



"WE ADORE YOU, O CHRIST, AND WE PRAISE YOU"

The Gift of the Holy Eucharist

SHARING FAITH IN THE
DIOCESE OF WESTMINSTER





"We Adore You, O Christ, and We Praise You": The Gift of the Holy Eucharist

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“ If we draw close to Christ,
the Light of the World,
we share in his holiness,
and we are sheltered by
his glory” (T-01269-OL)



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FORWARD

This year, the Agency for Evangelisation has produced this book of reflections for Lent to help us focus on the Eucharistic Congress to be held in Liverpool in September – Adoremus.

The six sessions provide an opportunity to focus on our love of Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament, the Mass, and our Mission. They help us to open our hearts to the merciful gaze of Christ, present in the Blessed Sacrament, who comes so that we may have life and live it in its fullness, so that we may know him more clearly, love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly.

‘Behold, the Lamb of God.’ In the act of adoration, we gaze upon Christ present in the Holy Eucharist, which is truly the Body and Blood of Christ. We lovingly adore him and offer ourselves to him so that he may gaze upon us and burn his love into our hearts and expand them to be more loving. We will examine the prayer of adoration and why this is so important in our lives.

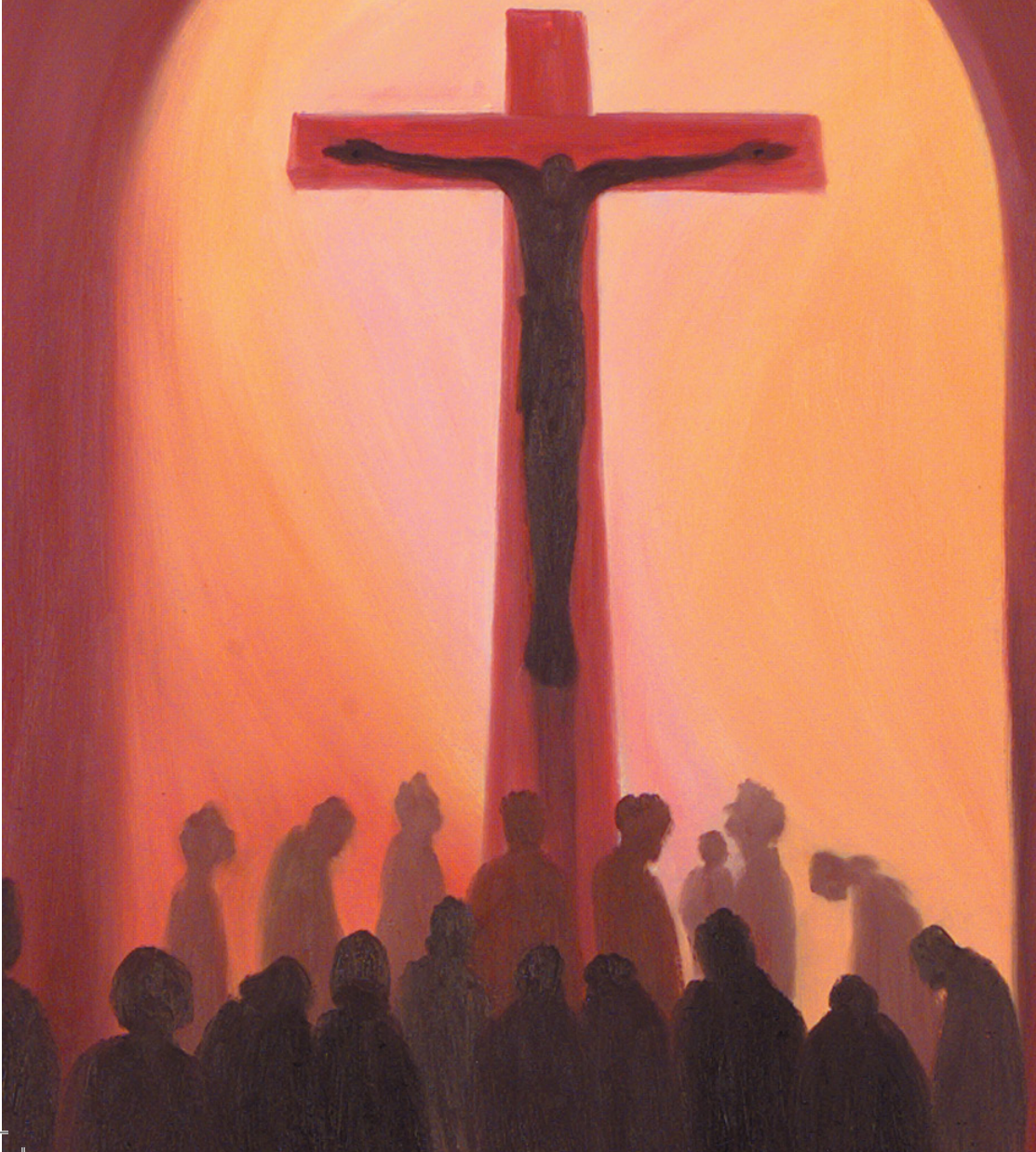
‘Do this in memory of me.’ These sessions also provide an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the Sacrifice of the Mass, so that we can worship God more fully and with greater reverence when we gather to celebrate the Mass. We gather as a community of Christ’s followers to hear God’s Word, receive his Sacrament, and to be sent out.

‘Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.’ We are sent out from the Mass to serve others as missionary disciples; to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. The humble example of Jesus washing his disciples’ feet reminds us of the call to loving service which he revealed at the Last Supper.

I commend this series of reflections so that by exploring these themes, we will celebrate the Easter Triduum with deeper meaning and greater love. They also serve as a preparation for the Eucharistic Congress when we will witness to the Catholic faith and show people the way to the fullness of life.

Bishop John Sherrington
Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster

“ At every Mass we are
united with Christ and
with each other in his
eternal offering”
(T-00229-OL)





INTRODUCTION

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In September of this year, a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress will take place in Liverpool. Thousands of people from all over the country will come together to deepen their faith in the Holy Eucharist and adore Christ in his Eucharistic presence.

The months leading up to September give us a chance to appreciate the gift of the Eucharist in a new way. And this is Cardinal Vincent's wish for our diocese in a particular way: "We seek to rejuvenate Eucharistic adoration in our parishes as the source of strength for our lives and for our mission, that of making present the love and compassion of Jesus in our society."

This is also Pope Francis's wish for the whole Church: "Without prolonged moments of adoration, of prayerful encounter with the word, of sincere conversation with the Lord, our work easily becomes meaningless... I want to encourage everyone to visit... the Blessed Sacrament of the infinite love of Christ and His mercy."

This booklet will help you grow in your love for Christ in the Holy Eucharist, and it will help your parish community to deepen its Eucharistic faith. It does not cover every aspect of the Mass, and many important things are left out. Instead, the six sessions focus on the sacramental presence of Jesus Christ, especially his Real Presence in the Blessed Sacrament and its implications for our lives.

The sessions cover six themes: the Christian encounter with the Lord ("I will be with you always"); the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist; the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; the graces given in Holy Communion ("Sacred Banquet, Spiritual Food"); Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; and the implications of the Mass for service and mission ("Love one another as I have loved you").

If the materials are being used during Lent, it might be best to begin in the week of Ash Wednesday and finish in the week before Holy Week. Alternatively, you could meet for the six full weeks of Lent including Holy Week, or for the first five weeks of Lent with the sixth session after Easter. The scripture readings are not taken from the Sunday Mass readings so you are not tied to the liturgical weeks in this way, and indeed the sessions can be run at any time during the year.

The images reproduced here are by Catholic artist Elizabeth Wang, and they form a core part of the materials, allowing for personal meditation and group reflection on the mystery of Eucharist. Some of the introductory materials about faith sharing groups are borrowed from previous publications from the Diocese of Westminster. The Final Prayers for each session are taken from the Rite of Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction. "CCC" stands for the Catechism of the Catholic Church.



For some of you, these practical points will be well known, but for others, they will be new. If you are new to the small community, we offer a big welcome; and to returning members, welcome back. Take time to read these few introductory pages - they will be of great benefit.

GATHERING as a small community to share prayer, life and faith is an important part of parish life. This is a sacred time. It is important that you take the time to get to know one another, so always make room to welcome and introduce new people, and to ask one another how you are and what has happened since you last met. This time for informal sharing is built into the Opening Discussion.

HOSPITALITY and environment are very important. You should meet in a reflective atmosphere with as few distractions as possible. It can be helpful to have a central focus, such as an open Bible, a crucifix and a candle. The host, if possible, should provide tea and coffee (and perhaps biscuits and a cake!) for when people arrive.

TIMING is important. The suggested time for each session is 90 minutes (see the section below about the structure of the meetings). Each session will have a balance of prayer, sharing, discussion, scripture, reflection, silence, and thinking about how to put these ideas into practice. It's fine to shorten things and adapt these materials if that will suit your group

PRAYER can take different forms. There are some simple suggestions built into the sessions about how to use the prayer time, but you can choose whatever way will work for the group, and extend the times if you wish. Silence is an important part of the process, so don't be afraid to pause during your prayer time or, indeed, during the reflection time for some quiet.

REFLECTION is essential to our spiritual life. We need to reflect on our experience and share our lives in a trusting environment. We listen to Scripture and a written Meditation on the theme of the session. As you reflect and discuss together, ensure each person who wants to talk is given an opportunity to share. No one needs to talk unless they want to, and no one person should dominate the conversation. Each week we have the opportunity to respond by thinking about how we could embody this faith in our lives and what practical suggestions might help us.



WHAT IS THE LEADER OF YOUR GROUP EXPECTED TO DO?

Each group will have a leader. A leader is not someone with all the answers who wants to put everybody else right. He or she is a fellow participant, but with particular responsibility for facilitating the group by:

- Preparing ahead of the session and creating a warm, accepting and open environment.
- Guiding the group and keeping it on track through the faith sharing process each week.
- Sharing the various tasks among the members of the group.
- Listening and, if necessary, asking questions to keep the discussion moving.
- Ensuring that each participant has the opportunity to speak if they wish.
- Encouraging members to see the meeting as more than a discussion group - as an opportunity for sharing and listening and growing in faith together.
- Ensuring the group finishes at the agreed time, even if the discussion could go on longer!
- Ensuring that everything in the group takes place according to parish and diocesan safeguarding expectations, if necessary by liaising with the parish safeguarding representative.



THE STRUCTURE OF EACH SESSION

(Timings are just rough indications. Please feel very free to adapt as necessary).

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25MINS INTRODUCTION

10 MINS

GATHERING: Tea and coffee are available, and perhaps some biscuits and cakes, as people arrive.

3 MINS

WELCOME: The leader welcomes people and asks them to introduce themselves briefly.

2 MINS

OPENING PRAYER: A simple format is suggested in the text.

10 MINS

OPENING DISCUSSION: A chance to get to know each other and catch up, and to reflect on a thought-provoking question that acts as an ice-breaker. The questions are given in each session.

35MINS MAIN REFLECTION

5 MINS

HOLY SCRIPTURE: The leader asks someone to read these brief passages out loud. Followed by a brief **PAUSE** for silent reflection.

10 MINS

MEDITATION: The leader asks someone to read out the Meditation, or for people to read it quietly themselves. Followed by a longer **PAUSE:** for silent reflection on the Meditation *and on the accompanying images*.

20 MINS

MAIN DISCUSSION: The questions are given in each session.

25MINS PUTTING IT IN TO PRACTICE

5 MINS

SUMMARY OF CORE BELIEFS & PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS: These are read by the group

15 MINS

FINAL DISCUSSION: About how to build this week's theme into our lives.

2 MINS

FINAL PRAYER: A simple format is suggested in the text.

2 MINS

CONCLUDING REMARKS: Together with an encouragement to read the two supplementary sections to that session (CATHOLIC TEACHING and WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS) and to read and reflect on the SCRIPTURE READINGS for the coming week.

"I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS"
The Christian encounter with the Lord



"I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS"

The Christian encounter with the Lord

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GATHERING

Tea and coffee are available, and perhaps some biscuits and cakes, as people arrive.

WELCOME

The leader welcomes people and asks them to introduce themselves briefly.



OPENING PRAYER

The leader invites people to sit in silence for a brief moment: to become aware of their concerns and distractions, to remember that they are in God's presence, and to offer their day to him. People are then invited to make the Sign of the Cross ("In the name of the Father..."), and to pray the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father...").

OPENING DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- What made you decide to join this group?
- What are your hopes for the group?
- What things have helped you to grow in your faith in the past?
- Which person has had the greatest influence on your faith and why?



