

Made Holy by the Body and Blood

MAUNDY THURSDAY

March 29, 2018

1 Corinthians 10:16-17

¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

The Lord knows our bodies and our lives. He knows them better than we do.

He knows the sin of our flesh. He knows the guilt our bodies have brought upon themselves. He knows the shame our bodies are covered in. He knows our attempts to make our bodies and our lives seem honorable before his Father, and he knows that the sinner can never make himself to be other than what he is—a sinner.

So our Lord, in his holy Body, his body once baptized into unity with all sinners in the Jordan by John the Baptist, his Body which bore the sin of the world and which was, then, crucified, his Body which was raised up from the dead on the third day—our Lord, in his holy Body, comes to us in his Word and says, ***“Take and eat, this is my Body.”***

Unholy bodies, unholy lives—that’s us—now made one with the holy Body, the holy life, of Christ Jesus.

By coming to us in his holy Body and Blood, and by giving himself to be brought into our bodies, our Lord gives us participation in his blood and in his body. He gives us fellowship with him, binding us to himself in oneness, so that we are one with him in his death on the cross and in his resurrection from the dead.

Everything that he accomplished in his Body on our behalf, he now brings to us. And it is all for the forgiveness of our sin, the cleansing of our consciences, and for binding us to him in oneness.

And now we who are many, taking the bread into our mouths, receiving the Body and Blood forgiving sins, having, then, been made one with the Body of Christ, we are made one body with each other, having partaken of our Lord's Sacrament.

We now look at one another, and we see those who are given participation in the Body of Christ. We still see ourselves and one other in the sinful flesh; but ours are bodies sanctified by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and which have now been given participation in the holy Body of Christ Jesus.

To scorn someone into whom the Lord has given his Body and Blood is to scorn the Lord's Body and Blood which has sanctified that person.

For now, the Lord having given us participation in his Body and Blood, we are bound together as one body, the Church, in which the Lord is giving us all participation.

And this means something for who we are as Church. Because Jesus, before he was betrayed, instituted a gift for his Church. He gave the mandate for the gift of the Lord's Table. This Mandate was the last will and testament made by a man on his way to death. He gave the way that his wealth was to be distributed after his death.

According to this mandate, his last will and testament, his Apostles were to distribute his body and blood to his Church to cleanse sinners, and the Church was to continue doing this often.

But because Jesus rose from the dead, the wealth of his Body and Blood is living. It is never diminished or depleted. It is living Body and Blood, and these living gifts have their way among us.

We receive this holy Body and Blood for the forgiveness of our sins, and we then embrace one another as those who are made holy by the Body and Blood.

For we, as one body, belong to Jesus. We, as his baptized people, are given participation in his Body. 1 Corinthians 10:17:

The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? ¹⁷ Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

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