



SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER  
ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH  
CAMBRIDGE, (H) ONT.

***MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST***

***June 18, 2017***



**Introduction to the Word:**

Last week we looked at Impressions - the impact that we have upon others; the Feast of the Trinity taught us that. For we know that God communicates with us and His message - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - is an infusion into our lives. As a result of this infusion of God's Spirit into our lives, each of us seeks to make an impression - it's just part of who we are. Whether our communication is by technology or touch, each of us does have an impact. This impact is in when our communication - and the impression and impact it makes - is in unity with the purpose of God's will for our life.

When our lives and purpose conform to the Father, then what we communicate is generated from the Father and our words reflect God action in our life and His will and way for us.

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Corpus Christi. We believe that the Eucharist is at the very heart of the Church, for it is there that we encounter Christ. This is why the Second Vatican Council proclaimed the Eucharist as the "source and summit of the Christian life" (*Lumen Gentium* [Constitution on the Church] # 11). It is in the Eucharistic liturgy that the final fulfillment of the Kingdom of God is richly symbolized. The Eucharist unites us with the living Church on earth, and with those who have gone before us in death. It is in the Eucharist that we experience the greatest "taste" of all, the presence of God within us.

**Warm Up Activity:**



## SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH CAMBRIDGE, (H) ONT.

Spend a few minutes speaking about your own First Communion (or that of a relative or friend you recently saw). How did you recognize the presence of God alive and active?

### CALL TO PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

**Leader:** The Lord our God satisfies our hunger with the gift of Eucharist; food that nourishes our spiritual life and strengthens us in our call to discipleship.

**Lord Jesus,** you are the spiritual food that leads to everlasting life,      **Lord, have mercy.**  
**Christ Jesus,** you are the manna sent down from heaven,      **Christ, have mercy.**  
**Lord Jesus,** you make us all one as we share in the Eucharistic banquet,      **Lord, have mercy.**

### **Let us pray together our Heart to Home Prayer:**

*God Our Heavenly Father, we long to make our thoughts your thoughts,  
and our ways your ways. As we prepare with attentive mind and open heart  
to hear your Word Lord, we long to be empowered with your Spirit  
so that we may bring your Word to our families, our parish and our communities.  
This, our prayer, we make through the intercession of Our Lady of the Visitation and in name of  
Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

### **SCRIPTURE REFLECTION TIME** (45 minutes)

(Please select one person –not including the leader – to take a turn at reading the scripture passages below.)

#### **FIRST READING** (Deuteronomy 8:2-3, 14-16)

Moses spoke to the people: “Remember the long way that the Lord your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, in order to humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commandments. He humbled you by letting you hunger, then by feeding you with manna, with which neither you nor your ancestors were acquainted, in order to make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

“Do not exalt yourself, forgetting the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good.” The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

#### **SECOND READING** (1 Corinthians 10:16-17)

Brothers and sisters: The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the Blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the Body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.



## SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH CAMBRIDGE, (H) ONT.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **GOSPEL** (John 6:51-59)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said to the people: “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

The people then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

So Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in them.

“Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever.”

Jesus said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*(Allow a few minutes for quiet and for a brief reflection on a meaningful word or thought)*

### **COMMENTARY:**

In the Ascension we learn that Jesus withdraws, so that we might ourselves be sent out to make Him present in the world. At Pentecost we rejoice in the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, whom we receive at Baptism and Confirmation and through whom as disciples of Jesus we proclaim the Kingdom of the Heavenly Father. Pentecost comes because all of us need a beginning - but we need one that has His guidance and inspiration - especially in our mission of discipleship.

In the Feast of the Trinity - God communicates with us and His message is an infusion into our lives. Each of us seeks to make an impression – even rocks makes an impression in the sand. Our impression is often in the form of communication – think of the various methods we have today to communicate – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Email and even carrier pigeon I guess. But what we communicate – or more specifically – WHO we communicate is the focus of the Trinity.

The Gospel today as we celebrate the Feast of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, takes place shortly after the miracle of the loaves and fishes. This miraculous event resulted in crowds of people following Jesus (the very crowds we find in the passage for today). They were following Him perhaps looking for more signs, or maybe just looking for food to satisfy their



## SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH CAMBRIDGE, (H) ONT.

hunger. Jesus proclaims to the crowd that He is the bread of life, the new manna offering eternal life. The miraculous food, the supernatural food that sustained the Israelites in the desert is now found in the bread of life, the body and blood of Christ. This notion certainly troubles a great many in the crowd, concerned about eating flesh and drinking blood. For us, too, this can prove to be a difficult notion. But Jesus is clearly not advocating cannibalism, but rather, He is speaking about this incredibly rich and intimate connection we have with Him through His body and blood. This Eucharistic encounter with Christ is without doubt a miracle that can transform us and the Church.