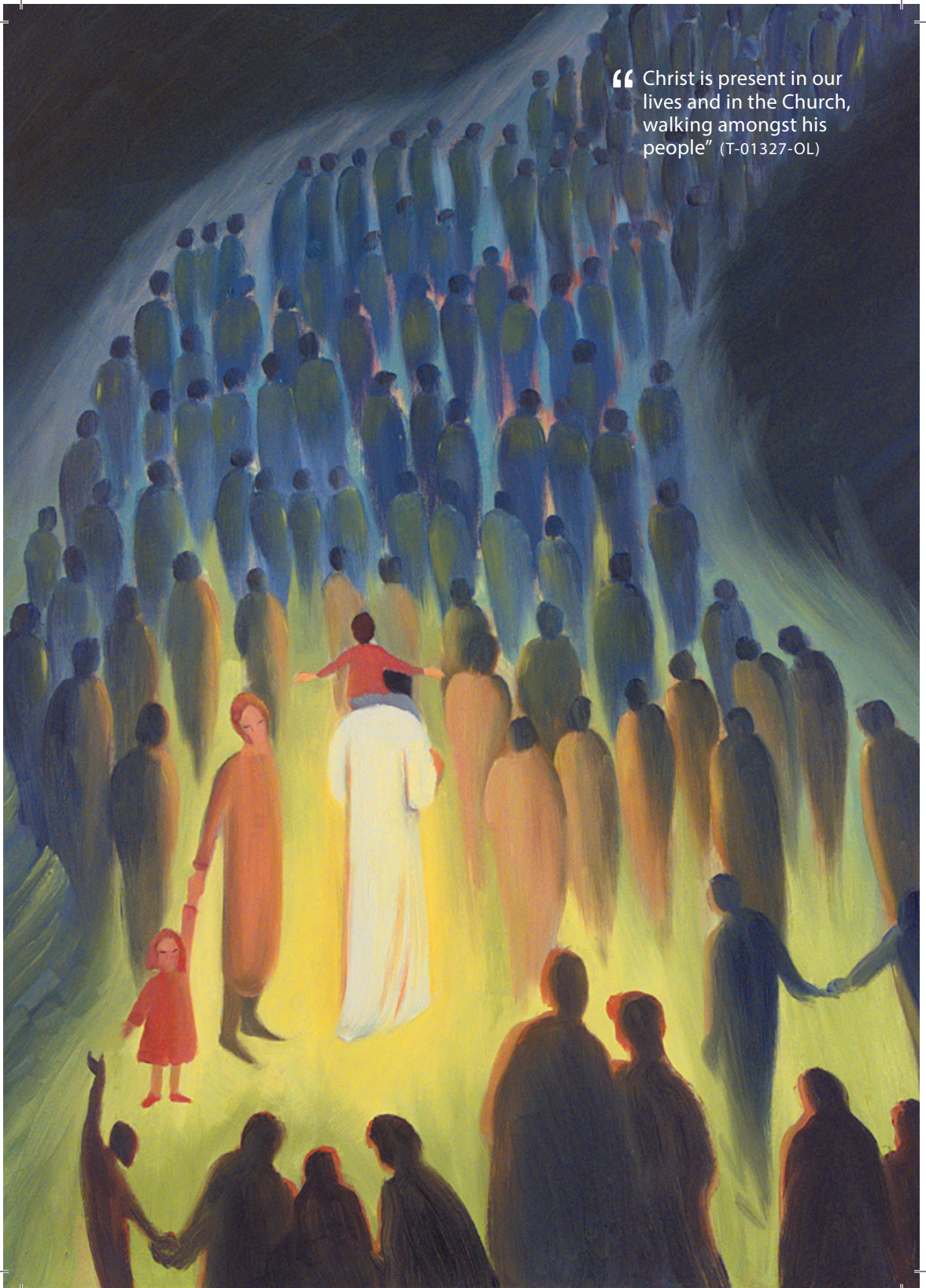
HOLY SCRIPTURE

The leader asks someone to read these brief passages aloud (continued over the page).

SPEAKING TO HIS DISCIPLES AFTER HIS RESURRECTION "And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'" (Mt 28:18-20)

JESUS SAID "Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." (Mt 18:19-20)

“ Christ is present in our
lives and in the Church,
walking amongst his
people” (T-01327-OL)





"I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS" The Christian encounter with the Lord

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ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS "When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'"

(Lk 24:30-32)

FROM THE BOOK OF REVELATION "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.' And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.'"

(Rev 21:3-5)

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence for personal reflection on the Scripture Readings.*

MEDITATION



The leader asks someone to read out the Meditation, or for people to read it quietly themselves.

Many of us have a sincere faith, but we wish it were more alive and more life-giving. Sometimes we are not very aware of God's presence in our lives, and we wonder if Jesus has disappeared or forgotten us. Faith can feel very empty. The doubts can creep in very easily.

It's so important to remember the solemn promise he made to us after his Resurrection: "Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of time." Jesus Christ is Emmanuel: "God with us." He is the eternal Word who came to dwell among us. And even after his Ascension into heaven, he is present with us now, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, and through the life of the Church. He has not left us alone. We just need eyes to see and ears to hear.

There are many different ways that Jesus speaks to us and touches our lives. It's often in very personal ways: through an event, an encounter, a conversation; through an experience of beauty, or kindness, or even of suffering; through the voice of conscience or the needs of those around us; through a moment of prayer, or a line from the Holy Scriptures, or an unexpected inspiration from the Holy Spirit.

Jesus made a special promise to be with us through the liturgy and the sacraments. In each of the seven sacraments the great gift of salvation is made present. Through these sacred signs we worship God, and his work of making us holy is carried out. This



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is especially true of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, the Mass, which is "the source and summit of the Christian life".

As Catholics, we try to go to Mass each Sunday, but it can become just a routine, and we often forget the staggering truth and beauty of what is happening. Whenever we go to Mass, the Lord is present in the praying community; he speaks to us through his Holy Word; we are united with Jesus in the sacrifice he offered on the cross for our salvation; we meet him, if we are able, in Holy Communion; we receive the power of his Holy Spirit; and we are united with the whole Church across time and space. It is the holiest act of worship possible on earth. We should be awe-struck and amazed.

Sometimes we do feel inspired, sometimes we feel a bit dry; sometimes we feel very peaceful, sometimes we are completely distracted. What matters is that we are there, and that we are trying to be open to the Lord.

Faith is a gift, but it's also something we need to work at. We don't come to Mass as strangers or indifferent spectators. We want to be conscious of what we are doing and what is taking place. We want our hearts and minds to be open and attentive, so we can enter into the prayers and the worship.

This isn't always easy, especially if we are tired, or sick, or caring for young children. And God loves us and delights in the simple fact that we are there. But the more we can "pray the Mass" and enter into it in a personal way, the more it will touch us and transform us. The sacramental reality can bear fruit in our lives, and our Sunday worship will become truly life-giving and give us joy and strength for the week ahead.

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence to reflect on the Meditation, and also to reflect on the three paintings that are reproduced as part of this session.*

MAIN DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- What thoughts and personal responses do you have about the Scripture Readings, about the Meditation, and about the three paintings reproduced here?
- How do these ideas fit with your own experience of faith and of life in the Church?
- What implications do these ideas have for your own life and faith, and for the life of your parish community?

The leader brings the discussion to an end and then invites people to read the Summary and Practical Suggestions that follow.

“ The Risen Christ stands
amongst us at Mass in
all his glory” (T-00550-OL)





"I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS"

The Christian encounter with the Lord

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SUMMARY OF CORE BELIEFS



- Jesus Christ promised to be present in our lives and in the Church for all time.
- Christ is present at Mass in different ways: in the praying community; through his Word; through the ministry of the priest; and above all in the Blessed Sacrament.
- The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- Renew your commitment to attend Mass each Sunday and Holy Day.
- Reflect on the Sunday Scripture readings sometime during the week before.
- Arrive a few minutes early for Mass so you have some time to pray and spiritually prepare.
- Keep Sunday special – by giving time for rest and prayer and family, and avoiding unnecessary work or shopping.
- Learn about the Mass – e.g. by reading the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the YouCat (the Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church), Catholic pamphlets, or online resources.
- Pray for your priest – that he can celebrate the Mass prayerfully and reverently, and that his preaching will be helpful.

FINAL DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- What do you think of these practical suggestions above? Which of them might work best for you?
- What other things could you do, individually or as a community, to deepen your faith in the presence of Christ and the importance of the Eucharist?



"I WILL BE WITH YOU ALWAYS" The Christian encounter with the Lord

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FINAL PRAYER

The leader brings the discussion to an end and invites people to pray together.

Lord,
may this sacrament of new life
warm our hearts with your love
and make us eager for the eternal joy of your kingdom.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Conclude with: Hail Mary... Glory Be... In the name of the Father....



CONCLUDING REMARKS

The leader reminds people about the date, time and place of the next meeting, and encourages people to read at home (i) the two supplements below, to deepen their reflection on today's theme, and (ii) the Scripture Readings from the NEXT SESSION, to help prepare for the coming session.

SUPPLEMENT 1: CATHOLIC TEACHING

Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC] 1324: "The Eucharist is 'the source and summit of the Christian life.' [LG 11]"

Sacramentum Caritatis 2: "In the sacrament of the altar, the Lord meets us, men and women created in God's image and likeness (cf. *Gen* 1:27), and becomes our companion along the way."

CCC 1373: "'Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us,' is present in many ways to his Church: [*Rom* 8:34; cf. *LG* 48] in his word, in his Church's prayer, 'where two or three are gathered in my name,' [*Mt* 18:20] in the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned, [cf. *Mt* 25:31-46] in the sacraments of which he is the author, in the Sacrifice of the Mass, and in the person of the minister. But 'he is present... most especially in the Eucharistic species.' [*SC* 7]"

CCC 1325: "'The Eucharist is the efficacious sign and sublime cause of that communion in the divine life and that unity of the People of God by which the Church is kept in being. It is the culmination both of God's action sanctifying the world in Christ and of the worship men offer to Christ and through him to the Father in the Holy Spirit.' [*Congregation of Rites, instruction, Eucharisticum mysterium*, 6]"



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SUPPLEMENT 2: WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

"If we really understood the Mass, we would die of joy." (Saint Jean Vianney)

"We must not separate our life from the Eucharist. The moment we do so, something shatters." (St Teresa of Calcutta)

"Hear Mass daily; it will prosper the whole day. All your duties will be performed the better for it, and your soul will be stronger to bear its daily cross. The Mass is the most holy act of religion. It is the favourite devotion of the saints." (St Peter Julian Eymard)

"It is easier for the earth to exist without the sun than without the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass!" (St Pio of Pietrelcina)

"The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic worship. Jesus awaits us in this sacrament of love. Let us not refuse the time to go to meet him in adoration." (St John Paul II)



“ Jesus Christ is the Bridge to Heaven. His love on the cross saves us and his loving presence sustains us” (T-00081-OL)





THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST

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GATHERING

Tea and coffee are available, and perhaps some biscuits and cakes, as people arrive.

WELCOME

The leader welcomes people and asks them to introduce themselves briefly.



OPENING PRAYER

The leader invites people to sit in silence for a brief moment: to become aware of their concerns and distractions, to remember that they are in God's presence, and to offer their day to him. People are then invited to make the Sign of the Cross ("In the name of the Father..."), and to pray the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father...").



OPENING DISCUSSION

Reflect on these questions together:

- How are you? How was your week?
- Have you had any thoughts about last week's session? Has it influenced you in any way?
- What's your favourite church building and why?



HOLY SCRIPTURE

The leader asks someone to read these brief passages aloud (continued over the page).

ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS "When Jesus was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognised him; and he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?'" (Lk 24:30-32)

ST PAUL WRITES "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing 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."

(1 Cor 10:16-17)

“Through the power of the Holy Spirit, and the ministry and words of the priest, Jesus Christ becomes present on our altars at Mass” (T-00157A-OL)





THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST

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ST PAUL WRITES "For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."

(1 Cor 11:23-26)

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence for personal reflection on the Scripture Readings.*

MEDITATION



The leader asks someone to read out the Meditation, or for people to read it quietly themselves.

Jesus Christ is present at the Mass in different ways: in the midst of the Christian community, when they gather to pray in his name; through his Word, when the Scriptures are proclaimed; and in the ministry of his priests, who act "in the person of Christ the head". There is one way of being present, however, that is utterly unique and has a significance far beyond all the others: the Real Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

We believe that Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is present in Holy Communion, under the appearances of bread and wine, in what is called the Blessed Sacrament. At every Mass, at the consecration, the bread and wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the miracle of transubstantiation. It's why we teach children not to say "the bread" or "the wine" when speaking about Holy Communion, because something fundamental has changed.

This is not just a sign or a symbol or a memory. We encounter "the whole Christ" - Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity - heart to heart, face to face. He is here.

We believe that the Eucharist is food for our hungry souls; it is healing and forgiveness; it is love and friendship; it is a share in his holiness and a promise of eternal life; it is a communion with the Church which is his body; it is a union with our brothers and sisters spread throughout the world and throughout time.

We don't always feel this or see it with our bodily eyes; but we can believe it, and see it with the eyes of faith. We believe this because of the words and the promises of Jesus. He himself said: "This is my Body...this is my Blood..."; "Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life"; "My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink." We



THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST

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believe this because of the constant teaching of the Church over twenty centuries. And we believe this because of the witness of the saints, who became saints in part because they learned to love Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

When St Claire of Assisi heard that Imperial troops were about to storm her city, she took the Blessed Sacrament to the window of her convent and prayed over the attacking armies. At the last minute, the power of her prayer and the power of the Sacrament miraculously turned them away. When St Margaret Mary Alacoque went to pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament in her convent in France, she had a vision of Jesus standing before her. His Sacred Heart was burning with love for her and for the whole of humanity, wounded by our sins and our lack of love, calling us to know him more, calling us to love him in the Blessed Sacrament.

