

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 25, 2024: Jos 24:1-2a,15-18b | Ps 34:2-3,16-21 | Eph 5:21-32 or Eph 5:2a,25-32 | Jn 6:60-69

Pray: My Lord and my God, thank you for your gift of bread from heaven, your Body and Blood. Amen.

Eat My Body, Drink My Blood, Have Eternal Life.

Being a Christian has always been a challenge, both in the past and present. Two thousand years ago, in a shocking revelation, Jesus told His disciples, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

This was a hard teaching, and many of His disciples couldn’t accept it, so they chose to walk away. Yet Jesus remained steadfast in His message, refusing to water it down or change it. Only those who were convinced that Jesus was who He said He was stayed with Him.

People then started disputing His claim, crying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” Did those who walked away realize that Jesus was not a mere man? Yes, He was fully man like they were, but He was (and is) also fully God and capable of anything! Didn’t they already see His miracles? This should have revealed His divinity.



They knew Jesus as a kind, humble, compassionate, and wise teacher, so what happened? Did they think He went crazy?

They needed to open their minds and hearts to listen, trust, and believe. What Jesus proclaimed about eating His body and drinking His blood was beyond human reason. He assured them His words were “in spirit and life,” but they refused to be open to the working of the Spirit to enlighten their hearts. They needed to lean on the assistance of the Holy Spirit to unlock and embrace this mystery of faith.

Belief in the profound supernatural nature of the Eucharist is a pure gift of grace from God the Father. Jesus offers Himself – Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity – as the way to eternal life, but He gives us free will to accept or reject this gift. True Catholic teaching delights in and celebrates the gift of the Real Presence.

Reflect & Discuss:

- † What Catholic teachings do you find difficult to accept?
- † Have you ever been tempted to walk away, and what drew you back?
- † How does the Real Presence in the Eucharist affect you?
- † How does receiving the Eucharist help you share Christ with others?