

## Reflection Thursday Week 8, Jesus Christ the Eternal High Priest 2021

From a homily by Archbishop Dermott Clifford:

"Pope John Paul II wrote: *"The Eucharist is the principal and raison d'être of the sacrament of the priesthood, which effectively came into being at the moment of the institution of the Eucharist."* Priesthood is not to be undertaken purely as a personal honour. At his ordination the bishop is instructed: *"The title of bishop is one not of honour but of function and therefore a bishop should strive to serve rather than rule."* The purpose is the service of the faithful, to enable the faithful to **exercise their own special priesthood**. The ordained priesthood is, *"unique, indispensable and irreplaceable"* Pope John Paul II said. Vatican II states that, *"No Christian community can be built up unless it has as its basis and centre the celebration of the Eucharist"*. It belongs to bishops and priests to preside at the altar, and to offer the sacrifice of the Mass. But the Eucharist has to be at the centre of the life of all members in the Church. There is a beautiful balance here. On one hand, it is through the grace of the Eucharist - Christ's ultimate expression of love - that the Church is made present. On the other hand, it is through the priestly ministry of the Church that the Eucharist is made present. Each has been entrusted to the other by Christ; *"the Church (makes) the Eucharist, but the Eucharist also (makes) the Church"* **Henry de Lubac**.

It is no accident that the word "communion" is the same word we use for the sacrament of the Eucharist. Christianity is an invitation to share in the communion of the Holy Trinity and to live in communion with one another, nourished by the Bread of Life. And both senses of the word "communion" are fundamentally about love: love of Christ, love of one another. As St Paul writes, *"The blessing cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ."* (1, Cor. 10,16).

*"May the Holy Spirit inflame our hearts,  
enliven our hope and open our minds,  
so that together with our sisters and brothers in faith  
we may recognise you in the Scriptures  
and in the breaking of bread.  
May your Holy Spirit transform us into one body  
and lead us to walk humbly on the earth,  
in justice and love,  
as witnesses of the resurrection."*

**Note:** *The word "companion" comes from the two Latin words, "cum" and "panis" - Christ is the one who shares the Bread of Life with us*

***A pirate at sea has a peg leg, a hook for a hand and an eye patch.***

One of his companions ask how he lost his leg. He answers, "A cannonball." So, how did you lose your hand. "A sword."

When the companion asks how he lost his eye, the man says, "A spray of the sea. . . . It was my first day with the hook.