

Food, Glorious Food

Intro. Some people have always looked for a way to live forever. There is scientific research. Books and movies have fictionalized our fascination with immortality. So far no one has found an absolute answer, not even at the Fountain of Youth in St. Augustine. Every time a hundredth birthday is celebrated, somebody asks what the secret of long life is. Some answers seem contradictory: fried foods, a shot of wine or whiskey, being a couch potato. Others true: reading the Bible, eating right, exercise, and a good friend or two. We know some of these things can *help*, but none can *guarantee* immortality. The Lord's Body and Blood in Communion offers something much better: Eternal life.

I. Another mystery – bread and wine changed into the Lord. Over the years several parents have said to me, “My child is not ready for Communion.” When I

ask why, the answer is, “Because he or she doesn't understand it.” My response is, “Did *you* understand it at age seven?” I have some theological training and **I** don't fully understand it. So only theologians should receive Communion? We don't understand the mystery of love, but still fall in love. We enter into mystery all the time without fully understanding it. Life is mostly mystery. With God's grace we discover its beauty a little at a time. What we celebrate about the Eucharist today are at least two things: remembering and Presence. We often do things to remember people. There are markers at places where someone has died in accidents or been killed. We have pictures or letters. Some of us get a tattoo to remember a person or an event or people they serve with. Our remembering keeps people alive in our hearts, makes them *present*. The Lord gave us the Eucharist so that every time we gather around this table we remember **Him**. The other

thing about the Eucharist is what we receive is the Lord in his true and real **Presence**. He is present in many ways, but none more than in the Eucharist. The Lord becomes physically part of us.

Concl. A story of orphans in nineteenth century England who were starving, spoke about food this way:

What we wouldn't give for that extra bit more -

That's all we live for.

Why should we be fated to

Do nothing but brood

On food

Magical food

Wonderful food

Marvelous food

Fabulous food

Beautiful food

Glorious food" [By Lionel Bart, *Oliver*].

The song is from a musical based on Charles Dickens' book, *Oliver Twist*. What if we felt, believed and sang like that about the "glorious food" that is the Lord as we receive Communion each week? Many have been without this Presence. Receiving it again should send us out of church different people. This is not ordinary food; it is the food for *change*. It doesn't give *immortality*, it offers *eternal life*. We don't receive the Lord just for ourselves. We pray to become what we eat – the Lord's Presence to a hungry and broken world.

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June 14, 2020