

BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

YEAR A

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

God of life, help us to know that when we share our food, as you do, with all who are in need, we satisfy our hunger; when we share our drink, as you do, with all who are in need, we satisfy our thirst. We offer this prayer as we gather to eat the bread and drink the wine of your Son, Jesus, who lives with us now and forever.

Note: In keeping with the Directory for Masses With Children (Paragraph 43), the authors have elected to use the first reading from Year C because it seems best suited "to the capacity of children."

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

Our readings for today focus on the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. In the first reading, Paul presents what he was taught concerning the actions and words of Jesus at the Last Supper. While the words may vary in the four accounts (*Matthew, Mark, Luke and 1 Corinthians*), what remains consistent is the belief that in the sharing of bread and wine Christ is present.

The Gospel proclaims that Christ himself is our life. It is he who satisfies our hunger and thirst. He chose to make this concept reality in bread and wine. Jesus invites us to share his body and blood, which in Hebrew are symbols of person and life. In these symbols we encounter the living Lord, ever present to us. To share in his life, to be one with him, is to live forever.

FIRST READING: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

This is a reading from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

Brothers and sisters,

This is what Jesus did at supper the night before he died. He took bread, and after he gave thanks, he broke the bread and said,

"This is my body, which I am giving for you. When you eat this bread, remember me."

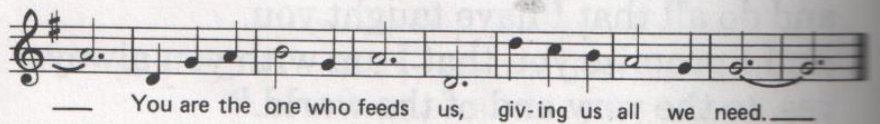
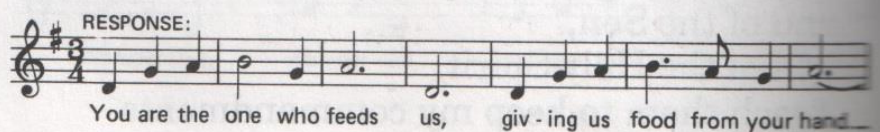
After supper, he took a cup of wine and said,

"This cup is the new covenant in my blood. When you drink from this cup, remember me."

For when you eat this bread and drink from this cup, you are proclaiming the death of the Lord until he comes again.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: Psalm 104



GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

1. "I am the Bread of Life," says the Lord. }
2. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia! }

2-2 "All who eat this Bread will live for - ev - er."

GOSPEL: *John 6:35, 51-56*

This is a reading from the Gospel of John.

Jesus said to the people,

"I am the bread of life.
Anyone who comes to me
will never be hungry,
and anyone who believes in me
will never be thirsty.
I am the living bread
that came down from heaven.
Anyone who eats this bread,
which is my life, will live forever.
This bread gives life to the world.
Unless you eat this bread
and drink from this cup,
you do not have real life in you.
For I am real food and real drink for you.
Everyone who eats this bread
and drinks from this cup
lives in me and I live in them.
Those who eat this bread
and drink from this cup
have eternal life
and I will raise them up on the last day."

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

What did you hear?

Discuss with the children the many times we celebrate our unity by sharing in a special meal: Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, birthdays, and so forth. Are there other times? Ask the children what their family eats on these special occasions. Help them see that certain foods have become symbols of what we are celebrating. When we see and eat certain food, it makes the event real and even brings to our memory past celebrations. For example, many families have turkey for dinner every year on Christmas. It has become symbolic for the celebration of this important event. And sharing in that special dinner brings members of the family closer together.

Jesus celebrated a special meal with his disciples the night before he died. They shared bread and wine. Jesus told them that from now on, whenever his disciples share that bread and wine and remember him, he is there in a special way. When we come together for mass, we remember what Jesus said and did. We too share that bread and wine which is the very life of Jesus, and it brings us all closer together. When we eat this bread and drink from this cup, we say that we believe in Jesus, and we believe that he gives us life and that he will give us life forever.