

## Corpus Christi

In our readings today we have Scriptural evidence of the Eucharist past, present, and future in the life of Jesus. Much of what Jesus did during His brief time on earth was prefigured in the Old Testament. This is the past evidence of the Eucharist in Scripture.

Melchizedek is a mysterious person in the Old Testament. We hear of him only in the book of Genesis and in psalm 110. We heard of him in our first reading today and in the responsorial psalm. Melchizedek is described as the king of Salem and a priest of God the Most High. Abram had won a decisive victory against his enemies, and Melchizedek came out to meet him. Melchizedek offered bread and wine as a sacrifice to God for the victory that Abram had won. (see Gen 14:18-20) The evidence of the Eucharist should be very obvious. Melchizedek is a priest of God. Priests offer sacrifice. Bread and wine are being offered as the sacrifice. The priest Melchizedek is offering this sacrifice in thanksgiving for God's assistance in granting Abram victory over his enemies.

I sincerely hope that what I just explained is rather obvious to everyone because this is exactly what Jesus did, and does, for us. Jesus is the High Priest of God. As the High Priest, Jesus offers sacrifice. First, Jesus offered Himself as the sacrifice by dying on the cross. This sacrifice won the victory for us over our enemies, which include the devil and his cohorts, sin, and death. Jesus continues to offer sacrifice for us at every Mass in which bread and wine are offered. This sacrifice is in thanksgiving for the victory that Jesus won over our enemies. Much like Melchizedek offered bread and wine for Abram's victory over his enemies. The bread and wine that are offered at Mass become the Body and Blood of Jesus. This offering, and our communion in it, also helps us to continue to win the battle over our enemies. Because we aren't in heaven yet. We are still in the midst of the battle, and we need all the divine help that we can get.

The Scriptural evidence of the Eucharist in the present life of Jesus we heard in the Gospel reading. In the multiplication of the loaves and fish Jesus was able to feed thousands of people. (Lk 9:11-17) Now we don't hear about bread and wine; we hear about bread and fish. However, this is also a prefigure of the Eucharist. Jesus was able to take the little that humans had to offer and make an abundance out of it. Jesus said the blessing and had His Apostles distribute the food. This is a sign of the Eucharist in that the ministers of Jesus, His priests, consecrate the food at Mass and then distribute it to the people. People that are spiritually hungry are fed and nourished in the Eucharist.

The Scriptural evidence of the Eucharist in the future life of Jesus we heard in the second reading in the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians. (see 1 Cor 11:23-26) I say the future life of Jesus in the Scriptures in that I mean that Jesus has already risen from the dead and ascended back into heaven. So, this reading by St. Paul actually takes place after Jesus had physically left the earth. I hope this makes sense. St. Paul was describing how the people gathered to worship the Lord. People gathered together and offered bread and wine as the sacrifice. They repeated the words that Jesus used at the Last Supper. The bread becomes the Body of Jesus, and the wine becomes His Blood. Jesus asked His disciples to do this in memory of Him. And this is exactly what St. Paul and the early Church were doing in remembrance of Jesus' sacrifice.

Almost two thousand years later, we continue the tradition. We continue to do what Jesus asked us to do in memory of Him. The Eucharist is offered, first of all as a sacrifice of Thanksgiving for what God has done for us in winning the victory over evil, sin, and death. Secondly, the Eucharist is offered so that we are fed spiritually. So that, we have the strength to continue to fight this spiritual battle over our enemies. So that, we will have the divine life of God continue to grow within us, help us become holier people, and persevere on that journey to heaven. The Eucharist helps us to do all of these things.

As we heard in the sequence, "Lo! The angel's food is given to the pilgrim who has striven; See the children's bread from heaven. . . . Jesus, . . . You refresh us, you defend us, Your eternal goodness send us." Lead us on to victory, Lord. May we share in the heavenly banquet with Thee. Where through Your mercy we will live eternally.