

Corpus Christi (C)
June 6, 2010

There are many ways of interpreting the Sacred Scriptures:

- Literally
- Symbolically
- Historically

Our reading from St. Paul to the Corinthians today is meant to be interpreted LITERALLY...in that it really happened and really means what it says and implies.

If we fail to do this, our entire Faith-life is in jeopardy and everything we believe and practice would be for nothing.

Fortunately though, we already know this and we can believe St. Paul from the start when he tells us: "I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you."

In other words, folks, he's not making this up!

St. Paul is doing what he does best, namely, being an instrument for Christ and conveying to others God's message of salvation.

He has received this message from THE Apostolic Tradition and from the Lord himself.

What St. Paul tells us comes not from his own imagination or creativeness. NO!

Rather, all that St. Paul says and writes in his letters, including the Corinthians, is what he has received from the Apostles, the first witnesses of Christ, and from Christ himself.

And so, it would be in our best interest not only to hear what he has to say, but also to listen carefully & be ready to act upon whatever assignments we are given as disciples and followers of Christ.

With this being said, what is St. Paul telling us today?

St. Paul gives us four specific actions, but these are not any ordinary actions...these are Eucharistic Actions...actions specifically designed and intended to illustrate the celebration and reception of the Eucharist – the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

The first action described is “Take” – Jesus took the bread...Jesus took the cup.

After this, Jesus “Gave Thanks” and “Said the Blessing.”

The third action is “Broke” and “Poured” – Jesus broke the bread and poured the cup of wine.

Lastly, the bread and the cup were “Given” to the disciples to eat and drink “In Remembrance of Jesus.”

Having these four actions together...one following after the other... clearly describes, as I’ve said, the Eucharistic Meal...a meal that is characterized by “Taking,” “Giving Thanks and Blessing,” “Braking and Pouring,” and “Giving.”

And so, whenever we hear all four actions grouped together such as this, we know then that they are no ordinary actions...rather, they are Eucharistic Actions and what’s more, they are the actions of Christ that offer us salvation.

In other words, because the Eucharist is the Body and Blood of Christ, we can say that all the actions Jesus did with the bread and the cup – took bread and the cup, gave thanks and said the blessing, broke the bread and poured the cup, and gave them to his disciples – were done to Jesus too.

Jesus was himself taken by others – friends and foes.

Jesus constantly gave thanks to God the Father for his calling, ministry, and all that he was blessed with.

Jesus himself was broken and poured out when he was scourged at the pillar and crucified on the cross.

And Jesus never stops giving himself to us.

Because Jesus did these four things – things that are characteristic of the Eucharist – each time we receive the Eucharist, the Body and Blood of Christ – we receive salvation.

But, let's not stop here...let's take it one more step.

We, as baptized Christians, are called to be Christ for the world, to bring Christ into the world, and to be a witness of Christ for our brothers and sisters, especially those who have not yet heard the Good News.

Given this, we are called to imitate Christ in life.

To imitate Christ is follow his example and act Christ-like.

And so, we are called to be taken, give thanks and blessings, be broken and poured out, and give ourselves to others.

Are we ready for this?

Are we ready to allow ourselves to be taken by others and thus, to give up our time, energy, and resources for our brothers and sisters?

Are we ready to give thanks and blessings to God for both the gifts and talents we have received as well as for the challenges and difficulties that do make us better people and stronger Christians?

Are we ready to be broken and poured out, to experience pain and suffering and even loss for the sake of the kingdom and the glory of God?

Are we ready to completely give of ourselves – totally and without reservation?

If we are to put on Christ and be Christ for others, we are called to follow in his footsteps and thus act in a Eucharistic manner.

Are we ready for this challenge knowing that every time we do these four actions, we are making real the presence of Christ to all people around us no matter of their race, culture, sex, education, or class status in society?

Are we ready to bring salvation to our all our brothers and sisters non-stop and until the end of time “in remembrance of Jesus Christ?”