

*“Whoever  
eats my flesh  
and drinks my  
blood has  
eternal life, and  
I will raise him  
to life on the  
last day”*

*Jn 6.54)*





## Chapter IX


# The Eucharist In the daily life of the Church and of the Christian

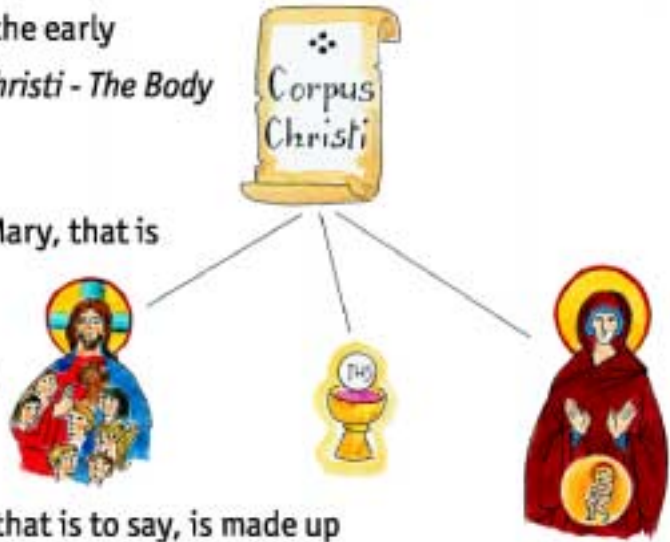
## 73 What is the relationship between the Holy Mass and the Church?

It is such a close relationship that the early Christians used the words *Corpus Christi* - *The Body of Christ* to speak about:

 The Body born of the Virgin Mary, that is Jesus Christ.

 The Eucharistic Body, that is the Eucharist.

 The ecclesial Body of Christ, that is to say, is made up of all the faithful of the Church whose *Head* is Jesus Christ.



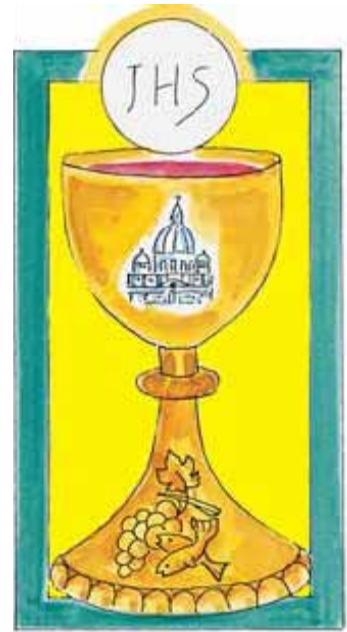
74 How is this relationship between the Holy Mass and the Church brought about?



The Eucharist contains the entire spiritual riches of the Church since the Church has no other spiritual riches apart from Jesus Christ and that which was given to her by Him.



The Eucharist builds up the Church, constitutes the Church, in the sense that the Eucharist unifies it, nourishes it, and makes it grow as an authentic communion of God's people in its rich diversity and in its deep unity. The Church lives from the Eucharist. The entire life, word and structure of the Church, is essentially Eucharistic. The Eucharist is the source and the high point of its spiritual life, its holiness and the witness of the faithful.



The same Eucharistic Bread, made from many grains of wheat, and the wine, made from many single grapes, together signify the unity and diversity of the Christian people who celebrate the Eucharist.



At the same time, the Church brings about the Eucharist, that is to say, it celebrates it and offers it to the Father, united to Christ in the Holy Spirit.



