



NATIONAL Eucharistic Revival

We receive the gift par excellence

From Ecclesia de Eucharistia, nos. 11-12, by Pope John Paul II

“The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed” (1 Cor 11:23) instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice of his body and his blood. The words of the Apostle Paul bring us back to the dramatic setting in which the Eucharist was born. The Eucharist is indelibly marked by the event of the Lord’s passion and death, of which it is not only a reminder but the sacramental re-presentation. It is the sacrifice of the Cross perpetuated down the ages. This truth is well expressed by the words with which the assembly in the Latin rite responds to the priest’s proclamation of the “Mystery of Faith”: “*We announce your death, O Lord*”. The Church has received the Eucharist from Christ her Lord not as one gift – however precious – among so many others, but as *the gift par excellence*, for it is the gift of himself, of his person in his sacred humanity, as well as the gift of his saving work. Nor does it remain confined to the past, since “all that Christ is – all that he did and suffered for all men – participates in the divine eternity, and so transcends all times”.

When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, the memorial of her Lord’s death and resurrection, this central event of salvation becomes really present and “the work of our redemption is carried out”. This sacrifice is so decisive for the salvation of the human race that Jesus Christ offered it and returned to the Father only *after he had left us*

a means of sharing in it as if we had been present there. Each member of the faithful can thus take part in it and inexhaustibly gain its fruits. This is the faith from which generations of Christians down the ages have lived. The Church’s Magisterium has constantly reaffirmed this faith with joyful gratitude for its inestimable gift. I wish once more to recall this truth and to join you, my dear brothers and sisters, in adoration before this mystery: a great mystery, a mystery of mercy. What more could Jesus have

done for us? Truly, in the Eucharist, he shows us a love which goes “to the end” (cf. *Jn* 13:1), a love which knows no measure.

This aspect of the universal charity of the Eucharistic Sacrifice is based on the words of the Saviour himself. In instituting it, he did not merely say: “This is my body”, “this is my blood”, but went on to add: “which is given for you”, “which is poured out for you” (*Lk* 22:19-20). Jesus did not simply state that what he was giving them to eat and drink was his

body and his blood; he also expressed *its sacrificial meaning* and made sacramentally present his sacrifice which would soon be offered on the Cross for the salvation of all. “The Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial in which the sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord’s body and blood”.



Join the Eucharistic Revival
diocesefwsb.org/eucharist