But the Eucharist to some is irrational. That God the Father would permit His only Son to be shown in the form of bread and that we would believe as Catholics that He is really and truly present, body, soul and divinity. In some ways they are correct – it is irrational – it is irrational love.

**Irrational Love** - not just warm levels of love but you go far and beyond. God the Father loves us so tenderly that not only did He send His Son, not only did He permissively permit His Son to Die on the Cross. Not Only did He resurrect His Son, but He gives His Son over and over again in the simple form of Bread to strengthen and encourage us. But irrational does not mean not possible - love is irrational

That is the beauty of the Eucharist – it is at its heart a sign of love. It is Love Himself really and truly present, but it is a sign of love for us – a reminder daily. It says I believe in you - so much so I give myself to you. It says I am Here - I will never withdraw from your life - this is why our appointment with God is so important and our time in the silence of Adoration so vital. It says - Look Up to Me - self Sacrifice is the key to harmony and it makes the greatest impression and impact. Let us make sure to give thanks for the great gift of the Eucharist – yet another way that God communicates – makes an impression - with us and has an impact on our lives.

*(Allow about 5 – 10 minutes for the participants to react to the **Commentary** to identify a newly discovered insight or idea.)*

### **Questions for Reflection and Discussion:** (15-20 minutes)

How do you understand Jesus as the living bread? What does it mean to you that this living bread, for the life of the world, is His flesh?

Speak of your experience together in Adoration as a group this year – how has that appointment with God made a difference?

Last week we spoke of “Vertical Living” how did your attempt to make that happen this past week go? How can the Eucharist help us with this?



## SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH CAMBRIDGE, (H) ONT.

What are your goals for allowing this summer to have an impression on your faith life? How can you impact others this summer as you seek to communicate His will and way?

### Intercessions:

**Leader:** Our response: Lord Hear us

- For Pope Francis: may God strengthen him in his apostolic ministry, for our Bishop Douglas, and our Pastor Father Freitas, may they be given the strength and stamina they need as they shepherd of Christ's faithful people. We pray to the Lord.
- For our parish community, that we may follow the example of Mary and Elizabeth by serving the Lord and one another in humility and fidelity to the invitation of God by being a family of faith who welcomes others and continue to be a home with something for everyone. We pray to the Lord
- For those who are struggling and seeking guidance, for families who are bringing children for Baptism into a new life of faith, for young couples preparing for Marriage, for elders seeking companionship, may they all experience the comfort and care of our community. We pray to the Lord.
- For those from our parish community considering a Vocation to priesthood and religious life. For our two seminarians Hayden and Robin. For Jonathan Reitzel soon to be our summer intern. May they experience the love of the Risen Lord as they seek to discern His will for their lives. We pray to the Lord.
- For the youth and young adults of the parish may they remain close to the Lord and may our example lead them to the practice of the faith among us. For the young people of our parish preparing to go to Steubenville this summer and those who will participate in VBS and at Camp Brebeuf. We pray to the Lord.
- For areas of the world in need, especially in Kenya and in Haiti. May our prayers and support aide them and bring them closer to Christ. We pray to the Lord.
- For all who have died, as well as for all the intentions recorded in the parish book of prayer. We pray to the Lord.

**Leader: Let us seek the intercession of the Patroness of our Parish as we pray:  
Hail Mary**

### **Closing Activity and Prayer** (15-20 minutes)

*(This time is reserved for quiet prayer as well as for an action-response to the communal reflections. You may wish to create and add petitions of prayer at this time. This time also intent to provide moments to connect and "outreach" to the larger community.)*

### **GROUP PRAYER/ ACTION:**

- Prayerfully consider ways that your group and our parish could grow at welcoming others, help those who are restless to find a home.



SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER  
ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH  
CAMBRIDGE, (H) ONT.

- Prayerfully talk about the summer plans for your group. Heart to Home editions conclude at the end of June – but your group can continue to meet – how can we help?
- Spend time as a group in Eucharistic Adoration – prayer for our shepherds in the Church

**Let us pray** (together)

*Lord God, merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness,  
by sending your own Son into the world and pouring forth upon us your love  
through your Spirit, you have found a way to share your own abundant life with us. May we  
be given the grace to make your impression upon our world, to impact and communicate with  
others in your name, so that we may together build your Kingdom and lead others toward  
eternal life. We make this prayer through Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

Heart to Home, copyright © 2017 by Father F. Freitas. It is **copyrighted and cannot be published without permission of the author**. The Scripture version used in this commentary is the New Revised Standard Version