Most of us, however, don't see him in this way. We need faith. As Jesus said to St Thomas after the Resurrection: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe." And many people have an instinctive feeling for the holiness of our Catholic churches. They are sacred spaces because of the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle. People understand that something happens at the moment of consecration. They instinctively want to worship Christ, now present here at the altar, when the priest holds up the host and the chalice for adoration. They know that they can open their hearts to him in a very personal way, in repentance, trust, love and friendship, because of his loving presence.

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence to reflect on the Meditation, and also to reflect on the three paintings that are reproduced as part of this session.*

MAIN DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- What thoughts and personal responses do you have about the Scripture Readings, about the Meditation, and about the three paintings reproduced here?
- How do these ideas fit with your own experience of faith and of life in the Church?
- What implications do these ideas have for your own life and faith, and for the life of your parish community?

The leader brings the discussion to an end and then invites people to read the Summary and Practical Suggestions that follow.

“ Jesus Christ, our loving
Saviour, is truly present with
us after the consecration,
in all his glory and majesty”
(T-00375-OL)





THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST

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SUMMARY OF CORE BELIEFS



- Jesus Christ is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament: the whole Christ - Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity.
- The bread and wine at Mass are changed into his Body and Blood through the miracle of transubstantiation, so that only the appearances and not the substance of bread and wine remain.
- We can worship Christ as God and Saviour in the Blessed Sacrament, and we can speak to him, heart to heart, as a friend and brother.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- Remember to genuflect as you enter and leave your place at Mass, and be conscious that you are genuflecting to the presence of Christ in the tabernacle.
- If you are able, you can kneel in prayer and adoration before Mass (to worship Christ and prepare for the celebration) and after Mass in thanksgiving.
- Appreciate the many gestures we make during Mass and what they signify: standing, kneeling, sitting; bowing during the Creed and as we approach Holy Communion, etc.
- As far as possible, try to keep a reverent and prayerful silence in church, and avoid unnecessary chatter – in order to help you be more prayerful, and to help those around you to pray.
- Display an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in your home, to remind you of his loving presence wherever you are.

FINAL DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- What do you think of these practical suggestions above? Which of them might work best for you?
- What other things could you do, individually or as a community, to deepen your faith in the Real Presence of Christ and honour his Eucharistic Presence?



THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST

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FINAL PRAYER

The leader brings the discussion to an end and invites people to pray together.

Lord our God,
in this great sacrament
we come into the presence of Jesus Christ, your Son,
born of the Virgin Mary
and crucified for our salvation.
May we who declare our faith
in this fountain of love and mercy
drink from it the water of everlasting life.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Conclude with: Hail Mary... Glory Be... In the name of the Father....



CONCLUDING REMARKS

The leader reminds people about the date, time and place of the next meeting, and encourages people to read at home (i) the two supplements below, to deepen their reflection on today's theme, and (ii) the Scripture Readings from the NEXT SESSION, to help prepare for the coming session.

SUPPLEMENT 1: CATHOLIC TEACHING

CCC 1374: "The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as 'the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend.' [St. Thomas Aquinas, STh III, 73, 3c] In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained.' [Council of Trent (1551): DS 1651]"

CCC 1376: "The Council of Trent summarises the Catholic faith by declaring: '... by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation.' [Council of Trent (1551): DS 1642; cf. Mt 26:26 ff.; Mk 14:22 ff.; Lk 22:19 ff.; 1 Cor 11:24 ff]"



THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE EUCHARIST

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CCC 1378: “The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession.” [Paul VI, MF 56]”

CCC 1325: “The Eucharist is the efficacious sign and sublime cause of that communion in the divine life and that unity of the People of God by which the Church is kept in being. It is the culmination both of God’s action sanctifying the world in Christ and of the worship men offer to Christ and through him to the Father in the Holy Spirit.” [Congregation of Rites, *instruction, Eucharisticum mysterium*, 6]”

SUPPLEMENT 2: WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

“You left us yourself in the Sacrament of the Altar, and you opened wide your mercy to us. There is no misery that could exhaust You. You have called us all to this fountain of love, to this spring of God’s compassion.” (St Faustina)

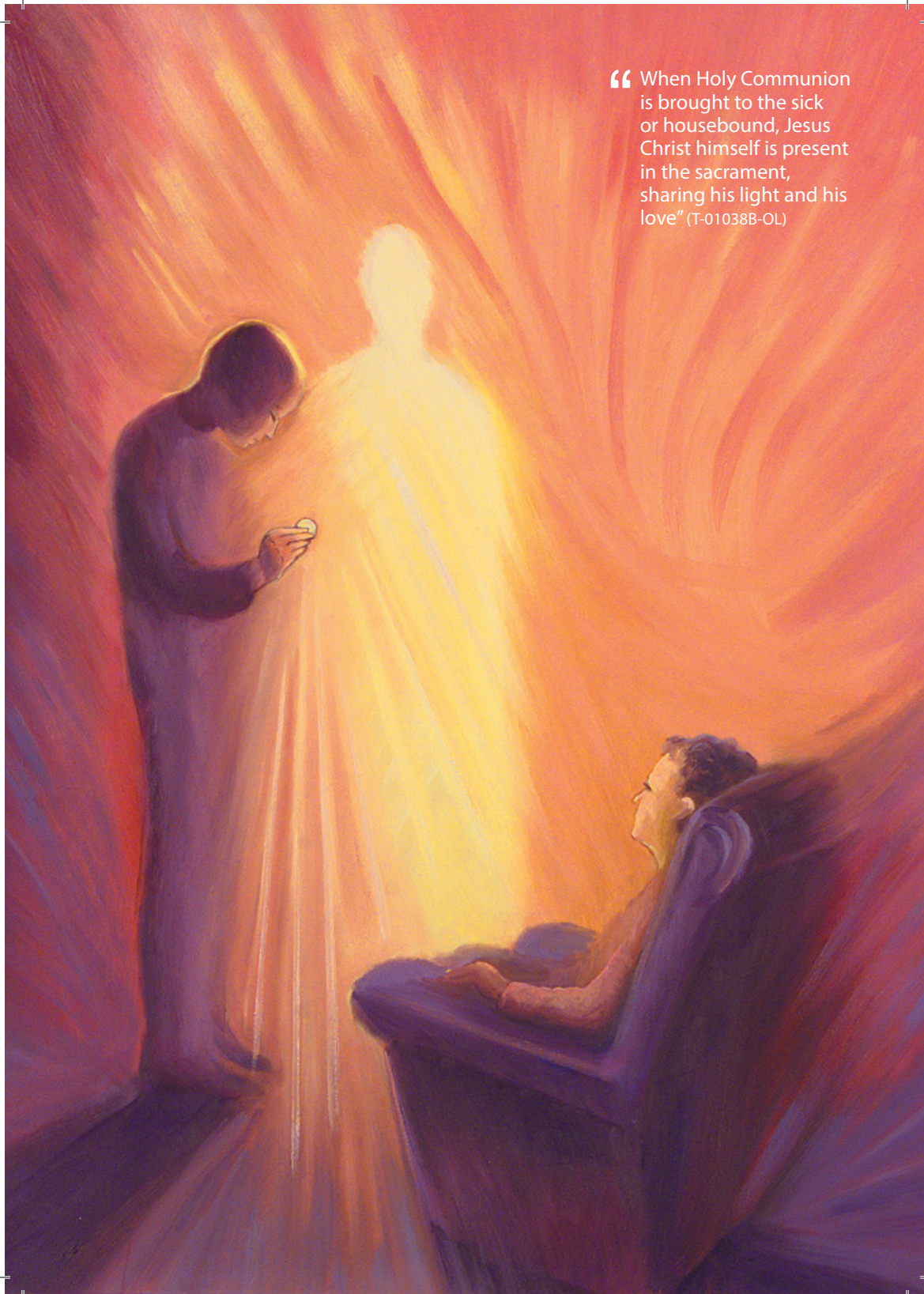
“If I can give you any advice, I beg you to get closer to the Eucharist and to Jesus... We must pray to Jesus to give us that tenderness of the Eucharist.” (St Teresa of Calcutta)

“Lord Jesus Christ, pierce my soul with your love so that I may always long for you alone, who are the bread of angels and the fulfilment of the soul’s deepest desires. May my heart always hunger for you, so that my soul may be filled with the sweetness of your presence.” (Saint Bonaventure)

“We adore you, most holy Lord Jesus Christ, here, and in all your churches throughout all the world; and we bless you, because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.” (St Francis of Assisi)

“Many people nowadays say, ‘I wish I could see his shape, his appearance, his clothes, his sandals.’ Only look! You see him! You touch him! You eat him!” (St John Chrysostom)

“ When Holy Communion is brought to the sick or housebound, Jesus Christ himself is present in the sacrament, sharing his light and his love” (T-01038B-OL)







THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

32

GATHERING

Tea and coffee are available, and perhaps some biscuits and cakes, as people arrive.

WELCOME

The leader welcomes people and asks them to introduce themselves briefly.



OPENING PRAYER

The leader invites people to sit in silence for a brief moment: to become aware of their concerns and distractions, to remember that they are in God's presence, and to offer their day to him. People are then invited to make the Sign of the Cross ("In the name of the Father..."), and to pray the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father...").

OPENING DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- How are you? How was your week?
- Have you had any thoughts about last week's session? Has it influence you in any way?
- What's your favourite part of the Mass and why?
- What is the most beautiful Mass you have been to and what made it so special?



HOLY SCRIPTURE

The leader asks someone to read these brief passages aloud (continued over the page).

AT THE LAST SUPPER "Then Jesus took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'"

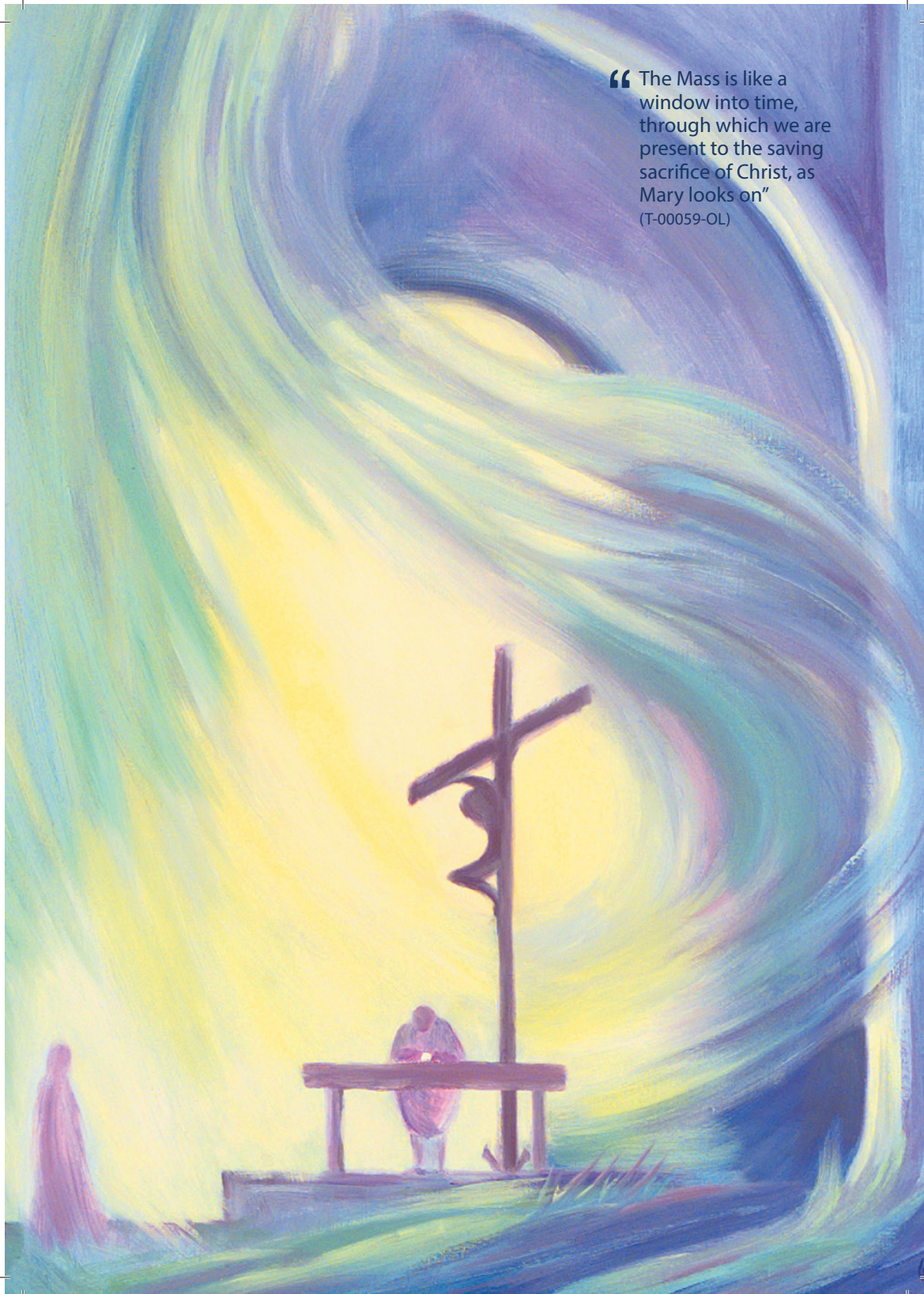
(Lk 22:19-20)

FROM THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS "But he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues for ever. Consequently he is able for all time to save those who approach God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them." (Heb 7:24-25)

FROM THE LETTER TO THE HEBREWS "For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified."

