

Jesus Christ the Bread of Life

How are Catholics to interpret the things that Jesus said in John 6? Some Christians say that Jesus was just using symbolic language; that what He means is that He can satisfy our deepest needs and longings, or that He can fill us with blessings, and that “eating the bread of life” means “believing in Jesus.”

Ever since the time of the Apostles, the Catholic Church has maintained the interpretation that when Jesus said, “eat my flesh” and “drink my blood,” He was talking about His Body and Blood in the Eucharist, which He established at the Last Supper. If that’s the case, then why didn’t John mention the Eucharist directly? One commentary, which I thought was particularly helpful, pointed out that although John didn’t use the word “Eucharist,” he did use Eucharistic language when Jesus said, “the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world” (John 6:51c), as well as all the other verses that contain “eating His flesh” and “drinking His blood” (John 6:52, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58).

The account of the Last Supper in John differs from the other Gospels in that there are no words of institution for the sacrament of the Eucharist (cf. Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20). However, John 6 can be seen as John’s version of the words of institution, hence the many verses which contain “eat my Body” and “drink my Blood.” Instead of focusing on ritual practice, John focuses more on the meaning and significance of receiving the sacrament itself.

What then, is the meaning and significance of receiving the Eucharist? Jesus Himself has told us the effects of receiving the Eucharist: “Whoever eats this bread will live forever” (John 51:b), “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you” (John 6:53), and “Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him” (John 6:56).



The effects of receiving the Eucharist can be considered in three ways: union with Christ, spiritual nourishment and its special connection with the Passion of Christ.

1. Union with Christ: Jesus, in giving Himself totally to us in the Eucharist, His Body and Blood, soul and divinity, asks us, in turn, to give ourselves to Him completely. The receiving of Christ and the giving of ourselves to Him makes complete what sharing in Jesus’ Divine Life means.
2. Spiritual nourishment: The Eucharist sustains the life of the soul by bringing the virtues to life in our souls, so that we can live the life of Christ. The Eucharist gives us the grace to deny ourselves and to live for Christ. The more love we have for Christ, the more we can resist sin and temptation, and pursue good works. But just as ordinary food can be effective only when properly digested by the body, so too, the Eucharist can produce its good effects in our souls only when we are properly disposed to receive it.
3. Special connection with the Passion of Christ: According to St. Thomas Aquinas, “Eucharistia est sacramentum perfectum dominicae passionis, tanquam continens ipsum Christum passum,” which means, “The Eucharist is the perfect sacrament of our Lord’s Passion, as containing the Christ who suffered.” All the sacraments receive their power from the Passion of Christ, but the Eucharist is the perfect sacrament of the Passion because the Eucharist contains Christ crucified (Christum passum). Hence, whatever is the effect of the Passion of Our Lord, all of that is likewise the effect of receiving this sacrament; i.e., when receiving the Eucharist, we also receive the saving action of the Passion and Death of Christ. That is something wonderful to think about!

Therefore, when we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, we need to go beyond sentimental feelings; we should give Jesus our sincere thanks for the privilege of receiving Him, recognize our need for His love and express our love for Him, request more grace to love Him more, to conform our lives to His will and to offer ourselves to Him for Him to make of us what He wants us to be.

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On the internet, I came across a picture of a 3-piece stained-glass window inside the Dahlgren Chapel of Georgetown University: on the left, John resting on the breast of Jesus at the Last Supper, in the middle, Jesus entrusting Mary to John at Calvary, and on the right, Mary receiving the Eucharist from John. The Apostles celebrated the Eucharist in the early churches, and John was the most likely Apostle to celebrate the Eucharist for Mary, and from him, she received the Body and Blood of her Son. Mary is our model for receiving the Eucharist; she received the Eucharist with faith, humility and obedience to her Son.



PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 15, is the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our church will celebrate the Assumption of our Lady with Mass in Chinese at 12:00 noon.



Are you an adult and have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation? If so, we invite you to join our Confirmation program to prepare you for the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Easter Vigil in 2025. If you are interested, please contact Fr. Bill.



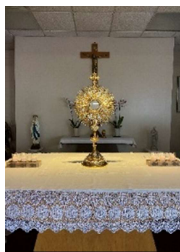
Chinese language classes for adults will begin on August 18, 2024. Class schedule is available in the church foyer and on the church website. Please register with Michelle Tsai.

Attention children and parents: Sunday School will resume on August 25, 2024. Class schedule for schoolyear 2024-2025 is now available in the church foyer and on the church website. Please register with Long Che Chan.



Our Fall garage sale will be on Saturday, September 7, 2024 from 8am to 2pm. Please check if you have clothes, household and gift items in good condition to donate. You may start bringing donated items anytime before August 25. Please sign up with Daisy Tsui and Angela Ooi if you can help during the garage sale.

Come and celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival with us on September 15, 2024. We will have a lantern parade by the children of our parish after the 10:30am Mass, our community potluck, riddles for adults and prizes for the best lantern and riddle winner!



Please make a commitment to stay for an hour of Eucharistic Adoration every Sunday from 9:00 to 10:00am. The sign-up sheet for August is in the church foyer.

Prayer List: Eva Mullins, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing, Pan Bohao and Xu Taicheng.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	Sundays 9:00-9:30 AM	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)	Tuesdays 2:00-3:00 PM	Mondays 6:00 PM (English)
	By Appointment	
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)		Eucharistic Adoration
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	Anointing of the Sick	Sundays 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Tuesdays 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		
First Saturday 10:00 AM (Chinese)		