**75** Why is the Eucharist the center of the Church's life?

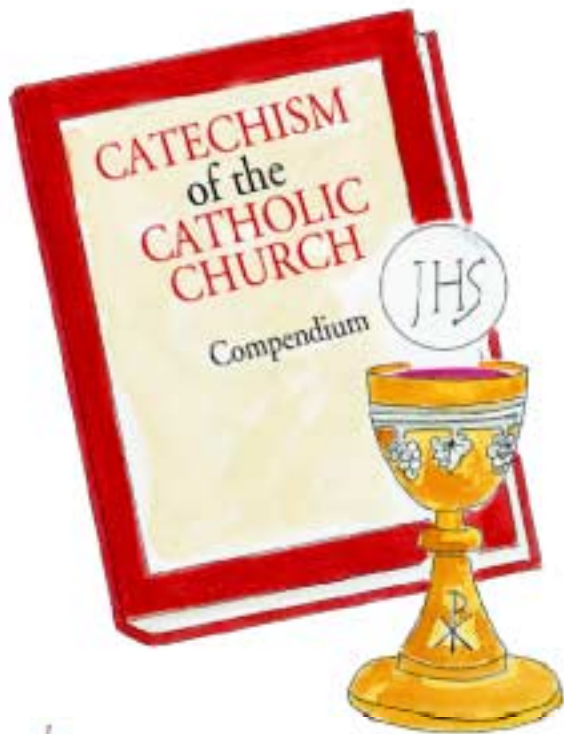


The Eucharist, first of all, shows forth the Church, in its unity and its variety of charisms and ministries.





The Eucharist is the compendium of the Church's faith: in the Eucharist the Church professes and celebrates its faith in the highest and most complete way.



The Eucharist is the apex of the Church's liturgy. In it is found both the culmination of God's action by which he sanctifies the world through the person of Jesus Christ as well as the worship that men and women offer to Jesus, and through him to the Father in the Holy Spirit.

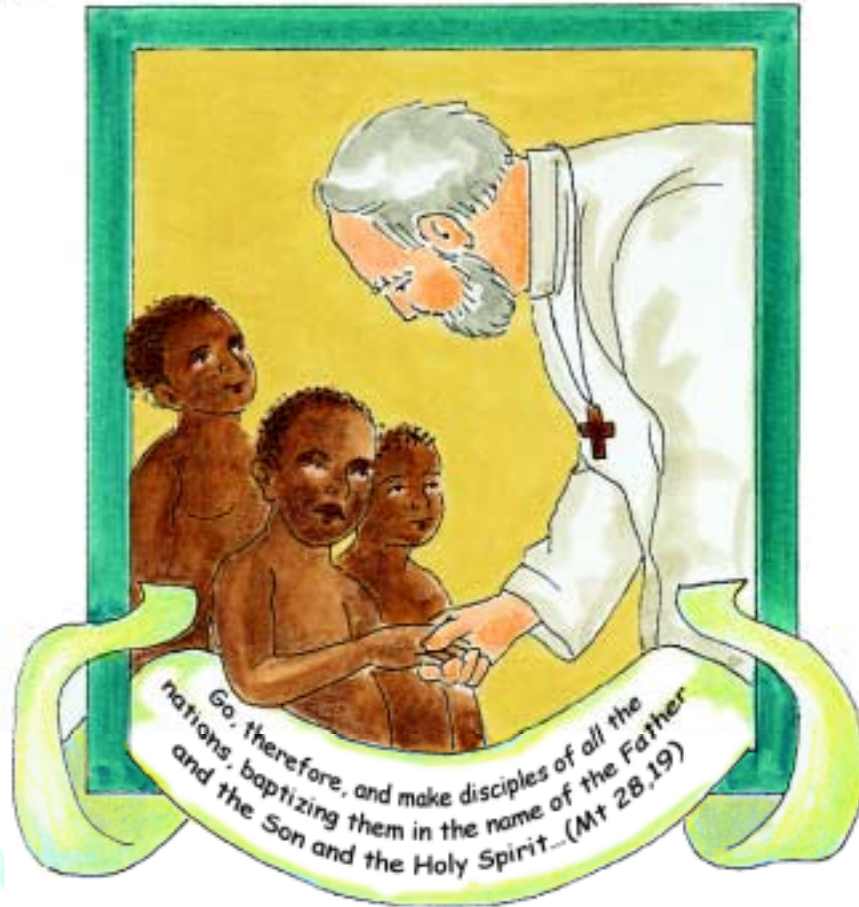


The Eucharist is the most complete and efficacious prayer that the Church makes.





The Eucharist is both the source and high point of the Church's entire missionary activity by which it makes known to all peoples the newness and beauty of the Word of the Lord.





Even though it does not act as a substitute for the sacrament of Confession, the Eucharist, furthermore, urges us on to conversion and purifies our hearts. In the normal manner of things, Confession is the sole way by which grave sins can be forgiven and for us to be reconciled with God and with the Church.



The Eucharist helps us to keep evil away from our lives and to grow in charity.