(Heb 10:14)

“ The Mass is like a window into time, through which we are present to the saving sacrifice of Christ, as Mary looks on”
(T-00059-OL)





THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

34



ST PETER WRITES “Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God’s sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in scripture: ‘See, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame’” (1 Pet 2:4-6)

ST PAUL WRITES “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Rom 12:1-2)

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence for personal reflection on the Scripture Readings.*

MEDITATION



The leader asks someone to read out the Meditation, or for people to read it quietly themselves.

When Pope Benedict began his pontificate, he adopted the tradition of putting a fairly large crucifix in the centre of the altar when celebrating Mass. This annoyed a lot of people because it blocked their view of the Pope. They had come all this way to Rome and they couldn't see him...

And this was the very point of doing it! Not to annoy people, but to remind them that the love of Jesus Christ on the cross is the centre of our Christian faith, and the centre of the Mass. We need to keep our focus constantly on him.

Catholic tradition speaks about “the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.” The Eucharist is more than a community meeting, more than a Liturgy of the Word, more than a communion service. It is also a sacrifice.

But if Jesus died on the cross, and “by a single offering has perfected for all time those who are sanctified” (Heb 10:14), how can there be another sacrifice? Does it mean his death on the cross was insufficient? Are we still waiting for our salvation to be accomplished?

The Church teaches that the Mass is a true and proper sacrifice, not because it is independent of the cross, but because it re-presents the very sacrifice that Christ offered on the cross, and applies its power. We hear the language of sacrifice in the words of consecration that Jesus spoke at the Last Supper. He said, “This is my body



THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

35

which is given for you”, and “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.” The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice.

Jesus cannot die again, but we can be brought sacramentally into the presence of his saving death on the cross. We are united with the offering of Jesus on the cross and therefore with his eternal offering. The Eucharist is a memorial in the most profound sense because it makes a past event present for us today, and allows its effects to touch us today. This has so many implications.

It means we are brought close to the merciful love of Christ on the cross. We could not be there two thousand years ago but we can be there through the Mass. This should fill us with awe and wonder. The Mass is the holiest place on earth. There is no distance between us and our loving Saviour.

It means that even though salvation has been won for us, once and for all, on the cross, the effects of this salvation – the benefits, the graces, the fruits - are shared with us today through the Mass. The new covenant is renewed in an “un-bloody manner”. The sacrifice of the Eucharist is an effective sacrifice, it allows our redemption to be accomplished, and brings graces for the living and the dead. It is a “sacrifice of propitiation” because it brings forgiveness for our daily sins.

It means that we can offer our lives, with Christ, to the Father through the Holy Spirit. My life can become part of his offering on the cross, and in this way my life can become a life-giving sacrifice of love.

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence to reflect on the Meditation, and also to reflect on the three paintings that are reproduced as part of this session.*

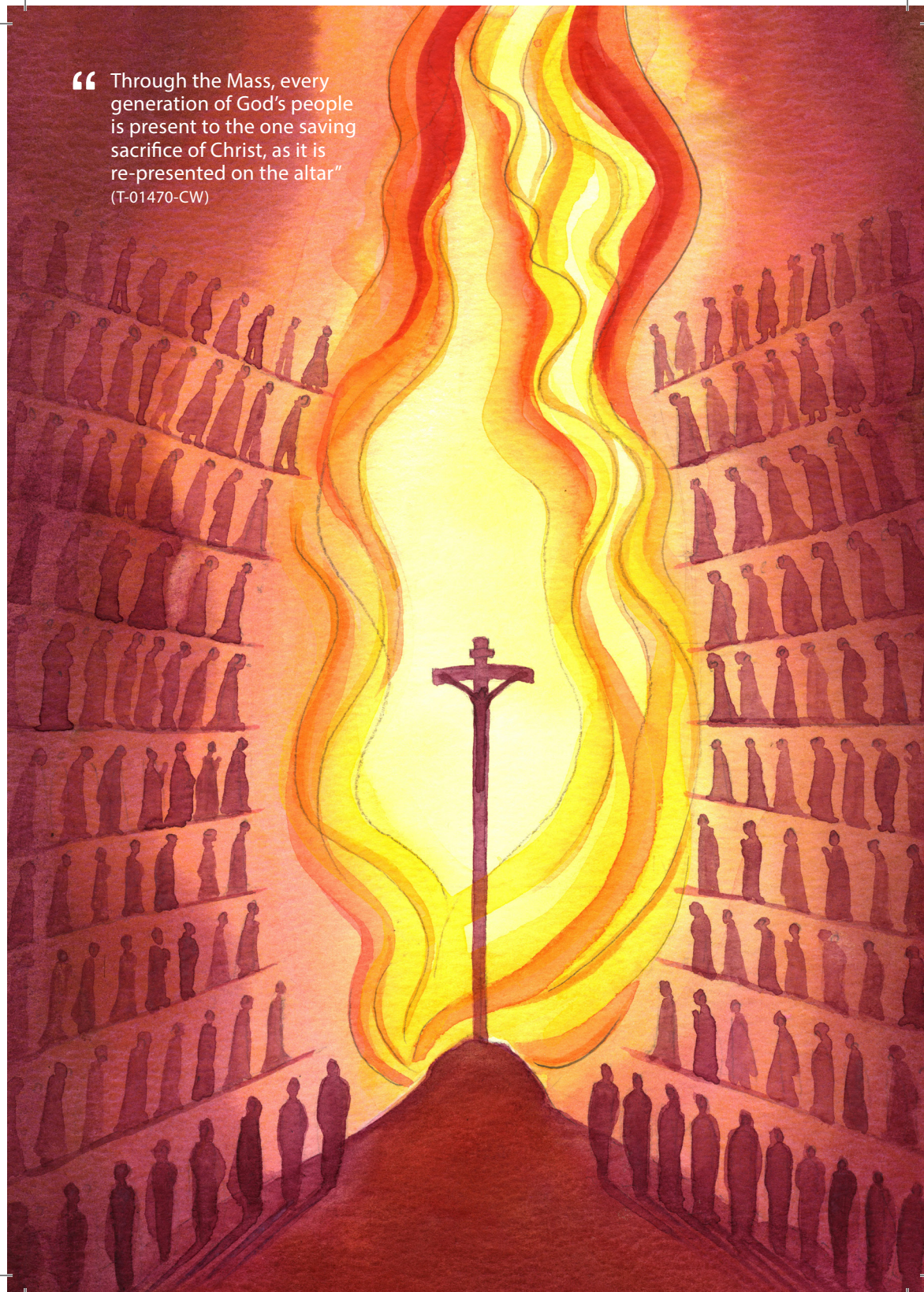
MAIN DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- What thoughts and personal responses do you have about the Scripture Readings, about the Meditation, and about the three paintings reproduced here?
- How do these ideas fit with your own experience of faith and of life in the Church?
- What implications do these ideas have for your own life and faith, and for the life of your parish community?

“Through the Mass, every generation of God’s people is present to the one saving sacrifice of Christ, as it is re-presented on the altar”
(T-01470-CW)





THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

37

The leader brings the discussion to an end and then invites people to read the Summary and Practical Suggestions below.

SUMMARY OF CORE BELIEFS



- The Mass is a sacrifice because it re-presents the sacrifice of the cross for us and applies its power.
- Through the Sacrifice of the Mass, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we offer our lives to the Father with Christ, united with him in his death and resurrection.
- The Mass is the most powerful prayer of thanksgiving and intercession; it brings great graces into the Church and into our lives; it brings forgiveness for our daily sins and purification for the faithful departed.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- Make a “morning offering” when you get up each day (there are different versions of this short prayer – you can look online...) Reflect on the Sunday Scripture readings sometime during the week before.
- “Offer up” your daily sufferings and struggles to God and consciously unite them with the Sacrifice of the Mass.
- Bring a personal intention to each Mass so that you are consciously praying for a particular need. You can “offer your communion” for this intention.
- If you have a very special intention, or if someone has died, ask the priest (or arrange this through the parish office) to offer Mass for this intention.
- Hang a crucifix in your home to remind you of Christ’s loving sacrifice.
- Try to follow the prayers of the Mass with more attention and devotion, entering into the words and intentions and making them your own, perhaps using a Sunday Missal or a Catholic App.



THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

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FINAL DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- What do you think of these practical suggestions above? Which of them might work best for you?
- What other things could you do, individually or as a community, to deepen your faith in the Sacrifice of the Mass and make it more fruitful in your spiritual lives?

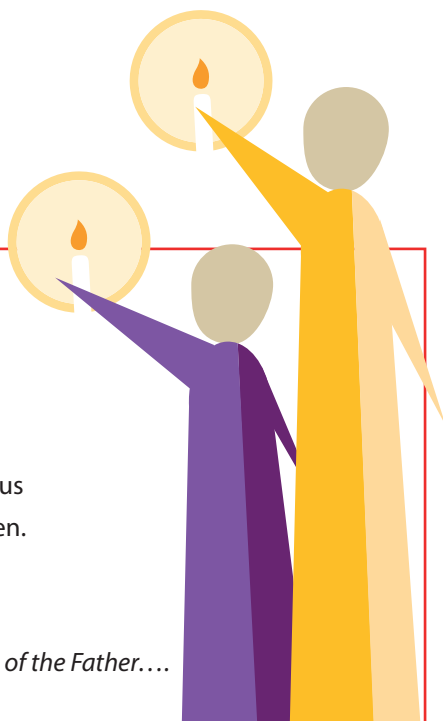
FINAL PRAYER

The leader brings the discussion to an end and invites people to pray together.

Lord our God,
teach us to cherish in our hearts
the paschal mystery of your Son
by which you redeemed the world.
Watch over the gifts of grace your love has given us
and bring them to fulfilment in the glory of heaven.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Conclude with: Hail Mary... Glory Be... In the name of the Father...



CONCLUDING REMARKS

The leader reminds people about the date, time and place of the next meeting, and encourages people to read at home (i) the two supplements below, to deepen their reflection on today's theme, and (ii) the Scripture Readings from the NEXT SESSION, to help prepare for the coming session.



THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

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SUPPLEMENT 1: CATHOLIC TEACHING

CCC 1323: "At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until he should come again, and so to entrust to his beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a Paschal banquet 'in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.'" [SC 47]"

CCC 1364: "In the New Testament, the memorial takes on new meaning. When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ's Passover, and it is made present: the sacrifice Christ offered once for all on the cross remains ever present. [Cf. Heb 7:25-27] 'As often as the sacrifice of the cross by which 'Christ our Pasch has been sacrificed' is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried out.' [LG 3; cf. 1 Cor 5:7]"

CCC 1366: "The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it re-presents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its memorial and because it applies its fruit."

CCC 1367: "The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice."

CCC 1368: "The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. The Church which is the body of Christ participates in the offering of her head. With him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She unites herself to his intercession with the Father for all men... Christ's sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering."

CCC 1371: "The Eucharistic sacrifice is also offered for the faithful departed who 'have died in Christ but are not yet wholly purified,' [Council of Trent (1562) DS 1743] so that they may be able to enter into the light and peace of Christ."

SUPPLEMENT 2: WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

"Apart from the cross, there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven."
(St. Rose of Lima)

"Trust all things to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to Mary, Help of Christians, and you will see what miracles are." (St John Bosco)

"All the good works in the world are not equal to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass because they are the works of men; but the Mass is the work of God. Martyrdom is nothing in comparison for it is but the sacrifice of man to God; but the Mass is the sacrifice of God for man." (St John Vianney)

"The Eucharist is a fire which inflames us." (St John Damascene)



“ At Mass we unite ourselves with Christ and with each other in his offering to the Father. This perfect offering of praise and thanksgiving brings forgiveness and strength” (T-00856-OL)

SACRED BANQUET, SPIRITUAL FOOD

The graces given in Holy Communion





SACRED BANQUET, SPIRITUAL FOOD: The graces given in Holy Communion

42

GATHERING

Tea and coffee are available, and perhaps some biscuits and cakes, as people arrive.

WELCOME

The leader welcomes people and asks them to introduce themselves briefly.



OPENING PRAYER

The leader invites people to sit in silence for a brief moment: to become aware of their concerns and distractions, to remember that they are in God's presence, and to offer their day to him. People are then invited to make the Sign of the Cross ("In the name of the Father..."), and to pray the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father...").

OPENING DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- How are you? How was your week?
- Have you had any thoughts about last week's session? Has it influenced you in any way?
- What are your memories of preparing for your First Holy Communion (as a child or as an adult)? What did you learn? What was the celebration like?

