

The Eucharist is at the center of the Church's life. It is her most profound prayer and principal activity. It is at one and the same time both the source and the summit of her life. In the Eucharist the Church manifests her true nature and is continuously changed from a human community into the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and the People of God. The Eucharist is the pre-eminent sacrament. It completes all the others and recapitulates the entire economy of salvation. Our new life in Christ is constantly renewed and increased by the Eucharist. The Eucharist imparts life and the life it gives is the life of God.

In the Eucharist the Church remembers and enacts sacramentally the redemptive event of the Cross and participates in its saving grace. This does not suggest that the Eucharist attempts to reclaim a past event. The Eucharist does not repeat what cannot be repeated. Christ is not slain anew and repeatedly. Rather the eucharistic food is changed concretely and really into the Body and Blood of the Lamb of God, "Who gave Himself up for the life of the world." Christ, the Theanthropos, continually offers Himself to the faithful through the consecrated Gifts, i.e., His very own risen and deified Body, which for our sake died once and now lives (Hebrews 10:2; Revelation 1:18). Hence, the faithful come to Church week by week not only to worship God and to hear His word. They come, first of all, to experience over and over the mystery of salvation and to be united intimately to the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Eucharist we receive and partake of the resurrected Christ. We share in His sacrificed, risen and deified Body, "for the forgiveness of sins and life eternal" In the Eucharist Christ pours into us - as a permanent and constant gift - the Holy Spirit, "Who bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God - and if children - then heirs with Christ (Romans 8:16-17).