

*Thirty-Third Week of Ordinary Time*  
*Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost (Latin)*  
*November 17, 2024*  
*Year of the Most Holy Eucharist*  
*Reflection #47*

*“St. Thomas said that the Eucharist is the greatest sacrament.”*  
*(Peter Kreeft, Practical Theology, p.264)*

On the night He was betrayed, Jesus took bread in His sacred hands and said: “This is My Body.” Likewise, He took a cup filled with wine and said: “This is My Blood.” And, both the bread and the wine truly became that which He said they would be. Saint Leo the Great once wrote: “Our partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ tends only to make us become what we eat.” Therefore, we profess that whoever eats of the Body and drinks of the Blood of Christ is offered the grace necessary to enter into eternal life. We are able to live with Him because of Him, because of His Sacrifice. The entire mission of Jesus, His earthly life and subsequent death, was offered to His Father as a means to save all of mankind.

Can any of us truly understand what takes place upon our altars every day? We could read the great theologians or doctors of the church to gain some insight. Yet, all of these pale in comparison to the reality of what the bread and wine become, who they become, after the words of consecration are said. The Eucharist IS the Bread of Life; the Bond which unites us to God and each other.

Yet, the Eucharist is so much more. It is the fulfillment of the promise Jesus made before ascending into Heaven. He said He would remain with us until the end. The Eucharist is just that; it is Jesus here present with us until the end whether that be the world or my own life.

This is a rather consoling thought. In the Eucharist, Jesus is with me until the end. To paraphrase Psalm 23, “I need not fear for You are at my side.” My family, we need not fear the future for Jesus is with us. The pundits of doom daily echo each other saying our destruction is at hand. It is enough to cause anyone to fear. Yet, we should not for our God is present here. He is with us. We may not be able to fully understand how this process happens, but we trust His Words that it does happen for He said: “This is My Body, This is My Blood.” Our only requirement is to receive Him into our hearts in a worthy manner. My family, let us both humble and avail ourselves of this opportunity. Please, dedicate yourselves, everything within you, to this time of being present to Jesus. Offer to Him your prayers and petitions. He is here present in our midst.

I realize this reflection is short, but I want to give all of us some time to just sit silently in His Presence. Take advantage of this time. Speak with Him in your heart. And, most importantly, allow Him time to speak with you.