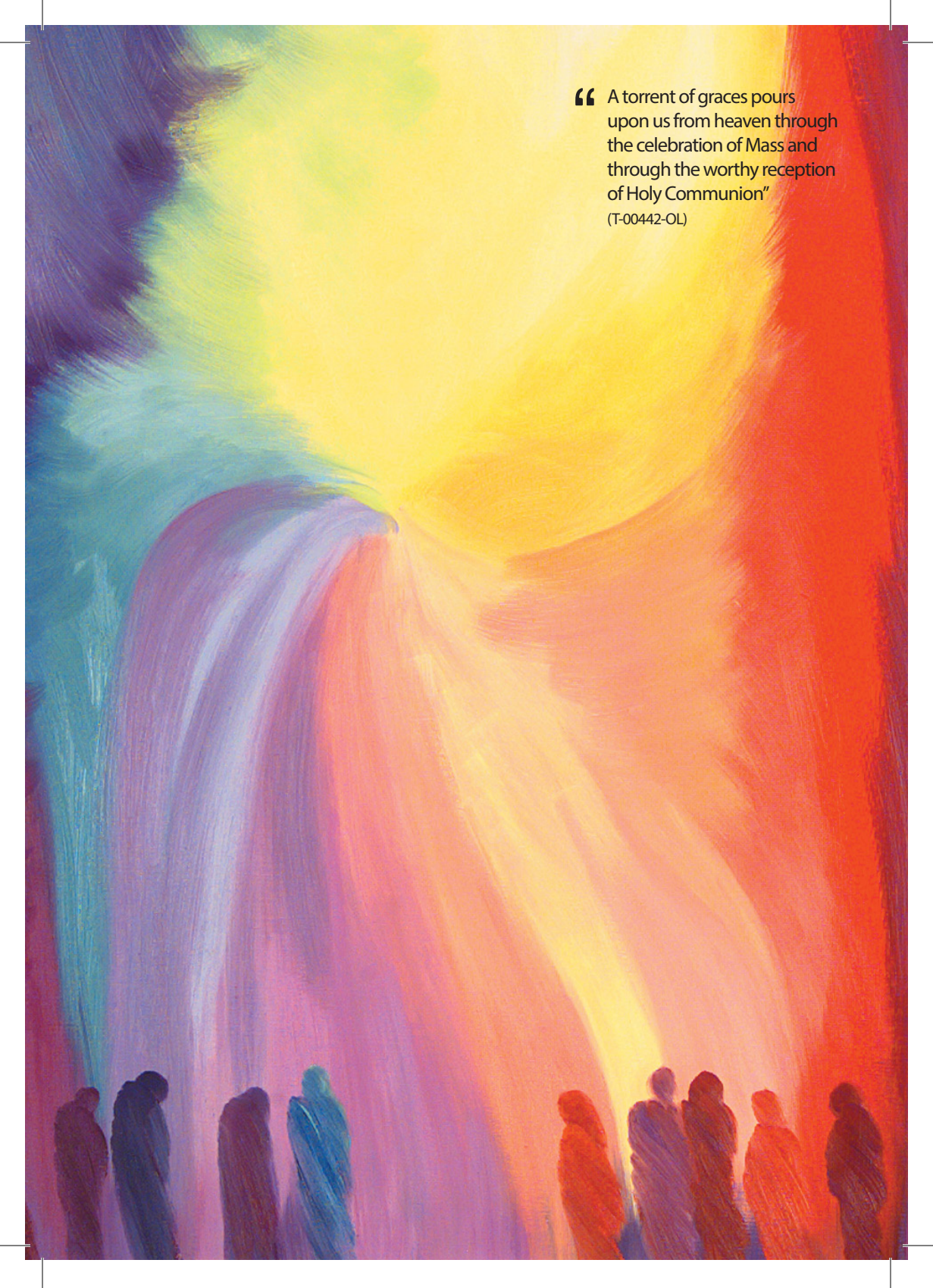


HOLY SCRIPTURE

The leader asks someone to read these brief passages aloud (continued over the page).

"The Samaritan woman said to Jesus, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.'" (John 4:9-10)

"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty... I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh... Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them.'" (John 6:35, 51, 54-56)

An abstract painting featuring a large, vibrant waterfall of rainbow colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) cascading down. At the bottom of the painting, there are silhouettes of several people standing and looking up at the waterfall. The background is a mix of warm and cool colors, creating a sense of depth and light.

“ A torrent of graces pours
upon us from heaven through
the celebration of Mass and
through the worthy reception
of Holy Communion”
(T-00442-OL)



SACRED BANQUET, SPIRITUAL FOOD: The graces given in Holy Communion

44



ST PAUL WRITES "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgement against themselves."

(1 Cor 11:27-29)

JESUS SAYS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me."

(Rev 3:20)

ST JOHN WRITES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION "And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" (Rev 19:9)

PAUSE for a couple of minutes of silence for personal reflection on the Scripture Readings.

MEDITATION



The leader asks someone to read out the Meditation, or for people to read it quietly themselves.

There is a deep spiritual hunger within the heart of every human being. We are like the Samaritan woman seeking water at Jacob's well without understanding her deepest thirst. St Augustine expressed this so clearly when he wrote: "Almighty God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

Jesus said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." He fulfils this promise by giving us his Body and Blood in the Eucharist as spiritual food and drink when we receive Holy Communion. The Eucharist is a sacred banquet which brings us into communion, not just with Christ but, with the whole Church of heaven, purgatory and earth.

The Catechism teaches that "the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself" is contained in the blessed Eucharist. And St Thomas Aquinas writes that the Eucharist is "the perfection of the spiritual life". These are powerful phrases.

How often we look in the wrong places for happiness and meaning. Even in the spiritual life, we are often restless and dissatisfied, looking for the next novelty or fix. But in reality, everything we need for our lives as Christians - every gift, every blessing, every virtue - is given to us in Holy Communion. This is the Bread of Life, the whole spiritual



SACRED BANQUET, SPIRITUAL FOOD: The graces given in Holy Communion

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good of the Church and of every Christian. Nothing is lacking. We just need to go deeper and understand the graces he is giving us, and be more open to them, so they can take effect in our lives.

We are encouraged to receive Holy Communion when we are at Mass, because the benefits are so great. We deepen our friendship and intimacy with Jesus Christ. The graces of baptism are renewed and increased. Our venial sins are forgiven. Our ability to love is strengthened. And we are given a foretaste of heaven itself. The Eucharist, as St Ignatius of Antioch wrote, “provides the medicine of immortality, the antidote for death, and the food that makes us live forever in Jesus Christ”.

No-one is truly worthy to meet Christ in this way. But all of us need to examine our conscience and prepare ourselves for so great an encounter. I need to live my life during the week in a way that is coherent with the Christian faith I profess each Sunday. I need to be continually open to conversion.

If there are any grave sins on my conscience then I need to go to Confession and receive absolution before coming to receive Holy Communion. This is to help me be honest with the Lord, and to know his mercy and forgiveness in Confession, so I can meet him with an open heart and a pure conscience in Communion. He wants to welcome me in both sacraments, so that I can find true and lasting peace, instead of remaining unreconciled with him and with the Church. He calls me to Confession because he loves me and he wants to give me his peace.

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence to reflect on the Meditation, and also to reflect on the three paintings that are reproduced as part of this session.*

MAIN DISCUSSION

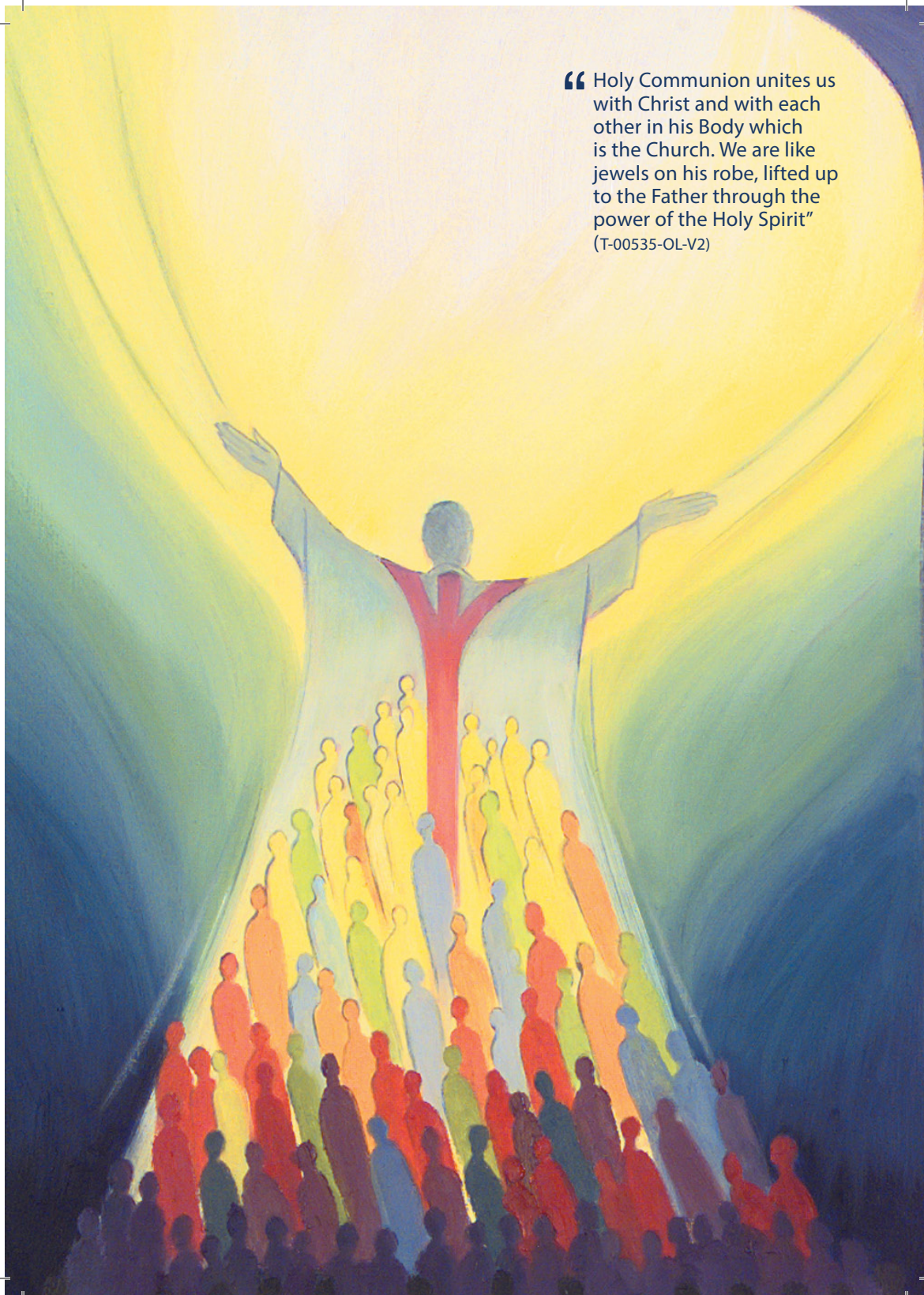


Reflect on these questions together:

- What thoughts and personal responses do you have about the Scripture Readings, about the Meditation, and about the three paintings reproduced here?
- How do these ideas fit with your own experience of faith and of life in the Church?
- What implications do these ideas have for your own life and faith, and for the life of your parish community?

The leader brings the discussion to an end and then invites people to read the Summary and Practical Suggestions that follow.

“ Holy Communion unites us with Christ and with each other in his Body which is the Church. We are like jewels on his robe, lifted up to the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit”
(T-00535-OL-V2)





SACRED BANQUET, SPIRITUAL FOOD: The graces given in Holy Communion

47

SUMMARY OF CORE BELIEFS



- The Eucharist is the perfection of the spiritual life and Holy Communion brings us all the graces we need at this moment.
- Holy Communion brings forgiveness, intimacy with Christ, a growth in charity, deeper unity with all members of the Church, and a foretaste of heaven.
- We can prepare to receive Holy Communion worthily through prayer, repentance, and if necessary through making a good confession.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- Remember to keep the Eucharistic fast for one hour before Holy Communion.
- Go to Confession, especially if you have any serious sins on your conscience, so that your heart can be open to receiving Christ in Holy Communion.
- Pray in thanksgiving for a few minutes after Mass, when others have left, and speak to the Lord about your needs and intentions.
- Try going to a weekday Mass, perhaps once a week, as an extra way of showing your love for the Lord and asking for his help.
- Bring a book of prayers to church that you can use before and after Mass in your personal devotion.
- Memorise some of the Eucharistic prayers and hymns from the Catholic tradition, e.g. Anima Christi, O Sacred Banquet, etc (see the section "Prayers for Personal Devotion" at the end of this booklet for some ideas).

FINAL DISCUSSION



Reflect on these questions together:

- What do you think of these practical suggestions above? Which of them might work best for you?
- What other things could you do, individually or as a community, to deepen your appreciation for the gift of Holy Communion



SACRED BANQUET, SPIRITUAL FOOD: The graces given in Holy Communion

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FINAL PRAYER

The leader brings the discussion to an end and invites people to pray together.

Lord our God,
you have given us the true bread from heaven.
In the strength of this food
may we live always by your life
and rise in glory on the last day.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Conclude with: Hail Mary... Glory Be... In the name of the Father...



