

“Though He Ascended, He is Still Here: The Gift of the Eucharist”

by Bobby Hesley

The Eucharist, Where God Finds Us and Where We Find God

It is primarily in the Mass that Jesus comes to us and that we come to Him. Jesus loves us and eagerly desires to be united to us. True love must have two components in order for it to be considered true love: sacrifice and union. To truly love someone is to sacrifice yourself for the one you love. “Greater love has no man this, to lay down one’s life for his friends.” (Jn 15:13)

Jesus not only does this in the Mass (renews His sacrifice of Himself for us on the altar), but He also unites Himself to us when we receive Him in Holy Communion; and both happen together at the same time, thus perfecting the act of love – union and sacrifice.

St. Thomas Aquinas once said about the Eucharist:

“This sacrament is both a sacrifice and a sacrament. It has the nature of a sacrifice inasmuch as it is offered up; and it has the nature of a sacrament inasmuch as it is received. And therefore it has the effect of a sacrament in the recipient, and the effect of a sacrifice in the offerer, or in them for whom it is offered.” Summa Theologica III 79.5
What a gift the Eucharist is!

Questions for Reflection:

1. Of all the many gifts that God gives me, do I truly see the Gift of Himself in the Eucharist as the best of all His gifts, or do I tend to be more focused on the temporal/material gifts He gives me?
2. If I truly do believe in Jesus’ Real Presence in the Eucharist, do I express this belief only intellectually, or do I also express it by visiting Him frequently to adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament and also by receiving Him as often as possible in Holy Communion (more than just on Sundays and Holy days of obligation)?
3. What are the opportunities that Jesus being present in the Tabernacle offers to me? Am I mindful of the fact that He is always there waiting for me to come by to see Him just to say hello? Do I realize that visiting Jesus in the Tabernacle also gives *Him* the opportunity to show His love for me, rather than me just showing my love for Him?
4. Do I see my Holy Hour as an exchange of love between Jesus and me, or do I see it only as a Catholic practice or ritual and nothing else?