

At the Last Supper, Jesus spoke particular words. He declared bread to be his Body, wine to be his Blood. The bread, he said, is his body "given for you" and the cup of the new covenant is his blood "poured out for you." Jesus gave his life once and for all as a sacrifice for us. And he told us to gather "in memory of me." Which is what Christians have been doing ever since.

The feast of the Body and Blood of Christ invites us to reflect on the wonderful gift of the Eucharist. It is first and foremost a celebration during which God nourishes us with his own life. It is a memorial, not only of the redemptive suffering and death of Jesus, but of his entire life of self-emptying love. In sharing the one bread and drinking the one cup, we pledge to imitate him, who can never be repaid.

In the Eucharist, we gather in the shadow of the cross to give thanks for the death and resurrection of Jesus which has saved us from death. We gather in response to the command of Jesus to "Do this in memory of me." We gather knowing that the sacrifice required of us is no less than that of our very selves given.

ABSENCE MAKES THE HEART GROW FONDER

For Christians, one of the most painful consequences of the Covid-19 crisis was the closure of churches. People could not gather for public worship, except in tiny numbers for funerals and weddings. But, thanks to modern communications technology, people could still participate in online liturgies, and they did. Parishes were transformed into not just local but global virtual communities, with participants tuning in from far and near. By the end of the first period of lockdown, many parishes and local

churches had built up substantial online congregations. New possibilities for evangelisation were opened up, priests and people saw the potential offered by communications technology in a way they never had before. It is good news for the church going forward.

But while Catholics were delighted to be able to tune in online to a liturgy that suited them, there was one crucial element of the celebration in which they could not take part: they could not receive the Body and Blood of Christ; they could not be physically nourished by his Body and Blood. For online participants, it was a major sacrifice, a keen loss.

It was a painful reminder of how precious it is to be able to receive the Eucharist in person and to never take that privilege for granted. It has been an opportunity for us to think about the importance of the Eucharist in our lives. It was only when they couldn't physically come to Mass that many Catholics realised just how much it means to them. The first time they were able to receive Holy Communion again was an emotional experience, a moment of joy, something to treasure.

It's how we should always approach the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of the life of the Church, and our food for life.

ORIGINS OF THE FEAST

We owe today's feast of the Body and Blood of Christ to a Belgian nun, St Juliana of Comillon. At first, it was celebrated only in her convent, but it proved so popular that within a few years Pope Urban IV extended it to the universal Church and commissioned the leading theologian of the time, St Thomas Aquinas, to compose a Mass and office for its celebration. The procession with the Blessed Sacrament became a popular feature of the celebration. ■



Today's readings

Ex 24:3-8
Heb 9:11-15
Mark 14:12-16.22-26

GOD'S WORD TODAY

While Mark's Gospel is the oldest, it does not contain the earliest New Testament tradition about the Last Supper. We have to turn to Paul (1 Corinthians 11:23-25) for that tradition, which predates Mark's (70 AD) by about 15 years. Both Paul and Mark tell us that at the Last Supper Jesus took bread and wine and spoke his words over them. Paul also tells us that Jesus added, "Do this ... in remembrance of me."

In commanding us to do the same as he did, he was saying to us, "Take your body and give it for others and break it for others in love. Take the cup of your blood and pour it out and empty it and hold it out so that others may be whole again."

The first disciples probably did not fully understand what he did that Thursday night. It gradually dawned on them that Jesus would repeat this giving of himself, time and time again, in us.

6 June 2021 – The Body and Blood of Christ Year B

Pascha Week 4

Stu()space

SERIES: POINTERS ON THE JOURNEY

Season colour: WHITE

In this new series, Gerard Moloney, C.Ss.R reflects on the Gospel in the context of today.

A VERY SPECIAL FEAST



The Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ reminds us that the Eucharist is our soul-nourishing food, the bread that gives us life.

Parishes of Dromara and Drumgooland

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The Body and Blood of Christ – 6th June 2021

Anniversary Masses

Dechomet

Sat 5th Aisling O'Donnell and Pat Doyle
Susan and John Greeran
Phyllis and Seamus Doyle
Mon 7th Kathleen Ward and Deceased
Family Members

Leitrim

Mon 7th Kathleen Malone

Dromara

Fri 11th Sarah McGrillen

Gargory

Sun 13th Seamus Gribben

Lough Derg 2021

Lough Derg regrets that it will not be possible in 2021 to reopen Station Island for the Traditional Three-Day Pilgrimage or even for the autumn programme of Day Retreats. Lough Derg will again offer the opportunity to "Do Lough Derg from wherever you are" on 3rd – 5th July.

The outdoor *Pilgrimage on the Lough Shore Pilgrim Path* will also be available as the summer goes on. Further information from Lough Derg office 0(0353) 71 9861518 or www.loughderg.org.

Drumgooland St Vincent de Paul

Are you experiencing difficulties and need a helping hand?

Contact us in confidence on 075 8644 7427

Collections 30th May

| | <u>Parish</u> |
|-------------|---------------|
| Dromara | £505 |
| Drumgooland | £1077 |

Trócaire

Thank you to all who have so generously supported the Trócaire appeal this year. The amounts transferred to the Diocese, which forward it to Trócaire, were:

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| Drumgooland | £4,511.50 |
| Dromara | £2,364.50 |

£135 in cheques made out directly to Trócaire have been forwarded as well as €171 in euro coins that were handed in. This year Trócaire received matched funding from the UK government so your generosity has been doubled.

We welcome into Drumgooland Parish Luke Shahmohammadi and Ruairí King

Dromore Diocesan Historical Society

On Mon 14th June at 7:30pm the Society will host an online talk by Anthony Russell entitled "John Mitchel – Less revolutionary than the average English shopkeeper"

Access to the talk will be available from 7:20pm with a start at 7:30pm sharp. A link to the talk can be obtained by e-mailing the Hon Secretary goss.jjm@gmail.com and will be forwarded on Mon June 14th

Weekend masses

Sat 6:00pm Dechomet
7:30pm Leitrim

Sun 9:00am Gargory
11:00am Dromara

Weekday masses

Mon 9:00am Leitrim
7:30pm Dechomet

Tues 9:00am Dromara

Wed 7:30pm Leitrim

Fri 7:30pm Dromara

Congratulations to the P4 children of St Michael's P.S. who celebrated their First Holy Communion on Saturday

Retreat

I will be away on retreat from Sun 20th Jun (evening) until Sat 26th Jun (morning)

Holiday

I will be away Sun 18th Jul after mass until Sat 7th Aug