CONCLUDING REMARKS

The leader reminds people about the date, time and place of the next meeting, and encourages people to read at home (i) the two supplements below, to deepen their reflection on today's theme, and (ii) the Scripture Readings from the NEXT SESSION, to help prepare for the coming session.

SUPPLEMENT 1: CATHOLIC TEACHING

CCC 1415: "Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance."

CCC 1416: "Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ."

CCC 1417: "The Church warmly recommends that the faithful receive Holy Communion when they participate in the celebration of the Eucharist; she obliges them to do so at least once a year."

CCC 1419: "Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints."



SACRED BANQUET, SPIRITUAL FOOD: The graces given in Holy Communion

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CCC 1324: "In the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch." [PO 5]"

CCC 1391: "The principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus. Indeed, the Lord said: 'He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.' [Jn 6:56]"

SUPPLEMENT 2: WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

"Not to go to Communion is like someone dying of thirst beside a spring." (St John Vianney)

"Our sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ has no other purpose than to transform us into that which we receive." (Pope St Leo the Great)

"Go often to Holy Communion. Go very often! This is your one remedy." (StThérèse of Lisieux)

"All the good that is in me is due to Holy Communion. I owe everything to it. I feel this holy fire has transformed me completely." (St Faustina)

"When you have received him, stir up your heart to do him homage; speak to him about your spiritual life, gazing upon him in your soul where he is present for your happiness; welcome him as warmly as possible, and behave outwardly in such a way that your actions may give proof to all of his Presence." (St Francis de Sales)

"With all the strength of my soul I urge you young people to approach the Communion table as often as you can. Feed on this bread of angels whence you will draw all the energy you need to fight inner battles. Because true happiness, dear friends, does not consist in the pleasures of the world or in earthly things, but in peace of conscience, which we have only if we are pure in heart and mind." (Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati)

“ Holy Communion brings
us friendship and intimacy
with our Saviour, Jesus
Christ. We can rest in his
loving embrace”
(T-06226B-CW)







ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

52

GATHERING

Tea and coffee are available, and perhaps some biscuits and cakes, as people arrive.

WELCOME

The leader welcomes people and asks them to introduce themselves briefly.



OPENING PRAYER

The leader invites people to sit in silence for a brief moment: to become aware of their concerns and distractions, to remember that they are in God's presence, and to offer their day to him. People are then invited to make the Sign of the Cross ("In the name of the Father..."), and to pray the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father...").



OPENING DISCUSSION

Reflect on these questions together:

- How are you? How was your week?
- Have you had any thoughts about last week's session? Has it influenced you in any way?
- What is your favourite way of praying? What is your favourite place to pray?

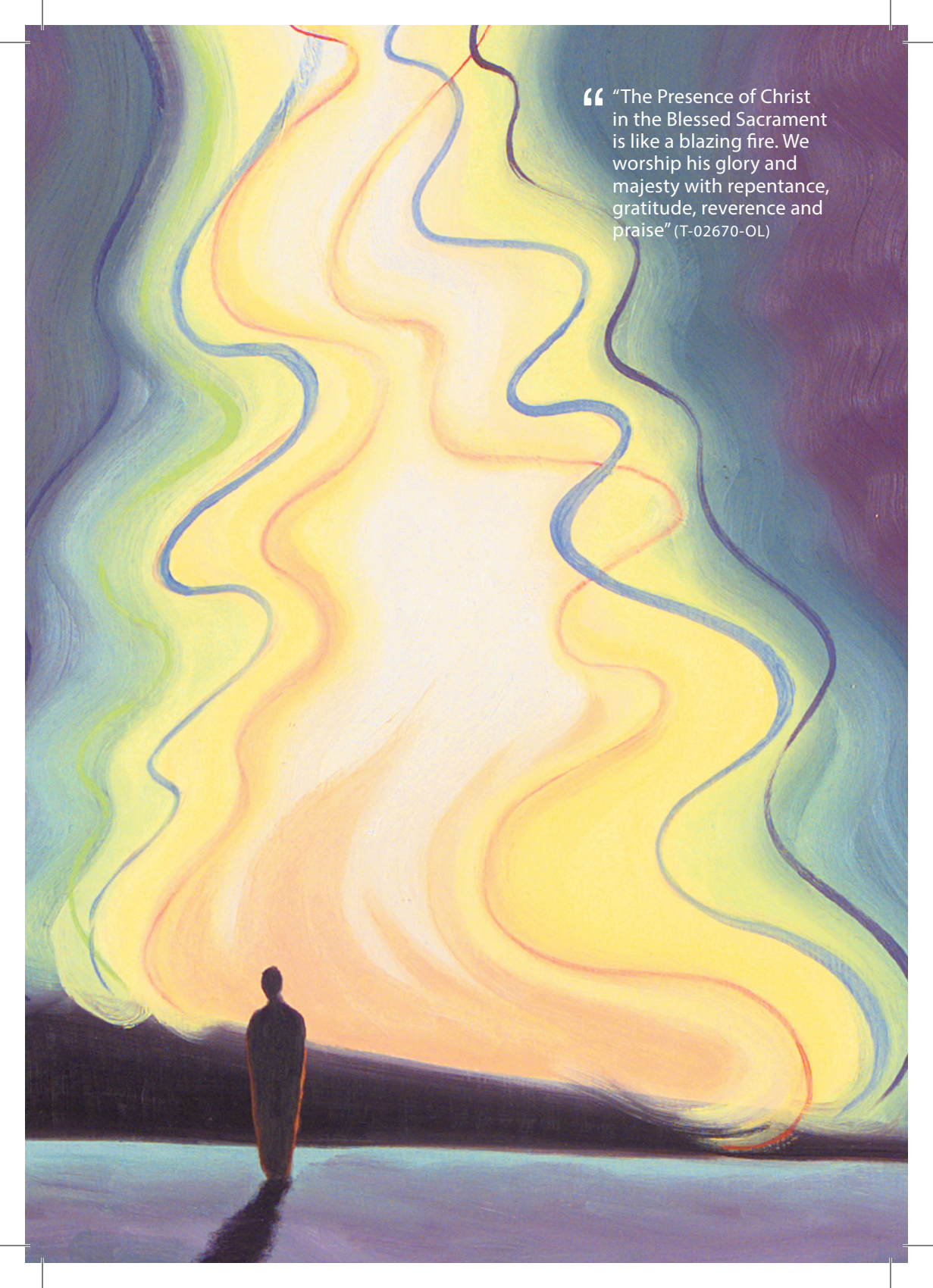


HOLY SCRIPTURE

The leader asks someone to read these brief passages aloud (continued over the page).

"The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed... God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.' Then he said, 'Come no closer! Remove the sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.'" (Ex 3:2,4-5)

"Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white... Suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!'" (Mt 17:1-2, 5)

An abstract painting featuring a large, vibrant, wavy flame-like shape in the center, composed of yellow, orange, and green hues. The flame is set against a dark, textured background of deep blue and purple. In the foreground, a small, dark silhouette of a person stands on a reflective surface, looking up at the flame. The overall composition is vertical and emphasizes a sense of awe and spiritual presence.

“The Presence of Christ
in the Blessed Sacrament
is like a blazing fire. We
worship his glory and
majesty with repentance,
gratitude, reverence and
praise” (T-02670-OL)



ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

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ST JOHN WRITES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION “And in the midst of the lampstands I saw one like the Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash across his chest. His head and his hair were white as white wool, white as snow; his eyes were like a flame of fire, his feet were like burnished bronze, refined as in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of many waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and from his mouth came a sharp, two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining with full force.”

(Rev 1:13-16)

ST JOHN WRITES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION “Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, singing, ‘To the one seated on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honour and glory and might for ever and ever!’ And the four living creatures said, ‘Amen!’ And the elders fell down and worshipped.”

(Rev 5:13-14)

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence for personal reflection on the Scripture Readings.*

MEDITATION



The leader asks someone to read out the Meditation, or for people to read it quietly themselves.

If you enter a Catholic church, you will nearly always spot a sanctuary lamp burning near the tabernacle, which is where the communion hosts are reserved after Mass. They are kept in this way for two reasons: first, so that Holy Communion can be taken to the sick and housebound when necessary; and second, so we can continue to worship Christ in the Holy Eucharist.

Jesus Christ remains present here in the communion hosts, in what we call the Blessed Sacrament. This is not just a metaphor or a symbol. He is truly present – Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity – in all his power and glory and majesty. So if a church appears to be empty, we know that we are never alone.

Whenever we come near to the tabernacle, even if the Blessed Sacrament is not exposed, we come into his hidden but powerful presence; heaven is laid open before us; and we can adore him and share our lives with him in a most intimate and profound way. We can speak to him, heart to heart. It is like Moses meeting the Lord in the burning bush, or the disciples walking up the mountain with Christ at the time of his Transfiguration.

This doesn't detract from the importance of the Mass, or the significance of the Blessed Sacrament as spiritual food – it simply helps us to appreciate his Eucharistic presence even further. As St Augustine wrote: “No one eats that flesh without first adoring it.”



ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

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This is such a consolation, knowing that he is with us in this way. When we go to Mass on Sundays, it makes us want to be more reverent - from the moment we enter the church to the moment we leave. We want to be more and more conscious of his loving presence. We genuflect to him as we enter and leave our places. We pray to him as we prepare for Mass and after it has ended. We remember that we are in the Court of Heaven, in the presence of our King, in the company of this visible community, and with the hidden presence of all the angels and saints.

This comes into special focus when we have Eucharistic Adoration ("Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament") – when the large host is taken from the tabernacle, put in the monstrance, and placed on the altar for our worship. Christ is not "more present" in this way, but he is in a way "more visible", and given more public honour.

As we gaze at his Sacred Body in the host we become more conscious of his holy Presence, more attentive, more grateful. And because we are worshipping him as a community, in a public liturgy, our prayer and worship has more significance. We adore Christ as a community, in the name of the Church, bringing the praise and sorrow and intercession of the whole Church to him, together with the needs of the whole world. And we unite ourselves with Christ, through the Holy Spirit, in his praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

If the period of Adoration can conclude with Benediction, when the priest or deacon blesses the congregation with the Sacred Host, then this is a fitting climax to the liturgy.

There are many beautiful traditions surrounding our worship of the Holy Eucharist. Public processions with the Blessed Sacrament allow our Eucharistic faith to become a witness to others, which strengthens our own faith and gives them an opportunity to encounter Christ. Longer periods of Exposition such as the 40 Hours Devotion and Eucharistic retreats encourage a community to deepen their love for the Eucharist. And some parishes and oratories have Perpetual Adoration, with a rota of worshippers, so that the praise and thanksgiving becomes unceasing.

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence to reflect on the Meditation, and also to reflect on the three paintings that are reproduced as part of this session.*

“ Christ our loving Saviour
and High Priest stands
before us in all his
beauty and majesty
when the Blessed
Sacrament is exposed”
(T-00054-OL)





MAIN DISCUSSION

Reflect on these questions together:

- What thoughts and personal responses do you have about the Scripture Readings, about the Meditation, and about the three paintings reproduced here?
- How do these ideas fit with your own experience of faith and of life in the Church?
- What implications do these ideas have for your own life and faith, and for the life of your parish community?

The leader brings the discussion to an end and then invites people to read the Summary and Practical Suggestions on the following page.

SUMMARY OF CORE BELIEFS



- Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is present in the consecrated hosts that are reserved outside Mass.
- We can worship his Eucharistic presence and draw close to him whenever we enter a Catholic church and pray before the tabernacle.
- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Benediction, and Eucharistic processions are powerful ways of adoring Christ and expressing our faith in him.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- Get into the habit of making “a visit” to the Catholic church near home or work or college, and having a few minutes to pray and adore the Lord before the tabernacle. Reflect on the Sunday Scripture readings sometime during the week before.
- Find somewhere you can go to Exposition and Benediction, even if it means having to travel outside your parish. Keep Sunday special – by giving time for rest and prayer and family, and avoiding unnecessary work or shopping.
- Make a mini-pilgrimage with family or friends to a Eucharistic shrine in the Diocese, e.g. to Tyburn Convent (where the sisters have Perpetual Adoration), or to Westminster Cathedral (to the Blessed Sacrament Chapel).
- Try to take part in a local Eucharistic procession on the Feast of Corpus Christi.



ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

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FINAL DISCUSSION

Reflect on these questions together:

- What do you think of these practical suggestions above? Which of them might work best for you?
- What other things could you do, individually or as a community, to deepen your love for the Blessed Sacrament and help the parish put Eucharistic worship at the centre of its life?

FINAL PRAYER

The leader brings the discussion to an end and invites people to pray together.

Lord our God,
may we always give due honour
to the sacramental presence of the Lamb
who was slain for us.
May our faith be rewarded
by the vision of his glory,
who lives and reigns forever and ever.

R. Amen.

Conclude with: Hail Mary...

Glory Be...

In the name of the Father....



CONCLUDING REMARKS

The leader reminds people about the date, time and place of the next meeting, and encourages people to read at home (i) the two supplements below, to deepen their reflection on today's theme, and (ii) the Scripture Readings from the NEXT SESSION, to help prepare for the coming session.



