

The Eucharist

Keep these ideas in mind as you study **Chapter 20**.

❖ In every Mass, Jesus is present under the appearance of bread and wine. He nourishes us with his Body and Blood. The Eucharist is more than just a memory of a great event. It is the perfect act of worship and the heart of Christian life.

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❖ God prepared humankind for the gift of the Eucharist. The Eucharist, in part, recalls the great Jewish feast of Passover, which celebrates the Israelites' freedom from slavery in Egypt. The bread of the Eucharist recalls the bread broken at the Last Supper. It also reminds us of the manna in the desert and of the miracle of the bread and fish.

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❖ At the Last Supper, Jesus washed the feet of the apostles to show them how to show love. By this important lesson, he taught us all the importance of serving one another.

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❖ Only a validly ordained priest can preside at Mass and consecrate the bread and wine.

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❖ The Eucharist is our great prayer of praise and thanksgiving. The word *Eucharist* means "thanksgiving." The two main parts of the celebration are the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

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❖ During the Liturgy of the Word, God speaks to us in readings from the Old Testament, the Gospel, and the epistles.

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❖ The words and actions of the Last Supper are repeated at every Eucharist. By these words, Jesus Christ becomes present. The bread and wine are consecrated when the priest says the words Jesus spoke at the Last Supper. The change of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is called transubstantiation. While the priest breaks the bread, we pray that Jesus, the Lamb of God, will have mercy on us and grant us his peace.

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❖ The official book of prayers and directions for the Mass is called the *Roman Missal*.

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❖ At the end of Mass, we are sent out to announce the Gospel to all.

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