

**GOSPEL**

Jn 6:51-58

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

*My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.*

Jesus said to the Jews:

‘I am the living bread which has come down from heaven.

Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.’

Then the Jews started arguing with one another: ‘How can this man give us his flesh to eat?’ they said. Jesus replied:

‘I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you.

Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood

has eternal life,

and I shall raise him up on the last day.

For my flesh is real food

and my blood is real drink.

He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him.

As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the Father,

so whoever eats me will draw life from me.

This is the bread come down from heaven; not like the bread our ancestors ate:

they are dead,

but anyone who eats this bread will live for ever.’

■ **The Gospel of the Lord.**

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# Breaking Open the Word



# THE SAVING WORD

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST / A

11 JUNE 2023

## A PROMISE OF LIFE

On the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, we are invited to consider the sustaining love of God in the past, present, and future. Deuteronomy calls us to remember how God nourished the people of Israel in the desert. Amid great hardship on that long journey to the land of promise, it was the living God who provided the people with the means to overcome thirst and hunger.

In trying to help the Corinthians address the division among them Paul stresses the role the Eucharist has in the present. United with Christ’s great act of self-giving, Christians are called to celebrate the source of their unity. Moreover, their participation is a solemn pledge to overcome division by working to reflect who they are, the body of Christ Jesus.

The future aspects of the Eucharist become apparent in today’s reading from John’s Gospel. It reflects how the early church had come to understand that the Eucharist they celebrated was the most precious of gifts. Unlike the manna in the desert, it is a source of life that will carry us through all of life’s journeys and is a reminder, promise, and preparation of the eternal life that awaits us.

The Eucharist prompts us to remember God’s sustaining acts in the past as a source of encouragement for the present. We are called to continue Jesus’ mission and message by working for unity in the present to be ready and worthy to share in eternal life which has been prepared for us in the future.

## FIRST READING

Deut 8:2-3, 14-16

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy

*He gave you food which you and your ancestors did not know.*

Moses said to the people: ‘Remember how the Lord your God led you for forty years in the wilderness, to humble you, to test you and to know your inmost heart – whether you would keep his commandments or not. He humbled you, he made you feel hunger, he fed you with manna which neither you nor your fathers had known, to make you understand that man does not live on bread alone but that man lives on everything that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

‘Do not then forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery: who guided you through this vast and dreadful wilderness, a land of fiery serpents, scorpions, thirst; who in this waterless place brought you water from the hardest rock; who in this wilderness fed you with manna that your fathers had not known.’

■ **The word of the Lord.**

## RESP PSALM

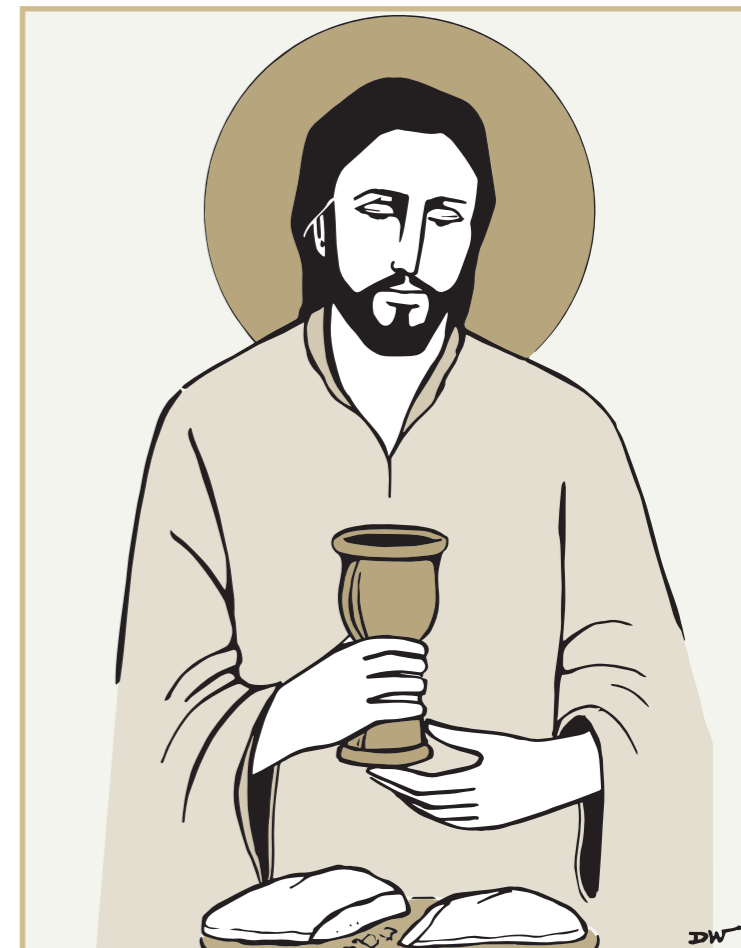
Ps 147:12-15, 19-20. R. v. 12

**R. Praise the Lord, Jerusalem. (or Alleluia!)**

1. O praise the Lord, Jerusalem! / Zion, praise your God! / He has strengthened the bars of your gates, / he has blessed the children within you. **R.**

2. He established peace on your borders, / he feeds you with finest wheat. / He sends out his word to the earth / and swiftly runs his command. **R.**

3. He makes his word known to Jacob, / to Israel his laws and decrees. / He has not dealt thus with other nations; / he has not taught them his decrees. **R.**



## SECOND READING

1 Cor 10:16-17

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

*Though we are many, we form a single body because we share this one loaf.*

The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ, and the bread that we break is a communion with the body of Christ. The fact that there is only one loaf means that, though there are many of us, we form a single body because we all have a share in this one loaf.

■ **The word of the Lord.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 6:51-52

**Alleluia, alleluia! / I am the living bread from heaven, says the Lord; / whoever eats this bread will live for ever. / Alleluia!**

**Christopher Monaghan CP**