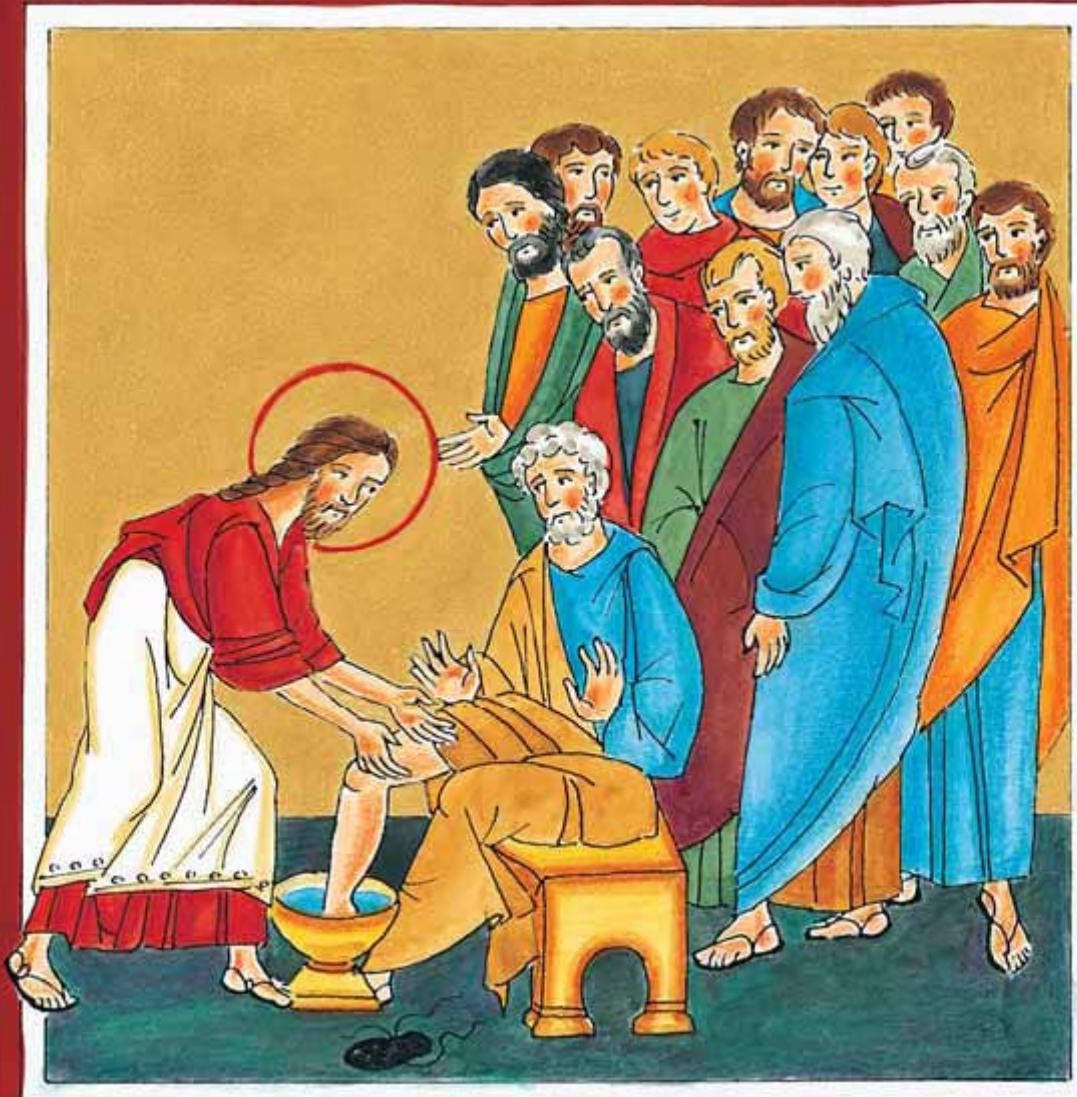
The Eucharist reveals man to himself, allowing him to discover his true identity. It helps him to appreciate his freedom and, through God's grace, makes him a *new creature*.







Since the Eucharist is a mystery of *kenosis* (a Greek word that means *lowering, humiliation, self-emptying*), in which Jesus shows us his profound humility even to the point of concealing himself under the humble appearances of the consecrated *Bread* and *Wine*, to live the Eucharist means to try and imitate the humility and unassuming nature of Christ.



