cup of blessing, gift of Christ the Lord!*

Be the Body you receive, broken for the world.” Our song is prayer, holy music, sung with firm conviction. We can never come to the Lord’s table alone, only together; we do not move silently, we sing! It is never just about “me,” it is always about “us.” We are moving to become “Holy communion.” The words we sing are integral to our procession, to our “holy communion.” Here, we sing with deliberate care, sure voice and an awareness that the sung words matter.

And we come in song, sacred prayer, with humble service, first to the Bread of life, the Body of Christ, with open hands, making a throne for Christ the Lord. We are told, the Body of Christ, and we reply AMEN. We consume and then we go to the sacred cup. At Blessed Trinity/Spirit of Christ, few pass by the cup or ignore its mystery.

Receiving the Blood of Christ is integral to the fullness of Holy Communion and a true sign of our shared life and faith. *It can never be ignored or passed by.* If for some rare reason, a person feels unable, on occasion, to receive from the shared cup, then stop, bow, take the cup in hand for a moment and then return it to the minister. This is the Blood of Christ. There are few reasons not to take and drink, as Christ invites, but it must always be recognized and revered, as so many do Blessed Trinity/Spirit of Christ. Then we

return to the assembly, continuing in song with all in the community, until all have received, until all have become the “holy Communion.” Then, after all have received, we sit in awesome silence, aware of the great mystery we have become. For now, we, *together with the whole Church*, are the Body and Blood of the risen Christ. Where is Christ—he is us, together. *“The many are now one body!” How silent we become!* In the face of this amazing truth, *this great mystery*, there is nothing more to say. Silence speaks. Look around. Who do you see? The Body and Blood of Christ—us with the whole Church! Then we are sent forth, broken and poured out to be for the world, our city, neighborhood, what Christ is for us here. We are the Eucharistic Procession Sunday after Sunday: We go to love and serve—to love and serve!

The words of Saint Augustine still remind us of who are and who we become: *“If you, therefore, are Christ’s body and members, it is your own mystery that is placed on the Lord’s table! It is your own mystery that you are receiving! You are saying ‘Amen’ to what you are: your response is a personal signature, affirming your faith. When you hear ‘The body of Christ,’ ‘the blood of Christ,’ you reply ‘Amen.’ Be a member of Christ’s body, then, so that your “Amen” may ring true!”*

**BLESSED ARE YOU, LORD GOD OF ALL CREATION,
FOR THROUGH YOUR GOODNESS WE HAVE
RECEIVED.**