SUPPLEMENT 1: CATHOLIC TEACHING

CCC 1378: “Worship of the Eucharist. In the liturgy of the Mass we express our faith in the real presence of Christ under the species of bread and wine by, among other ways, genuflecting or bowing deeply as a sign of adoration of the Lord. ‘The Catholic Church has always offered and still offers to the sacrament of the Eucharist the cult of adoration, not only during Mass, but also outside of it, reserving the consecrated hosts with the utmost care, exposing them to the solemn veneration of the faithful, and carrying them in procession.’ [Paul VI, *MF 56*]”

CCC 1380: “In his Eucharistic presence, he remains mysteriously in our midst as the one who loved us and gave himself up for us, [Cf. Gal 2:20] and he remains under signs that express and communicate this love: ‘The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic worship. Jesus awaits us in this sacrament of love. Let us not refuse the time to go to meet him in adoration, in contemplation full of faith, and open to making amends for the serious offences and crimes of the world. Let our adoration never cease. [John Paul II, *Dominicae cenae*, 3]”

Sacramentum Caritatis 66: “The act of adoration outside Mass prolongs and intensifies all that takes place during the liturgical celebration itself. Indeed, ‘only in adoration can a profound and genuine reception mature. And it is precisely this personal encounter with the Lord that then strengthens the social mission contained in the Eucharist, which seeks to break down not only the walls that separate the Lord and ourselves, but also and especially the walls that separate us from one another.’” (*Pope Benedict*)

SUPPLEMENT 2: WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS (and from Tolkien!)

“Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament ... There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves upon earth.” (J.R.R. Tolkien)

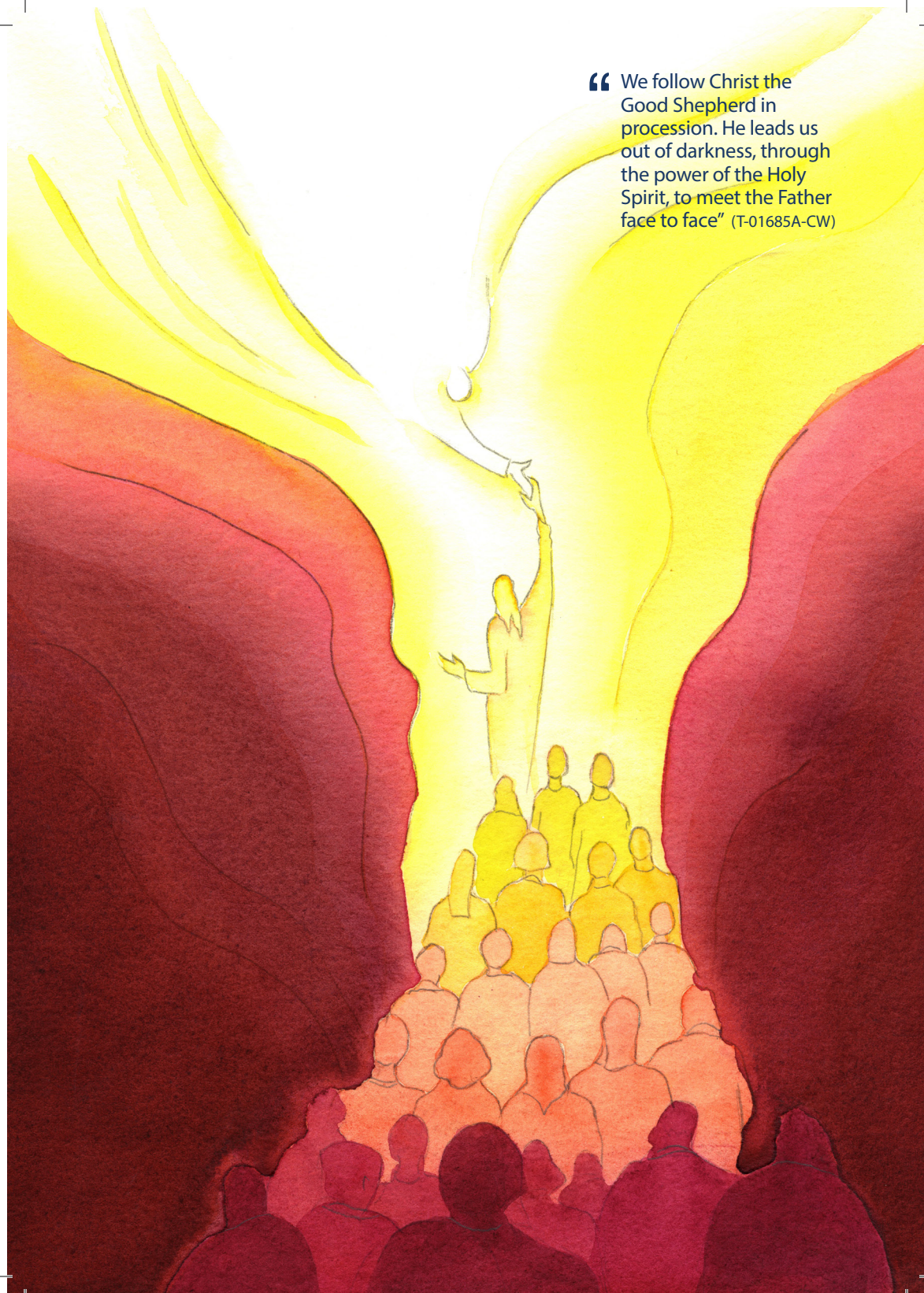
“Through adoration, the Christian mysteriously contributes to the radical transformation of the world and to the sowing of the Gospel. Anyone who prays to the Saviour draws the whole world with him and raises it to God.” (St John Paul II)

“Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the Living Heart of each of our parishes.” (Blessed Paul VI)

“Do not think that Jesus Christ is forgetful of you, since he has left you, as the greatest memorial and pledge of his love, himself in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.” (St Alphonsus Liguori)

“When the Sisters are exhausted, up to their eyes in work; when all seems to go awry, they spend an hour in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. This practice has never failed to bear fruit: they experience peace and strength.” (St Teresa of Calcutta)

“ We follow Christ the Good Shepherd in procession. He leads us out of darkness, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to meet the Father face to face” (T-01685A-CW)



“LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU”
The implications of the Mass for service and mission





"LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU": The implications of the Mass for service and mission

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GATHERING

Tea and coffee are available, and perhaps some biscuits and cakes, as people arrive.

WELCOME

The leader welcomes people and asks them to introduce themselves briefly.



OPENING PRAYER

The leader invites people to sit in silence for a brief moment: to become aware of their concerns and distractions, to remember that they are in God's presence, and to offer their day to him. People are then invited to make the Sign of the Cross ("In the name of the Father..."), and to pray the Lord's Prayer ("Our Father...").



OPENING DISCUSSION

Reflect on these questions together:

- How are you? How was your week?
- Have you had any thoughts about last week's session? Has it influenced you in any way?
- What are the main social problems and social needs in the area around your home and parish?



HOLY SCRIPTURE

The leader asks someone to read these brief passages aloud (continued over the page).

"Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him."

(Jn 13:3-5)

JESUS SAID "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you."

(Jn 15:12-14)



“The people we carry in our hearts can be touched and transformed by our prayer, our love, and our service”
(T-00532-OL)



“LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU”: The implications of the Mass for service and mission

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JESUS SAID “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

(Lk 6:27-31)

JESUS SAID “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

(Mt 25:35-36, 40)

PAUSE *for a couple of minutes of silence for personal reflection on the Scripture Readings.*

MEDITATION



The leader asks someone to read out the Meditation, or for people to read it quietly themselves.

The sacrament of the Eucharist is sometimes called “the Mass” (Missa) because it “concludes with the sending forth (missio) of the faithful, so that they may fulfil God’s will in their daily lives.” (Catechism 1332) This mission is not just an optional appendix to the Eucharist, it is part of its inner meaning.

This is underlined in the Gospel of St John. At the Last Supper, where we might expect to learn about the Institution of the Eucharist (“This is my body...”), instead we see Jesus kneeling before his disciples and washing their feet. There is no contradiction between St John and the other gospels, in fact there is a great unity. We understand that the self-giving love of the Eucharist, which looks forward to the sacrifice of the cross, is inseparable from a self-giving love for one’s neighbour. As Jesus says: “If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet... I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.”

In the Eucharist, we come to understand Christ’s immense love for us. He loves us even when we do not deserve that love. He gives his life for us on the cross. He gives himself to us sacramentally in his Body and Blood. Our response – personal and communal – is to do the same for others: to love family, friends, colleagues, neighbours; to love all those we meet, and especially the most needy.



“LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU”: The implications of the Mass for service and mission

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The Eucharist transforms who we are and transforms the way we love. In Christ, we no longer live for ourselves, but for him, and for others. His teaching (“love your enemies... bless those who curse you...give without any hope of return...take up your cross...”) which might have seemed very abstract, becomes full of meaning, because we want to love him and our neighbour in return for his love.

This self-giving is built into the structure of the Eucharist. The collection is meant to be for the needs of the poor and not just for the church. And by receiving Holy Communion, I become one with all the members of Christ’s body, including the poor and the marginalised. As St John Chrysostom wrote: “You have tasted the Blood of the Lord, yet you do not recognise your brother... God freed you from all your sins and invited you here, but you have not become more merciful.”

Pope Benedict wrote: “Union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own. Communion draws me out of myself towards him, and thus also towards unity with all Christians. We become “one body”, completely joined in a single existence. Love of God and love of neighbour are now truly united: God incarnate draws us all to himself.” (Deus Caritas Est)

The Eucharist is a school of charity, justice and peace. It is also a school of mission. “The love that we celebrate in the sacrament is not something we can keep to ourselves. By its very nature it demands to be shared with all. What the world needs is God’s love; it needs to encounter Christ and to believe in him. The Eucharist is thus the source and summit not only of the Church’s life, but also of her mission: ‘an authentically Eucharistic Church is a missionary Church.’” (Sacramentum Caritatis 84).

PAUSE for a couple of minutes of silence to reflect on the Meditation, and also to reflect on the three paintings that are reproduced as part of this session.

MAIN DISCUSSION

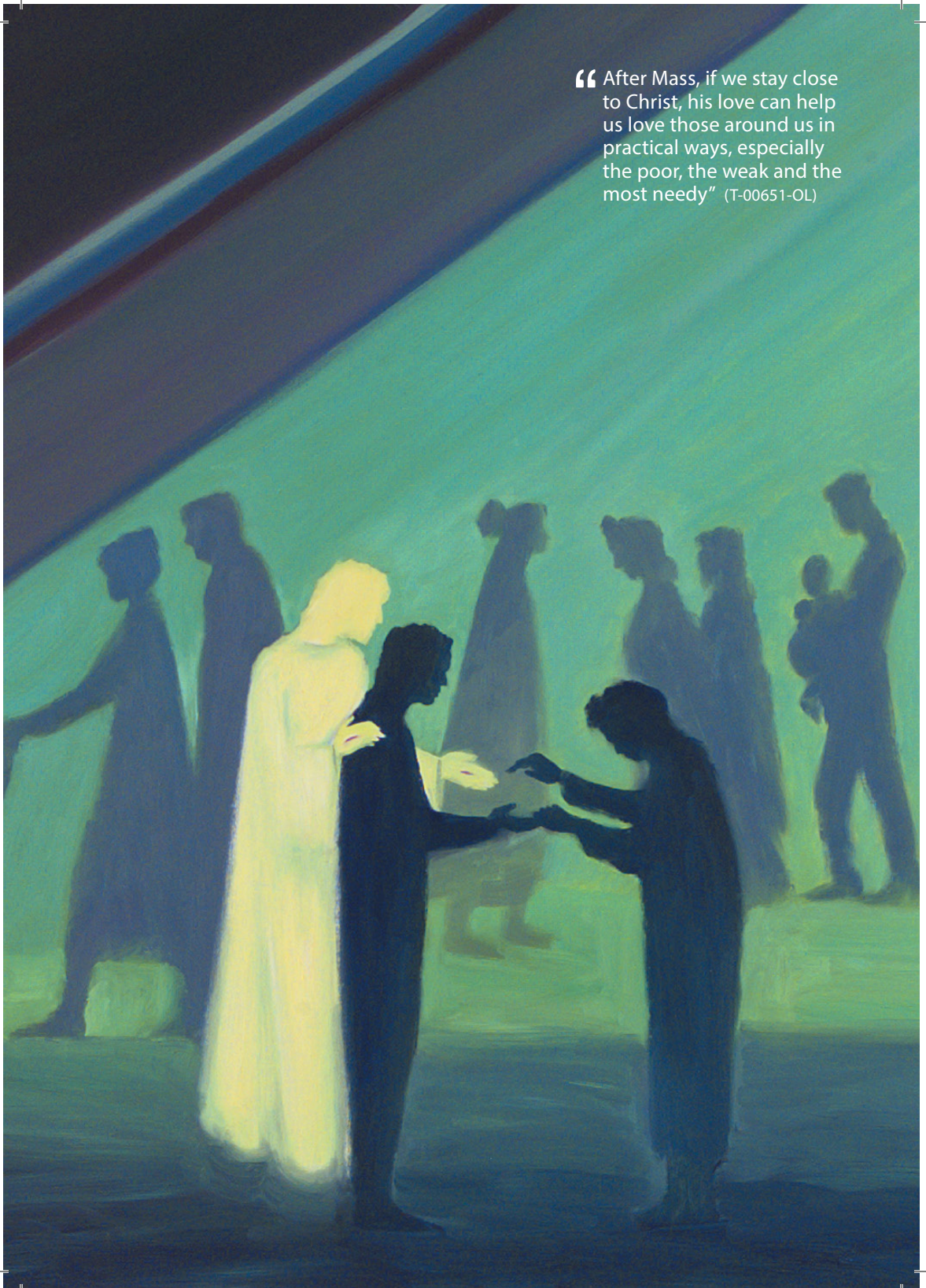


Reflect on these questions together:

- What thoughts and personal responses do you have about the Scripture Readings, about the Meditation, and about the three paintings reproduced here?
- How do these ideas fit with your own experience of faith and of life in the Church?
- What implications do these ideas have for your own life and faith, and for the life of your parish community?

