

Eucharistic Series - Part 1

“The Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist”

- Prepare beforehand: have participants bring a Bible and journal, or have a copy of this document for each person.
- Snacks and a great sense of welcome starts the group off right! :)
- Opening Prayer (together):
Come, Holy Spirit and guide our group today. Help us to grow in friendship, and draw us closer to you in your Eucharistic presence. Amen.
- Introductions: Name, where did you grow up? What was your favorite childhood toy, game or activity? Why did you sign up for the Eucharistic series?
- Video: DeWayne & Melanie share short stories about the Eucharist:
<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/749632125>
- After watching the video: What stood out to you? Has your personal experience of faith been similar or different?
- Have a volunteer read the following scripture slowly. The back story of this scripture passage: Jesus speaks these words shortly after feeding 5000. The people came back to him looking for more bread to eat.

John 6:48-69

48 I am the bread of life. **49** Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. **50** This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that a man may eat of it and not die. **51** I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any one eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” **53** So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you; **54** he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. **55** For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. **56** He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. **57** As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me will live because of me. **58** This is the bread which came down from heaven, not such as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever.” **59** This he said in the synagogue, as he taught at Caper'na-um.

The Words of Eternal Life

60 Many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" **61** But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at it, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? **62** Then what if you were to see the Son of man ascending where he was before?" **63** It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. **64** But there are some of you that do not believe." For Jesus knew from the first who those were that did not believe, and who it was that should betray him. **65** And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

66 After this many of his disciples drew back and no longer went about with him. **67** Jesus said to the twelve, "Will you also go away?" **68** Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life; **69** and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God."

Questions for Reflection

1. The context of this scripture passage: Jesus speaks these words shortly after feeding 5000. The people came back to him looking for more bread to eat. After reading the scripture, look closely at verse 49. What was the purpose of the manna for the Israelites in the Old Testament? What did Jesus say happened to the people who ate it?
2. Look at v. 51. Who does Jesus say is the living bread that came down from heaven? Who is this bread for? What happens when we eat this bread?
3. Read v. 60-61. At this time in history, Jews were well aware that it was against the Torah to drink the blood of animals. The disciples' say "this is too hard!" Have you ever felt that it is "too hard" to believe in the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist? How can we help each other grow in this faith and belief?
4. Read v. 66. This is the only time in scripture that disciples left Jesus because of doctrinal reasons. Why do you think Jesus chose not to re-phrase or correct their understanding?
5. Read v. 67-69. What did Jesus' closest friends say to him in response to this teaching?
6. "ALL PLAY" question: What is your takeaway from today's discussion?
7. Challenge for the week: Make a plan to attend a daily mass this week. Receive the Eucharist very intentionally and report back what you experienced next week!

- Closing Prayer: Go around the circle, each person mentioning a prayer request for someone else and one for yourself. When you are finished, pray an Our Father for those intentions. See you next week!