“The washing of the feet, a manifestation of perfect love, is the distinctive sign of the disciples: **‘I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you’** (*Jn* 13,15). Jesus, the Lord and Master, gets up from his place at the table and takes the place of a servant. He turns the roles upside down and shows the radical newness of the Christian life. He shows in a humble way that to love with words and deeds consists first of all, in serving one’s brothers and sisters. By washing the feet of the disciples, Jesus anticipates the humiliation of his Death on the Cross by which he will be a servant to the world in an absolute way. Whoever eats the Body of Christ will also find the strength to do a similar fraternal gesture. There is a bond of closeness and unity between Christ and his disciple that transforms a person in his or her very depths and makes them willing to serve” (Pope John Paul II).



The encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist helps us to do good works and to please God.

It encourages the Christian not to be afraid to speak about God to others, to be engaged and active in the life of politics and social action, especially in order to try and remedy the many inequalities that exist in the world.



The Eucharist urges us on to announce what we have celebrated in the Holy Mass, to make it known and to love others, sharing our daily bread and our material goods with them, especially with the most needy.



We can build a better world when we are united to Jesus in the Eucharist, a world in which hatred is overcome by love, violence is triumphed by peace, pride vanquished by humility, selfishness defeated by generosity, discord conquered by reconciliation, hopelessness overwhelmed by hope.



The Eucharist urges us on to imitate the virtues of Jesus. The synthesis of these virtues are found in the Beatitudes.



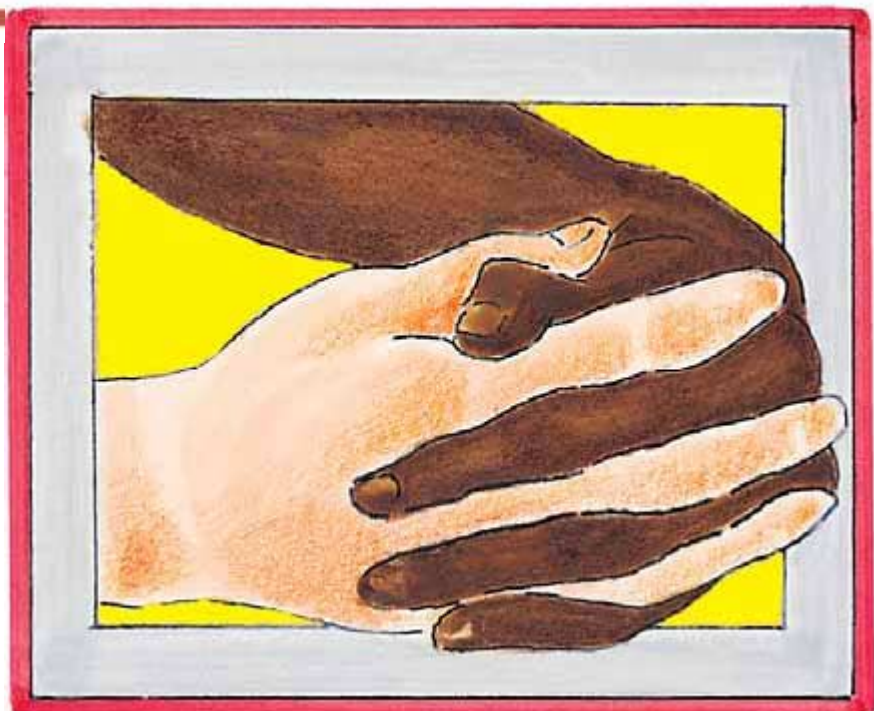
**76** What is the importance of the Holy Mass in the life of the Christian?



The Holy Mass is a weekly, and if possible also a daily, reunion of love with Jesus Christ who gave himself for us.



The Holy Mass nourishes us and gives us a direction for our lives, it helps us to grow in harmony and in love.





The Holy Mass is the starting point and goal of every Christian act. We go forth from the Mass into the world, to accomplish our daily activities with the duty to live out what we have celebrated (Mass - mandate – mission in the world). And then we return to the Mass, having completed our work (Eucharist, offering and praise for everything that has been made through Christ).



To live out the Mass in our lives and to incorporate our lives into the Mass is the duty of every member of the faithful!





The Holy Mass is the food, light and strength for our earthly pilgrimage and it sustains and nourishes our desire for eternal life: Heaven.