The leader brings the discussion to an end and then invites people to read the Summary and Practical Suggestions that follow.

“After Mass, if we stay close to Christ, his love can help us love those around us in practical ways, especially the poor, the weak and the most needy” (T-00651-OL)





"LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU": The implications of the Mass for service and mission

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SUMMARY OF CORE BELIEFS



- The experience of Christ's sacrificial love in the Eucharist motivates us to love others as he has loved us.
- The Eucharist strengthens us to love our neighbour, to recognise each person as our brother or sister, and to be open to the needs of all, especially the poor and forgotten.
- The beauty of Christ's love in the Eucharist is such an amazing gift and brings such joy that we long to share this good news with others as missionary disciples.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- Make a new effort to greet people after Mass (e.g. outside the church) and spend a few minutes getting to know them.
- If there is tea and coffee after your Mass, try to overcome your shyness or busyness and go to it. If there is not, you could offer to your priest to organise this yourself!
- Think about how your everyday relationships (with family, friends, colleagues) reflect the love of Christ, and how your love could be purer and more generous.
- If you have time, consider volunteering for a local project e.g. within your parish, or your community, or the SVP, or through the Caritas Westminster volunteering hub.
- Always be on the lookout for those who are marginalised in any way.
- Be more confident in living and sharing your Catholic faith; take more risks in speaking about your Catholic faith with others; pray for opportunities to share your faith or invite people to Catholic events.
- Consider joining or starting in your parish a group committed to social outreach or mission, like the St Vincent de Paul Society (for the Corporal Works of Mercy) or the Legion of Mary (for the Spiritual Works of Mercy).



“LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU”: The implications of the Mass for service and mission

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FINAL DISCUSSION

Reflect on these questions together:

- What do you think of these practical suggestions above? Which of them might work best for you?
- What other things could you do, individually or as a community, to bring alive the social implications of the Eucharist, and the implications for mission and evangelisation?
- As the faith sharing group comes to an end this week, can you share ideas about other activities in the parish, or elsewhere, that could help members of the group to grow in faith, or other faith resources that people could use?

FINAL PRAYER

The leader brings the discussion to an end and invites people to pray together.

Lord,
give to our hearts
the light of faith and the fire of love,
that we may worship in spirit and in truth
our God and Lord, present in this sacrament,
who lives and reigns forever and ever.

R. Amen.

Conclude with: Hail Mary... Glory Be... In the name of the Father....



CONCLUDING REMARKS

The leader thanks everyone for participating in the group, which is now ending! People are encouraged to read the two supplements below, to deepen their reflection on today's theme. They are encouraged to keep the booklet for further reflection. There can be a discussion about whether to continue meeting as a group in other ways...

SUPPLEMENT 1: CATHOLIC TEACHING

CCC 1351: “From the very beginning Christians have brought, along with the bread and wine for the Eucharist, gifts to share with those in need. This custom of the collection, ever appropriate, is inspired by the example of Christ who became poor to make us rich. [cf. 1 Cor 16:1; 2 Cor 8:9]”



"LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU": The implications of the Mass for service and mission

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CCC 1397: "The Eucharist commits us to the poor. To receive in truth the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognise Christ in the poorest, his brethren."

"This sacramental 'mysticism' is social in character, for in sacramental communion I become one with the Lord, like all the other communicants. As Saint Paul says, 'Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.' (1 Cor 10:17) Union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself... Love of God and love of neighbour are now truly united: God incarnate draws us all to himself." (Deus Caritas Est 14, Pope Benedict)

"Lived in this way, not only the Sunday Eucharist but the whole of Sunday becomes a great school of charity, justice and peace. The presence of the Risen Lord in the midst of his people becomes an undertaking of solidarity, a compelling force for inner renewal, an inspiration to change the structures of sin in which individuals, communities and at times entire peoples are entangled." (Dies Domini 73, Pope John Paul II)

"We cannot approach the Eucharistic table without being drawn into the mission which, beginning in the very heart of God, is meant to reach all people. Missionary outreach is thus an essential part of the Eucharistic form of the Christian life." (Sacramentum Caritatis 84, Pope Benedict)

SUPPLEMENT 2: WISDOM FROM THE SAINTS

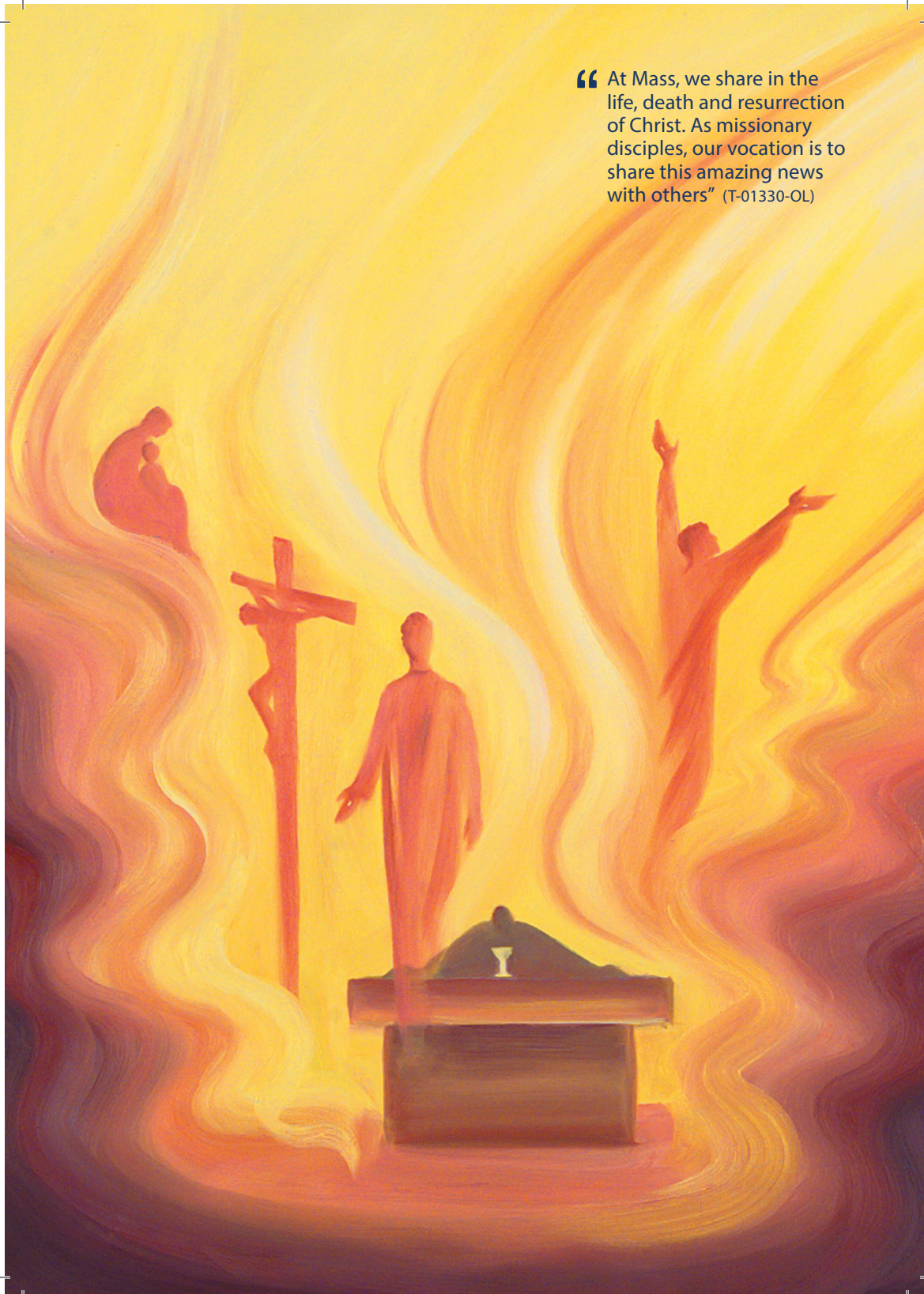
"Where will you get the joy of loving? In the Eucharist, in Holy Communion. Jesus has made Himself the Bread of Life to give us life. Night and day, He is there. If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist, come back to that adoration." (St Teresa of Calcutta)

"In each of our lives Jesus comes as the Bread of Life - to be eaten, to be consumed by us. This is how He loves us. Then Jesus comes in our human life as the hungry one, the other, hoping to be fed with the Bread of our life, our hearts by loving, and our hands by serving." (St Teresa of Calcutta)

"The Eucharist involves more than just receiving; it also involves satisfying the hunger of Christ. He says, 'Come to Me.' He is hungry for souls." (St Teresa of Calcutta)

"We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realising that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest." (Blessed Oscar Romero)

“ At Mass, we share in the
life, death and resurrection
of Christ. As missionary
disciples, our vocation is to
share this amazing news
with others” (T-01330-OL)



PRAYERS

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“ When we worship Christ
at Mass we are united with
all the saints and angels,
and with the souls of
Purgatory” (T-00042A-OL)



**FOR USE IN CHURCH AS YOU PRAY BEFORE THE BLESSED SACRAMENT, OR
AFTER RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION.**

PRAYER OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI:

We adore you, most holy Lord Jesus Christ, here, and in all your churches throughout all the world; and we bless you, because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world. (Shorter form from the Stations of the Cross: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you, because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world.)

ANIMA CHRISTI:

Soul of Christ, sanctify me. Body of Christ, save me. Blood of Christ, inebriate me. Water from the side of Christ, wash me.

Passion of Christ, strengthen me. O good Jesus, hear me. Within Thy wounds hide me. Suffer me not to be separated from Thee.

From the malicious enemy defend me. In the hour of my death call me. And bid me come unto Thee. That with Thy saints I may praise Thee. Forever and ever, Amen.

O SACRUM CONVIVIVM:

O sacred banquet, in which Christ is received, the memory of His Passion is renewed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.

V. Thou didst give them bread from heaven: R. Containing in itself all sweetness.

O God, who under a wonderful Sacrament hast left us a memorial of Thy Passion; grant us, we beseech Thee, so to reverence the sacred mysteries of Thy Body and Blood, that we may ever feel within ourselves the fruit of Thy Redemption: Who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

LAMB OF GOD:

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.



DIVINE MERCY PRAYER:

Eternal Father, I offer you the body and blood, soul and divinity, of your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART:

Sacred Heart of Jesus, I put my trust in Thee. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on me.

CONSECRATION TO JESUS THROUGH MARY (ST LOUIS DE MONTFORT):

I am all yours and all I have is yours, O dear Jesus, through Mary, your holy Mother.

PRAYER OF THE PRIEST BEFORE HE RECEIVES HOLY COMMUNION AT MASS:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who, by the will of the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit, through your Death gave life to the world, free me by this, your most holy Body and Blood, from all my sins and from every evil; keep me always faithful to your commandments, and never let me be parted from you.





“If we stay close to Christ
in faith, hope and love, he
will lift us out of darkness
and give us a share in
his light, joy and peace”
(T-01406-OL)

The paintings reproduced in this booklet are by Elizabeth Wang. Elizabeth was born in 1942, received into the Catholic Church in 1968, and died in 2016. She was an artist, housewife and mother who spent much of her time writing and speaking about prayer and the Catholic faith. She was very involved in the life of her home parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Harpenden, here in our Diocese.

Over 5,000 of her paintings can be seen online, together with many of her writings, at the Radiant Light website.

Please visit: www.radiantlight.org.uk



In September of this year, a National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and Congress will take place in Liverpool. Thousands of people from all over the country will come together to deepen their faith in the Holy Eucharist and adore Christ in his Eucharistic presence. The months leading up to September give us a chance to appreciate the gift of the Eucharist in a new way.

This booklet will help you grow in your love for Christ in the Holy Eucharist, and it will help your parish community to deepen its Eucharistic faith. It includes prayers, scripture readings, meditations, and quotations from the Catechism and the saints about the Eucharist. It also includes discussion questions and practical guidance about how to run a faith sharing group, together with a beautiful set of illustrations to aid personal reflection.

The sessions cover six main themes: the Christian encounter with the Lord; the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist; the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; the graces given in Holy Communion; Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; and the implications of the Mass for service and mission.



Cardinal Vincent has written: "We seek to rejuvenate Eucharistic adoration in our parishes as the source of strength for our lives and for our mission." This booklet should help individuals and parish communities come to know more deeply the love of Christ in the Eucharist.

