



The Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist

Talking Points

- Catholics believe that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, gives himself to us *sacramentally* in Holy Communion. Bread and wine are changed substantially into the Body and Blood of Christ.
- In the Blessed Sacrament we receive the whole Christ: body, blood, soul and divinity. While receiving Communion under the form of bread only, we receive the *totus Christus* ("whole Christ"), receiving Communion under both forms is a more complete participation in the Eucharist. Through sacramental signs, we are drawn into Jesus' saving action more fully.
- In Holy Communion, we receive a share in God's own life. "You are what you eat" is a popular crude expression but it is true in this case. With ordinary food, it becomes us. In Holy Communion, we become more and more united with Jesus.
- The Eucharistic species are both *real* because it is truly the Body and Blood of Jesus, but the Eucharist is also *symbolic* because it points towards a greater reality. Sacraments are both symbolic AND real.
- While Jesus Christ is present to us in many ways (through the scriptures, through the ministry of the priest and others, through the community gathered to pray), the presence of Christ in consecrated bread and wine is a presence *par excellence*. All the other modes of Christ's presence point towards the sacramental presence.

Discussion Questions

Am I really present to the presence of Christ in the Eucharist?
What keeps me from being truly and really present to God at Mass?



Do I experience Jesus' presence in the community, in the Word proclaimed, in the ministry of the priest and others? How can I better encounter Jesus in these ways?

What are some ways I can be the presence of Christ to others?