

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



Today's Readings

Do not forget your God. Deut 8:2-3,14-16
Communion with Christ. I Cor 10:16-17
Eat this and live forever. Jn 6:51-58

Next Week

Follow me.
Hosea 6:3-6; Romans 4:18-25;
Matthew 9:9-13

In a nutshell

When Jesus speaks of himself as 'the bread of life' in today's Gospel, he is challenging his listeners to embrace his presence in a fresh and robust way; a challenge which arouses controversy as they struggle to grasp his meaning. On today's celebration of the Body and Blood of Christ, let us readily enter into this challenge of faith.



Fed by the body of Christ

This story comes from the experiences of a missionary priest who lived in Pakistan for many years:

One December I encouraged Rasula to come to our parish for Christmas Day. There would be Mass, food and friends. And so she came and brought along her own eight children as well as some of her relatives and their children. They arrived late, after Mass, just when the food program was beginning. But Rasula's main preoccupation was to have her nephew baptised. So off they went to the church.

In the meantime I was keeping an eye on the food situation hoping there would be enough for them. They had come the furthest distance. However the food ran out before they came from the church. Now, I knew that the Sisters had some rice for themselves and for ourselves. So I went and asked them for this rice which they willingly gave. I put it in two large dishes and when Rasula and company arrived I

invited them to eat.

They sat and ate. I watched them from a distance hoping there would be enough for all. I noticed that Rasula did not eat. When they had finished the rice I went and asked, 'Have you all eaten well?'

'Yes.'

'Rasula,' I said. 'Have you eaten?'

'Yes,' she replied. 'I have eaten well.'

'But I was watching,' I said. 'You didn't eat at all.'

She replied, 'My children have eaten, have I not eaten?'

And for me the ground on which she stood became holy ground. (FN)

Rituals that bond and give life

For half a century two women, long widowed, lived next door to each other. They became as close as sisters. Fuelling their friendship were certain rituals. Like the mid-morning scones which one would bake and pass over the window sill to the other whose kitchen was just an arms length away.

This little story gets me thinking: If such a simple ritual can feed a lifelong friendship, how much more does the Eucharist feed, nourish and transform the people of the Church as the body of Christ?

So, next time you share scones and coffee or beer and burgers with a friend, think of the deeper meaning of the ritual of eating and drinking. And of how Christ used such realities to bond us to him in the most sacred of ways.



church below the rooftops

Six things to reflect upon after receiving communion

1. The enormity of this gift: Christ's body and blood
2. How deeply we are loved by Jesus
3. Our vocation to live as one body of Christ
4. Our love for our brothers and sisters who, for whatever reason, do not receive the communion host
5. Our longing for unity among Christians
6. Our mission to 'feed' those who hunger in body and soul

A prayer after communion

Pray silently for the person nearest you on your left, on your right, behind and in front of you.

Pray that the reality of Christ's sacrifice will find deep roots in their lives.



RealPeople offers faith reflections from the saints and prophets of everyday life.

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