

Reading for the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ
Corpus Christi
June 7th 2026

First reading

Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14b-16a

‘He fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know.’

Moses spoke to the people: You shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Do not forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrifying wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 147: 12-13. 14-15. 19-20. R12a

O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord!

or: Alleluia.

O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord!

O Sion, praise your God!

He has strengthened the bars of your gates;

he has blessed your children within you.

He established peace on your borders;

he gives you your fill of finest wheat.

He sends out his word to the earth,

and swiftly runs his command.

He reveals his word to Jacob;

to Israel, his decrees and judgements.

He has not dealt thus with other nations;

he has not taught them his judgements.

Second reading

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

‘Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body.’

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 there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

Sequence

Lauda, Sion

The Sequence may be said or sung in full, or using the shorter form indicated by the asterisked verses.

Praise, O Sion, praise your Saviour, praise your captain and your pastor, with hymns and solemn songs.

Perform what pow’r affords indeed; his worth all praises far exceed, none can reach his dignity.

A special theme of praise is read, a living and life-giving bread, on this day exhibited.

Which in the supper of our Lord, to twelve disciples at his board no doubt was delivered.

Let our praise be loud and free, full of joy and decent glee, with minds’ and voices’ melody.

For now solemnise we that day, which with joy does to us display the prince of this mystery.

At this board of our new Ruler, of new law, new Paschal order abolishes the ancient rite.
Old decrees be new annulled, shadows are in truths fulfilled, day finishes darkness.
That at supper Christ performed, to be done he rightly charged for his eternal memory.
Guided by his sacred orders, bread and wine upon our altars to saving host we sanctify.
Christians are by faith assured that to flesh the bread is changed, the wine to blood most precious.
That no wit nor sense conceives, firm and grounded faith believes, in strange effects not curious.
Under kinds two in appearance, two in show but one in substance, lie things beyond comparison.
Flesh is meat, blood drink most heav'nly, yet is Christ in each kind wholly, most free from all division.
None that consumes him does rend him, none that takes him does divide him:
received, he whole perseveres.
Be there one or thousands hosted, one as much as all received, he by no eating perishes.
Both the good and bad receive him, but effects are diverse in them, true life or true destruction.
Life to the good, death to the wicked, mark how both alike received with far unlike conclusion.
Form of bread not Christ is broken, not of Christ, but of his token, is state or stature altered.

The shorter form of the sequence begins here.

*Angels' bread made pilgrims' feeding truly bread for children's eating, to dogs not to be offered.

*Signed by Isaac on the altar, by the lamb and paschal supper, and in the manna figured.

*Jesu, food and feeder of us, here with mercy feed and friend us, then grant in heaven felicity.

*Lord of all, who here do feed us, heav'nly guests, heirs, fellows make us, in eternal company.

Amen. Alleluia.

St Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), translated by St Robert Southwell (c.1561-1595)

Gospel Acclamation

John 6:51

Alleluia, alleluia.

I am the living bread that came down from heaven, says the Lord.

If anyone eats of this bread, he will live for ever.

Alleluia.

Gospel

John 6:51-58

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

At that time: Jesus said to the Jews, 'I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live for ever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'

The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?'

So Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live for ever.'

Short reflection on the reading for today

Sitting together for a meal can generate a special feeling of togetherness. Each of us will have our own memories of table companionship or fellowship. Many of these will be happy experiences of celebration and laughter, of love received and shared. Some memories of table fellowship may be sad, times when we were more aware of one who was absent than of those who were present. Jesus shared table many times with his disciples. It is likely that, when sharing food with his disciples, he also shared with them his vision of God's kingdom. At table, the disciples imbibed something of Jesus' mind and heart and spirit. Of all the meals he shared with them, the meal that stayed in their memory more than any other was their last meal together, what came to be known as the last supper. Today's gospel gives us Mark's account, his word-picture, of that last supper.

This last meal Jesus shared with his disciples stood out in their memory, capturing the imagination of generations of disciples right up to ourselves. He did more than share his vision with the disciples; he gave them himself in a way he had never done before, and in a way that anticipated the death he would die for them and for all, on the following day. In giving himself in the form of the bread and wine of the meal, he was declaring himself to be their food and drink. In calling on them to take and eat, to take and drink, he was asking them to take their stand with him, to give themselves to him as he was giving himself to them.

It was because of that supper and of what went on there that we come to Mass. Jesus intended his last supper to be a beginning rather than an end. It was the first Eucharist. Ever since that meal, the church has gathered regularly in his name, to do and say what he did and said at that last supper — taking bread and wine, blessing both, breaking the bread and giving both for disciples to eat and drink.

Jesus continues to give himself as food and drink to his followers. He also continues to put it up to his followers to take their stand with him, to take in all he stands for, living by his values, walking in his way, even if that means the cross. Whenever we come to Mass and receive the Eucharist, we are making a number of important statements. We are acknowledging Jesus as our bread of life, as the one who alone can satisfy our deepest hungers. We are also declaring that we will throw in our lot with him, as it were, that we will follow in his way and be faithful to him all our lives, in response to his faithfulness to us. In that sense, celebrating the Eucharist is not something we do lightly. Our familiarity with the Mass and the frequency with which we celebrate it can dull our senses to the full significance of what we are doing. Every time we gather for the Eucharist, we find ourselves once more in that upper room with the first disciples, and the last supper with all it signified is present again to us.