

Source and Summit

Episode 1 – The Bread of Life

Dr. Brant Pietri – *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist* *Jesus and the Last Supper*

Solemnity of Corpus Christi – The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ

Readings:

- Year A
 - Deut 8:2-3, 14b-16a – Remembering the manna in the desert
 - Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20 – He satisfies you with finest wheat.
 - 1 Cor 10:16-17 – The bread and cup as a sharing in Christ’s body and blood.
 - John 6:51- 58 - Jesus as the living Bread
- Year B
 - Ex 24:3-8 - Moses and the blood of the covenant.
 - Ps 116:12-13, 15-16, 17-18 - The cup of salvation.
 - Heb 9:11-15 - Christ as the mediator of the new covenant.
 - Mark 14:12-16, 22-26 – The Institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper.
- Year C
 - Gen 14:18-20 - Melchizedek brings out bread and wine.
 - Ps 110:1, 2, 3, 4 - You are a priest forever.
 - 1 Cor 11:23-26 - St. Paul's account of the Lord's Supper.
 - Luke 9:11b – 17 – The feeding of the 5000.

Exodus 16: 11-18

11 The **LORD** said to Moses:

12 I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them: In the evening twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will have your fill of bread, and then you will know that I, the **LORD**, am your God.

13 In the evening, quail came up and covered the camp. In the morning there was a layer of dew all about the camp,

14 and when the layer of dew evaporated, fine flakes were on the surface of the wilderness, fine flakes like hoarfrost on the ground.

15 On seeing it, the Israelites asked one another, “What is this?” for they did not know what it was. But Moses told them, “It is the bread which the **LORD** has given you to eat.

Regulations Regarding the Manna.

16 “Now, this is what the **LORD** has commanded. Gather as much of it as each needs to eat, an omer for each person for as many of you as there are, each of you providing for those in your own tent.”

17 The Israelites did so. Some gathered a large and some a small amount.

18 But when they measured it out by the omer, the one who had gathered a large amount did not have too much, and the one who had gathered a small amount did not have too little. They gathered as much as each needed to eat.

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John 6:30 - 59

30 So they said to him, “What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do?”^m

31ⁿ Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

32 So Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven.”^o

33 For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

34^p So they said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”

35^q Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst.”^q

36 But I told you that although you have seen [me], you do not believe.”^r

37 Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me,

38 because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me.”^s

39 And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it [on] the last day.”^t

40 For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him [on] the last day.”^u

41 The Jews murmured about him because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven,”

42 and they said, “Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph? Do we not know his father and mother? Then how can he say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?”^v

43 Jesus answered and said to them, “Stop murmuring^x among yourselves.”^w

44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draw him, and I will raise him on the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets: ‘They shall all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from him comes to me.”^x

46 Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father.”^y

47 Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.

48 I am the bread of life.

49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died;^z

50 this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die.

51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world.”^a

52 The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us [his] flesh to eat?”

53 Jesus said to them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you.

54 Whoever eats^b my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day.

55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.

56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him.

57 Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me.”^b

58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever.”

59 These things he said while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

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Catechism of the Catholic Church - I. The Eucharist - Source and Summit of Ecclesial Life

1324 The Eucharist is "the source and summit of the Christian life."¹³⁴ "The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself, our Pasch."¹³⁵

Lumen Gentium – Chapter 2 – On the People of God

11. It is through the sacraments and the exercise of the virtues that the sacred nature and organic structure of the priestly community is brought into operation. Incorporated in the Church through baptism, the faithful are destined by the baptismal character for the worship of the Christian religion; reborn as sons of God they must confess before men the faith which they have received from God through the Church (4*). They are more perfectly bound to the Church by the sacrament of Confirmation, and the Holy Spirit endows them with special strength so that they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith, both by word and by deed, as true witnesses of Christ (5*). Taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice, which is the fount and apex of the whole Christian life, they offer the Divine Victim to God, and offer themselves along with It.(6*) Thus both by reason of the offering and through Holy Communion all take part in this liturgical service, not indeed, all in the same way but each in that way which is proper to himself. Strengthened in Holy Communion by the Body of Christ, they then manifest in a concrete way that unity of the people of God which is suitably signified and wondrously brought about by this most august sacrament.

On the Eucharist and Its Relationship to the Church – Chapter 1 – The Mystery of Faith

18. The acclamation of the assembly following the consecration appropriately ends by expressing the eschatological thrust which marks the celebration of the Eucharist (cf. *1 Cor* 11:26): "*until you come in glory*". The Eucharist is a straining towards the goal, a foretaste of the fullness of joy promised by Christ (cf. *Jn* 15:11); it is in some way the anticipation of heaven, the "pledge of future glory".³⁰ In the Eucharist, everything speaks of confident waiting "in joyful hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ".³¹ Those who feed on Christ in the Eucharist need not wait until the hereafter to receive eternal life: *they already possess it on earth*, as the first-fruits of a future fullness which will embrace man in his totality. For in the Eucharist we also receive the pledge of our bodily resurrection at the end of the world: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (*Jn* 6:54). This pledge of the future resurrection comes from the fact that the flesh of the Son of Man, given as food, is his body in its glorious state after the resurrection. With the Eucharist we digest, as it were, the "secret" of the resurrection. For this reason Saint Ignatius of Antioch rightly defined the Eucharistic Bread as "a medicine of immortality, an antidote to death".³²

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Original context – what the Jewish audience would hear

1. Jn 6:30 – demanding Jesus perform a sign – this AFTER feeding the 5000.
2. Jn 6:31-34 - Jesus points out that manna was from God, not Moses (Ex. 16).
 - a. Jewish scripture: Ex. 16:11+ – 2-fold miracle:
 - i. Flesh – quail in evening
 - ii. Bread – manna in the morning – coming down from heaven
 - b. Later Jewish tradition (2 Baruch)
 - i. TEMP – Manna was a foretaste of promised land. (40 years)
 - ii. PERM – New manna will come down with the Messiah. (forever)
 - c. Are you the Messiah? Then show us the New Manna.
 - d. Lord, give us this bread always.
3. **BELIEF:** Jn 6: 35 – 47 – Jesus’ Divinity
 - a. I am the **Bread of Life True manna Bread that comes down from heaven**
 - b. Manna & Jesus both from heaven (Divine) = Jesus is a heavenly being.
 - c. Faith – One must believe in the Divinity of Jesus if they are to believe in the Real Presence.
4. **EAT:** Jn 6:48 – 58 – Sacrament: eating flesh, drinking blood.
 - a. I am the Bread of Life
 - b. Manna is a TYPE for the Real Presence.
 - c. Year 3 of Jesus Ministry - Jesus is preaching in Synagogue in Capernaum:
 - i. Come down from heaven; must believe in me.
 - ii. Must eat my body
 - iii. Must drink my blood
 1. Jews are prohibited from drinking blood of animal sacrifices (Lev 7:26) because the LIFE was in the blood (Lev 17:11).
 2. We HAVE to: must eat & drink His body and blood
 - iv. Flesh is REAL food, Blood is REAL drink.
 - v. TRUE manna from heaven because will live forever.

Implications for today – What is this Bread?

- Old manna from heaven in Exodus was miraculous, then
 - New manna must be greater than the old, because the NT fulfills the OT.
- In the Eucharist a miracle takes place. It is the TRUE manna.
- We should want to go as often as possible. Daily – like in Exodus.
- St. JP II’s encyclical “*On the Eucharist and Its relationship to the Church*” #18: The Eucharist is a foretaste of the Journey & pledge of bodily resurrection.